Introduction: locating the chapter

In the following chapter I hope to think through and problematize the first eleven years of democratization in Hungary from a feminist perspective. My decision is motivated by the assumption that the changes in the Hungarian political system over the 1990s to a relatively more democratic political structure should at long last also mean some space in the Hungarian political (and academic) printed media for the articulation and circulation of a critique of the effects of bourgeois patriarchy as well. In other words, after the absence of reference to feminism between 1945 and 1989 in the various public domains of the printed media, one would have hoped that a more open society should involve some space in the printed media for feminist voices articulating what social and cultural changes they consider relevant in the post-state socialist era, including the contestation over the meaning of the term ‘feminism’ itself.

This chapter therefore is born out of my current research project which tries to explore the various meaning-making practices regarding the term ‘feminism’ in the printed political and scientific media in the given period. In my critical discourse analysis of the relevant media practices, I have focused on the emergence of the term ‘feminism’ itself for explicit thematization. As part of this project, in the current chapter, instead of keeping the two media domains separate, I shall explore their intersection, and concentrate on the little space available to self-identified feminists from the academia who have presented their views in the national daily papers and weekly political magazines against the non-feminist definitions of the term by journalists and (mostly male) academics. This focus should serve my aim to explore the network of
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Various understandings of the term come to mean one of two things: a position of power that allows for the manipulation of others, or a position with the power to control and shape the discourse of others. In this context, the dominant position is not just one of power, but also one of ideology. The gate-keeping role is often used to maintain the status quo by preventing the dissemination of certain ideas and perspectives to the public.

What I intend to explore is the changing limits within which, as feminist scholars, we are able to operate. In this article, I will argue that the voice of radical women is often marginalized and silenced, both in the media and in the academic field. This is not due to a lack of willingness to fight for a presence in the media, but rather a lack of any alternative, destabilizing approach to the dominant patriarchal understanding of gender.

In order to make the power dynamics of the media visible, what follows is a form of ideology critique in a twofold manner. On the one hand, it is a critical discourse analysis of the gate-keeping practices of the printed media. On the other hand, it is also a form of self-analysis, a critical reflection on the limits of the feminist ways of struggling for that space in the media. This double edge is informed by my understanding of the importance of self-reflexivity, as formulated by Deborah Cameron.

Feminism is not about giving housewives their due, it is about changing the condition of domestic labour altogether. Similarly, feminism cannot stop at validating the linguistic strategies of women; it must also ask why women find some communicative practices more relevant than others to their circumstances: a question of their social position, of the social practices in which they are allowed to participate.

In my opinion, such systematic self-reflexivity is necessary if we wish to ensure that our commitment to women's social equality is necessary and feasible. Otherwise, any feminist could easily be caught in a position that merely results in her own personalized gain. In this particular case, the benefit consists in the access to the media space of the daily papers and to have one's voice legitimized by its very presence in the contestation over the meaning of 'feminism' over other, more radical feminist voices.

However, as my analysis of the media texts will show, the hegemonic position of the 'expert' known from within is, at the same time, a position with only ephemeral gains that can be lost as soon as it is confronted by the similarities of the masculinist positions. But above all, this is achieved at the expense of other voices that are hardly present as representatives of the radical outlaw sexualities on the other.

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In my opinion, such systematic self-reflexivity is necessary if we wish to ensure that our commitment to women's social equality is necessary and feasible. Otherwise, any feminist could easily be caught in a position that merely results in her own personalized gain.
(feminist) women collectives for whom the gate is going to be shut again.

Therefore, as a feminist academic, when I carry out an equally systematic discourse analysis on the non-feminist voices in terms of the various definitions of ‘feminism’ attributed to feminists (by way of the voice presentation techniques in the articles), I hope to avoid an unconditioned embrace of the otherwise long overdue feminist presence in the Hungarian media. I hope to perform a self-analysis without which no feminist critical analysis can be complete. In line with my dissatisfaction with the lack of systematic self-reflexivity in most critical discourse analyses (see Barát 2000a), I argue that such redirecting of the analytical gaze is especially indispensable when one claims to be engaged in some form of ideology critique. Otherwise feminists’ claims to democratization, like those of the feminist academics in the Hungarian media, are caught within the hegemonic relations of power precisely because their criticism is one-sided, and as such inevitably run the risk of assuming their position to be ‘naturally’ outside those oppressive relations.

My view concerning the relevance of self-reflexivity follows from Rosemary Hennessy (1993: 14), who claims that ideology is an ‘array of sense-making practices which constitutes what counts as “the way things are” in any historical moment’. That is, since ideology is a legitimizing material power in that it re-produces what counts as reality (including ‘the meaning of feminism’), whatever feminists have to say about that is therefore inevitably shaped by the existing ideologies, and in turn the feminist representations help to shape its change. In other words, given that all discourses are effects of the existing relations of power, all definitions of ‘feminism’ are constructed in relation to differential distributions of hetero-gendered power. Thus, the value of one theorization over another is assessed on two interrelated accounts. Its potential for the particular purposes of empowerment is always conditioned and limited by the possibility of its hegemonic appropriation for maintaining the very status quo it should destabilize. Therefore I think that feminist critique is always a contingent political activity whose only means to secure some potential for social change is to make its own inevitable partiality visible through self-reflexivity: that is, through enacting some form of accountability.

Analysis of the gate-keeping practices

The database for my research project is itself a new form of political practice that shows the location of the media as a new, relatively separate form of political power. It is the so-called Pressdoc CD-ROM produced by the Parliament Library as of 1990. The beginning of the political and economical changes in the Hungarian state systems is marked by the emergence of this collection of ‘media watch’ type materials. It is assembled from all the printed media products (academic included) published in Hungary. Originally this was meant to be a service for the information of the Members of Parliament only. Since 1998, however, the database has also been available for subscription by institutions, such as universities, bringing about another telling conjunctural point between academic and political practices through the mobilizing force of marketization (but this falls outside the scope of my interest in this chapter). For my analysis, I searched all the references in the database between January 1990 and December 2001 and found only 52 entries where either the title or the abstract of an entry had ‘feminism’ explicitly in it. The mere number itself implies a microscopic media presence! Whenever I refer the reader to the majority of the mainstream media, this is the overall figure they should bear in mind.

The majority: non-feminist mediated voices

From my analysis I have found that, in the little material available, what goes on is a systematic gate-keeping strategy that seems to be legitimized on three interrelated lines of argumentation, all of which try to discredit ‘feminism’ for various reasons at the very beginning of the so-called democratization process. What follows is an analysis of the rhetoric of argumentation, which draws on Charlotte Linde’s (1993) work.

Linde, analysing oral life stories as sites of identity construction, is basically interested in establishing the linguistic devices of creating coherence of the emerging selves. She defines argumentation as an interactional means of explanation that establishes causality in narratives. According to her, the rhetoricity of argumentation consists in its use ‘not to arrive at the truth — the role that formal logic claims for itself — but... to demonstrate that propositions that may appear dubious, false, problematic, or stupid do in fact have justifications that should lead to their addressee’s believing them’ (p. 94). That is, argumentation is a relational linguistic device for ‘establish[ing] the truth of propositions about which the speakers themselves are not comfortable, or [the linguistic device for] defend[ing] propositions whose validity they feel their addressee has in some way challenged’ (p. 92). The very structure of the argument (that is, the proposition and the reasons for believing the proposition to be true) ‘would not be
relevant in the absence of some suggestion that the proposition might not be believed' (p. 92).

The analytically motivated separation of the three major dimensions of argumentation will result in the identification of further sub-texts, or implied discourses. This exposure of the implied values, I hope, can help me produce a more persuasive insight into the complex relations at play.

**The Discourse of Anti-Communism**

The two extracts that represent the mainstream practices of misogyny I have chosen for the following reasons. Extract 1 is the most representative sample of all the three major lines of argumentation pulled together. Besides, by way of its early appearance in the media, namely 1992, and that of its genre (as a survey article in a weekly political magazine), it can be considered as the one that set the subsequent hostile scene. Furthermore, it is also relevant in that it addresses feminist academics explicitly. In that sense the two extracts from the interviews with feminist academics and/or activists in the national dailies may be considered as responses to this interpellation.

Extract 2 is of special importance for an analysis because it comes from the only centre-right national daily in Hungary, called *Magyar Nemzet* (Hungarian Nation) which, as part of the restructuring of the daily paper market, became the semi-official organ for the first and third governments in power over the given period. The first government had MDF (Hungarian Democratic Forum) as the only central party which accounted for its dominant position in the coalition. It became only the minority force by the time of the third government which was dominated by FIDESZ (Young Democrats’ Association), a centre-right Christian democratic party. Furthermore, Extract 2 is taken from a letter by a Hungarian male academic who is currently on scholarship in Vienna, and who constructs himself as a regular visitor who can, therefore, make reliable comparisons between Hungarian and so-called Western women. The extract is all the more relevant there as it can be considered to be representative of the available Other, the potential ‘partner’ that should meet the apparently feminist demands as formulated by his female academic fellows in Extracts 3 and 4. The last few lines in Extracts 2 and 3 are underlined in order to indicate the almost verbatim similarity between the two wordings. Extract 2 is also important as the political event that motivated its publication—there the legislation of the Abortion Act—will be taken up again in Extract 6 (from a subversive perspective there, though).

**Extract 1**

It is obvious that modern feminism is not about the suffragette movement at the turn of the century. It is rather yet another ideology, which is just as intolerant, brutal and authoritarian as Marxism, scientism, the gurus of Buddhist and Hindu therapies, drug abuse and New Age. Radical feminism, which blames phallocracy for all problems in the world, therefore deserves the name of a cult. There is no difference between the modern feminist movement and women of the 19th century (at least, the most prominent of them). Feminists were against the Order of the Sword, and the same women who are against the Order of the Sword today. The two lines don’t diverge because there are no differences in the substance of the arguments, though the modern feminism is not about the suffrage question.

**Extract 2**

I am happy to hear that—in comparison with the previous five years—the number of abortions this year has decreased by 20 percent as a result of the Fetus Protection Act... All reasonable and healthy men love women, myself included, though we are all familiar with the male moaning. Let me add quickly, either way, only together, preferably in the relationship of equal partners, can we live these short earthly lives of ours. The town is full of colorful expensive boutiques where women of twenty something, probably with a GRE certificate, ‘are killing their time bored... They are the copycats of Western businesswomen, apparently doing self-realization, but not knowing that without expertise, merely dressed up and decorated, they could not even stand perhaps.
the counter in the part of the world… With a daring jump, their behaviour reminds me of the ‘emancipated’ women in the 1905s of Hungary… Naturally, I do not miss Ibsen’s doll house, but I am speaking against the frequency of the Western patent of aggressive self-realizing women who behave in a masculine manner in this more open social atmosphere. Where are the men who could make women’s life easier, where is the social-economical support where it is not the woman exhausted with the daily stress who is waiting for her husband, partner in the home?

(Magyar Nemzet, 14 February 1994, ‘The Aggressively Self-Realizing Woman – Of Her Own Accord and Happily?’ by György László)

The first line of argumentation that tries to discredit any feminist position is informed by a discourse of anti-Communism in various ways, all of which have in common the same ideological investment. If the media succeeds in associating feminism with the political discourses of the previous regimes of Stalinism and state socialism, all reduced to some ‘Marxist ideology’ (in this way, in fact, conflating the two under the single term ‘Communism’) they can legitimately refuse feminism as part of the legacy of the totalitarian past. Anything that is labelled as ‘mere ideology’ comes to mean totalitarian practices of power, and that comes to be equated with ‘Communism’, the ultimate ‘evil’ force in history. The only logical step left by this most exclusionary argumentation for any reasonable Hungarian reader is to (want to) leave this evil past behind, a past which has come to include this alleged feminism, an integral part of that era. In fact, if women seek any kind of active participation in the rebuilding of this new politity, the only intelligible position of agency constructed for them is that of some conservative ‘post-feminism’. The little feminist concern audible at times of decision-making in the media, raising the question of whether we know what those women concerned want, will sound safely outdated. At the same time, the very act of explicitly claiming in the media to be a feminist, whatever the particular meaning of that claim might be, will count as an autonomous act of self-identification in such a hostile and threatening context, and one that will enact some destabilizing power through the very act of discursive announcement.

A sub-text here can be drawn from the implication of all those mocking references to the Stalinist division of labour in the extracts (the whistling woman conductor, the woman tractor driver, or the vast numbers of untrained female workers on the construction sites of the new housing estates, which ironically are their prospective homes). In so far as they draw on the readers’ familiarity with the infamous term ‘the woman question’ used for naming the ‘female perspective’ in past political discourses, we have the discourse of racism implied here. (See an insightful analysis of the use of the term ‘the woman question’ in the state socialist era by Adamik 2001.)

At this point let me add that when considering the mainstream definition of ‘feminism’ I also have in mind the journalists’ voices present in the texts that will be quoted in relation to the domain of self-definition. In one of those instances, in Extract 3, the journalist explicitly accuses the feminist interviewee of ‘bringing back’ the old national institution of the ‘Women’s Council’, which was the only legitimate political ‘civil’ organization for representing women’s interests in the past. This was the state organization that had tackled the ‘woman question’ during the time of the different Communist parties in power over 40 or so years. The point I am making here is that the implication of racist discrimination is enacted also at the same time through the intensive emotional investment of the expected response to the ‘Communist past’.

My point about the sub-text is not so much about the ideological investment of the anti-Communist discourse in discrediting ‘feminism’ as the implied ideological re-appropriation of the grammatical structure of the expression itself. The structure of the noun phrase (‘the woman question’) can easily be associated with other historically emergent discourses of violent discrimination in Hungary. The other expressions evoked by the similarity in phrase structure are ‘the Jewish question’ and ‘the Gypsy question’, which were the traditional right-wing formulations by Hungarian intellectuals (academics and artists) between the two world wars, in the context of the racist debate on the question of national identity. This was epitomized in the controversy of ‘Who is “the Hungarian [subject]?”’ and ‘What [ways of being] is Hungarian?’ (For an analysis of the various positions in the debate see Poszler 1986; 1998.)

This is a legacy that has re-emerged in the past 12 years even in certain right-wing parliamentary parties’ political discourse, legitimizing their struggle to discredit some of their left-wing political rivals on the grounds of their implied ‘Jewish identity’ and all this legitimized in the name of securing ‘new democratic’ political changes (for a detailed analysis of the racist political discourse in the printed media, see Barát 2000b). What is relevant about this sub-text is its contradictory workings in relation to the past, its politics of history. The irony of the rhetoric lies in the contradictory relationship the readers are expected to have in relation to what counts as ‘Hungarian history’: the past 40 years of state socialism are believed to be thoroughly and homogeneously
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bad and therefore possible to erase from the national memory, while the 20 or so years of the quasi-feudal nationalistic irredentist legacy between the two wars are evaluated as "the" values and therefore impossible to forget.

The discourse of anti-Americanism

These second most prominent aspect of argumentation draws on a discourse of anti-Americanism that re-defines feminism as politically inflected with a misogynist backlash in the name of the already evoked claim to some post-feminist era. What is also relevant to note is the reduction of all possible forms of feminism to the allegedly homogeneous "American" form of it. No universal present moment towards an absolute hatred against anything remotely related to the USA.

There is a further sub-text emerging here as well. The misogynist argument very often draws on the claim that women have become so "masculine" that they have lost their femininity and therefore cannot feel attracted to anybody but women anymore. It is the discourse of explicite homophobia evoking the ultimate threat of "feminism" (that of a non-heterosexual woman). The meaning of "feminist" comes to be conflated with "lesbian": as such, feminists emerge as "the" realization of "pure" idiosyncrasy, and engage in terrorizing other women, using "ideology" as their lethal weapon.

The point I would like to spell out here concerns the varying degrees of exclusion in the mainstream meaning-making practices of feminism in the media. The discourse of exclusion on the ground of sexual orientation, unlike those on the ground of racial and ethnic belonging, does not need to be hedged or implied in a modulated manner. It can be spoken about without any anxiety or concern: after all, who would want to risk any kind of implication, let alone identification with them through speaking on behalf of the non-heterosexual collectives in contemporary Hungarian society? At the same time, it is also important to already note that the self-defining reformist feminist voices are eventually also caught within the discourse of heterosexism. However, the difference lies in the modulated presence of the position insofar as it is only implied by the naturalizing logic and never openly thematized as the assumed common ground for reader and journalist. Therefore, the assumption of exclusion on the ground of sexual orientation in the mainstream media is also the discursive situation of Eurocentrism. The second is the discursive situation of Eurocentrism in the mainstream media.

The discourse of female difference

The third dimension of argumentation, like the second one, takes up the appropriate of feminist discourses, but this time that valorizes women's ways of knowing. The reader is referred to women's hostile opinion in an indirect way through the othering of "feminist women" as fierce "amazons", whose implied violent and aggressive women's place, emasculates, whose implied violence and aggressive women's place, emasculates, whose implied violence and aggressive women's place, emasculates, whose implied violence and aggressive women's place, emasculates, whose implied violence and aggressive women's place, emasculates. Women's violence in the othering of women is the ultimate point of rejection in the Eurocentric vision, where is other women's forms of feminism, for whom implication is given that these may be other forms of feminism. No form of feminism is the stereotyped American form of it. No form of feminism is the stereotyped American form of it.
jobs'. Ironically, though, one should ask: why all this concern then? Why all this intense hatred towards this outdated, discredited, alien Other?

Feminist voices

The odd moments when there are some self-identified feminists speaking in the media seem to happen on the occasion of some events that are found to be newsworthy. These include the publication of a feminist book, the foundation of a women’s non-governmental organization, the foundation of a gender studies department, or, least of all, in relation to the reading of the Abortion Bill in Parliament, in which case ‘women’ are pushed into the focal point of the media’s interest as if they are the only party concerned. In fact abortion became the most salient instance of legislative interest with three occasions of modification in ten years. The selection, however, seems to be systematic in that the media seems to abstract feminist politics away from the actual domains of policy making, redefining it as some form of merely cultural activity, and as such something that one hopes can be kept under control. From this perspective, the media practices of editorial decisions seem to domesticate the potentially unruly feminist practices. And instead of functioning like a potential public space for channelling the non-state articulations of women’s needs, as formulated by Nancy Fraser (1997), the media functions as a successful gate-keeping institution in the interest of the hetero-gendered state systems.

Reformist feminist voices

For this chapter it is the attempts at co-opting feminist discourses that obtains special salience since the majority of what little feminist voice that is present comes from a liberal feminist embrace of the difference that Hungarian women’s knowledge is said to make. However, this difference is pointed out not only in relation to and over men’s ways of knowing and lived experience but also in relation to and over so-called Western feminist women’s ways of knowing, and – through the sub-text of naturalized heterosexual desire – in relation to and over any radical lesbian feminist or gay position as well. The urgent need for the political potential of the latter voice may emerge as a legitimate expectation when we are confronted with the only moments of exposure of the heterosexist interests of the ‘new democratic’ system in Hungary in Extracts 5 and 6. In my view these multiple self-distinctions in the feminist voices are drawn from the shared perspective of the liberal agenda of emancipation. Ironically, it is motivated by a claim to the emancipation of Hungarian (non-academic) women but via the emancipation of Hungarian feminist academic women only. As the various enactments of the discourse of discrimination in the mainstream extracts prove, this agenda cannot be a legitimate aim for us.

EXTRACT 3

J (journalist): The past forty years have changed the social consensus a bit, millions of ladies who used to be confined to the hearth of the home could have the world opened up for them: our mothers could jump and drive the tractor, grab the bricklayer’s bucket… The traditional values were overthrown, in hundreds of thousands of family hearths the heat went out…but what to expect now? How to relate, for example, to the recent emergence of aggressive woman managers, where to put the army of unemployed women, what to think about women’s sexual emancipation?…There has been formed the ‘Feminist Network’. Are you trying to take over the good old role of the ‘Women’s Council’?

A (academic): Not at all. For one thing, the network is an organization of volunteers...

J: Shouldn’t you start the reassessment with whether women are really the weaker sex, in need of support? Men’s average life expectancy is 10 years less;…most of the homeless are also men.

A: Men’s shorter life span, amongst other things, is a biological issue…

J: Shouldn’t you just take over Western societies’ position that shows a higher concern with women’s interests?

A: It is not sure at all that we should take over their image of an idealized housewife…In the single wage earner family model the housewife is to provide all these services free of charge; the capitalist employer is freed from incurring expenses. In the West this division of labour has long traditions, but we need not fall into this trap…Of course, it is not that feminists would reject the major elements of the bourgeois family values, or would be anti-sex or anti-men. But we should dust the ancient perception of woman in order to see what we, women, want…So that, in accordance with our real needs, we can choose from various options.
Where are men in all this process? Naturally, without men, feminists would be left all by themselves. It would be good to see that men take democracy seriously, beyond party politics as well and start practising it right in the home. A woman who is more balanced, has more time for her appearance and children, could be a nicer partner for men as well, which can, in turn, enhance men's well-being too. We also should make our own first steps in this direction right now!

(Reform, 6 February 1994, ‘The System Change by Women—Shock Effect and Feminism’, by Kruppa Géza)

J: Perhaps you should not encourage them to assume male roles but to perform their own. In your book you seem to refer to the biological and psychological differences between men and women with contempt.

A: My concern is whether biological difference is turned into social differentiation. That is, whenever just because a woman is nice, feminine, and has got the capacity for sympathy, is suitable for dealing with people, teaching, whenever these splendid female characteristics are acknowledged not only in words but in terms of moral and financial appreciation, she comes last... But I also think that women... must have energy, dynamism, and cleverness...

J: Why is it that you try to make women protest instead of looking for solutions for repairing their relationships?

A: I don't make them rebellious but I can't accept that a woman always has to choose between her children and career. I'd like if both could be available.


Insofar as feminism is not about giving housewives their due as ‘partners’ who are pleasurable to live with, but is about changing the conditions of marriage altogether, a feminist critique of the media’s meaning-making practices cannot stop at validating the (little) reformist self-definition of feminism. It must also ask why these feminist women find so little media space for their meaning-making practices, or rather why it is only this ‘domesticated’ liberal form of feminism that can emerge at all?

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My answer to the question is that the three heterogeneous discourses of misogyny are linked together and figure as a coherent anti-feminist position through the logic of some new traditionalism as defined by Elspeth Probyn (1997). It can easily tangle liberal feminism into a ‘woman-centredness’ through affirming a possibility of choosing between the home and career but never exposing the (hetero-) gendered bias in the (alleged) choice itself. In other words, in my view it is the very avoidance of the problematization of the public-private divide itself in the feminist self-definition that can reveal our vested interest in its maintenance, although in a more favourably redrawn fashion. That is, this is a strategy that leaves the achievement of our feminist academic position in the public domain ‘natural’, and leaves our contradictory relationship to the hegemonic culture ‘natural’. This is a position that simply discredits any (other) feminist claim to political change, leaving us easily defenceless when it comes to the all too similar accusations of the misogynist mainstream voices.

Ideologically speaking, there are two major points in the logic of this academic discourse: one is the powerful reduction of the misogynist populist discourse to the so-called ‘popular culture’. This is a position that simply draws any (other) feminist discourse into a popular culture where it is confused with the reduction of the ‘public domain’ to a popular culture. And the second is the powerful reduction of the patriarchal discourse to the popular culture which can be seen as the popularization of the patriarchal discourse itself. This is a position that simply denies any (other) feminist discourse to the popular culture. This is a position that simply denies any (other) feminist discourse to the popular culture.

As Extract 4 shows, what the feminist sociologist is unable to see is that the hostility of the journalist is motivated by his implied understanding of the inflection of the class dimension. The academic voice comes to be seen as ‘rebellious’ only from the working-class women’s less privileged potential. But such an understanding should also involve exploring how professional women can gain some space for professional practice by in fact exploiting some other woman who must take over the bulk of the domestic labour, whether this be a grandmother or some cleaning woman, which is not the same as renegotiating the gendered bourgeois family economy in the new middle classes. This would mean the exposure of the dual location of consumption as demonstrated by Delphy and Leonard (1992), which can end the popular culture in this way.
family as a single ‘unit’, undermining the state socialist legacy of seeing the (preferably married) couple as the ultimate unit against the interfering power of the state. The implication of the institution of heterno-normative marriage brings me to the homophobic moments in these reformist voices.

As Extract 3 shows, as long as the solution to the ‘choice’ between career and family is taken to be naturally based in a desire to have an equal partnership in a balanced complementarity between male and female ‘partners’, and in so far as this position takes heterosexuality as the only possible form of erotic relationship, it is an effect of heterosexism. And as such, it gets easily caught within the explicit voices of homophobia in the mainstream media.

The non-hetero-normative voices

As the limits of the reformist position shows, if we wish to seek an account of the complex hegemonic relations between the sexes, we need a much more radical understanding of what counts as a feminist approach. In the light of the telling similarity between the male academic voice and those of the feminist academics in the above interviews, what we need to do is expose the reason for this ‘coincidence’. The reason could be that bourgeois patriarchy is kept successfully in its place by naturalizing its ideological conflation of gender and sexuality. By destabilizing the (theoretically) assumed reductive continuities between anatomical sex, social gender, sexual practice, desire and sexual identity we may expose not only the mainstream masculinist but also the reformist feminist exclusionary separation of biological/anatomical sex and social gender. In other words, it is not only the explicit discourse of homophobia of the mainstream media that can keep gender inequity in place, but the various reformist feminist voices in the interviews as well in that they fix sexuality on an allegedly completely material (biological) morphology of human bodies. At the end of the day all they fight for is some share of the male privileges without questioning the foundation of the structural division itself.

The only voice that speaks from within this radical and therefore favourable position in my data are the interviews with a British feminist activist who was a visiting academic and activist at the time, and with the male leader of the Hungarian GLBT Organization, Habesas Corpus. Both of them are also open about their outlaw sexuality. Furthermore, both interviews were published in the same political weekly called MANCS (‘Paw’, a term that is an acronym playing upon the old ironic name of the magazine, Magyar Narancs, or ‘Hungarian Orange’). It is a media product from the centre-left that was originally founded back in 1989 as the organ for the most radical political voice in party politics, that is, the Young Democrats. As the party gradually gained support and eventually became the leading force in the third government in 1998, the magazine’s takes on the democratization process shifted to the point of stark opposition. They eventually broke up and the editors were forced to give up their original name (‘Hungarian Orange’) in a symbolic court case over copyright payments due to the direct symbolism between the fruit logo of the party and the name of the magazine. This is the only media space to date that is potentially open to the most destabilizing voice of self-definition, even if their journalists seem to enact some distancing in the ironic mode of framing the occasions of the particular interviews.

EXTRACT 5

J: AB is a feminist but she does not bite. She has been active in Hungary since 1988, in the Autonomy Group, the only oppositional organization dealing with the woman question. Since then she has organized lectures on social gender, at ELTE amongst other places, is a NaNe activist, working on constitutional recognition of women’s rights.

AB: In practice, there are two roles for them: self-sacrificing, or rather nurse and whore. If they assume some roles, especially that of self-confidence, that deserves only mockery, exclusion, sometimes even rape. Another explanation is that now it is democracy, and rape belongs to the private domain of life. Also, women are often persuaded not to go to court, they should rather be kind to their husband, besides, they would not win their case. This is what is meant by ‘reconciliation’ now. But feminists are also said to be lesbians. And if they protest, their opponents only become all the more satisfied because they have managed to change the topic, to shift the direction of feminist criticism, or perhaps, because they have succeeded in frightening other women to think the same. So the only good strategy is if a feminist answers: ‘Sure, I am a lesbian. So what?’

(MANCS, 29 July 1998, ‘Women’s Section’, by sissó)
The Constitution Court declared that the institution of obligatory counselling is in the interest of keeping the fetus. And no MP, even in 1997 when it was included in the Penalties Code, there was a lot of celebratory noise. (MANCS, 19 November 2000, 'Hiding and Fear', by Géza Juhász)

Concluding remarks

In my opinion, the major insight one may learn from analysing the re-articulation of the speech/talk divide enacted by the media's gate-keeping strategies is that the effect of hegemonic power relations between 'woman' and 'man' means that patriarchal structures organise sexual difference. In Hennessy's formulation:

"In positing male and female as distinct and opposite sexes that are naturally attracted to one another, they are practices of heterosexuality. In the heterosexual matrix in which woman is taken to be man's [natural] opposite, women and men are positioned in the relationship between them.

Therefore, the interests of the expansion of the (cultural) capital and the accumulation of profits (including our own promotion or access to research funds). In the name of self-reflexivity, what feminist researchers should ask of themselves is: how far does our own theoretical discourse participate in the reification of this hetero-gendered sexual identity? How do we unhinge our definitions of 'woman' and 'feminism' from her exploitative relationship to 'man'? In short, any (media) analysis from a feminist perspective should make the interests of sexuality visible as well.

Appendix: Originals of the extracts

Extract 1

Nyilvánvaló, hogy modern feminist bennünk fordulós alsótaga a modern feminist mozgalomról beszélünk. Inkább egy másik ideológia van, amely titkos, abszolútutóval, mint a marxizmus, az agyének, a buddhista éhség és a hinduista terápia, akár a hermetikus, és az a New Age. Az a radical feminist is, aki elhagyja a világ minden bűnét, ilyenformán megértelmezi a vaginokrácianévét — bocsánat neologizmusért —, mert szintén, mint a biológiai ideológia, egy öntéti filozófia diagnózisra és politikai egyeduralomra másnak. Mint a többi ideológia... a neofeminizmus is az Egyesült Államok társadalomának egyik bővülő, ugyanakkor groteszkterméke... Előbb minden elkövetve, hogy egyszerűen a jelenlétben van a leszboszissy és agyermekellen értesítési rendje... Akit az amerikai közönség, akik mindig készen állnak, hogy 'azabberrációttorvényesItték a 'család új megfogalmazásának 'hıklétek... Az osztály harcot nem h garo, deszosztály egyenlőség, sem nemi egyenlőség nincs. A feminist mozgalom két, akik megfélemlítik nőt, és egy másik nemi szintű kezelésre.

Extract 2

Orömmel hallom, hogy 'amagzatvédelmi hatásoként — az elmúlt otesztendő orvostudomány — az idegen átlagosan 20 percent-kal újrahatású változásokat jelentenek a villámok kiváltásához. Az első részben a gyógyszeres terápiák koncentrációja, a második részben a gyógyszeres terápiák koncentrációja kiváltó hatása kifinomult. A harmadik részben a gyógyszeres terápiák koncentrációja kiváltó hatása kifinomult. A harmadik részben a gyógyszeres terápiák koncentrációja kiváltó hatása kifinomult.
csökkent az abortuszok száma... Európai intézeti ösztöndíjjal hosszabb időt töltöttek Bécsben... Minden épszerű és egészséges férfi szereti a nőket, jómaga is természetesen, de ismert a férfinyugválgyás: olykor sem velekt, sem nélkülük nem boldogultunk. Gyorsan hozzájárult: szerintem akárhogyan is, de csak velük együtt, lehetőleg társat találva járhatjuk végig rövidre szabott földi utunkat... telve a város csicsás, drága butikokkal, ahol huszonéves, feltethetően érettségigizett hölgyek unatkoznak... Ők a nyugati üzletasszonyt utánoz önmagválásítók, csak éppen azt nem tudják, hogy ott szakértetően nélkül, felelesszéva be sem állhatnak a pult mögé... Egy merész gondolati ugrásal, ezeknek a hölgyeknek a viselkedése erősen emlékeztet engem az ötvenes évek Magyarországának 'egyenjogú' kalauznőire, traktorista és esztergalyos leánykáira, és asszonyaira... Természetes a 'babaszobát' hiányolom, az Ibsen megírta Nóra állapotot... hanem a nyugati mintára agresszíven onmegvalósítók és a szabadabb lékörben 'férfiasan' viselkedők gyakorisága ellen szököm. Tudom, örvedetlen az abortuszóvány, és ez segít az igyekvő nőkéreést... Hol vannak a férfiak, akik megkonnyíthatják a nók életét, hol van a társadalom gazdasági háttere, ahol nem a hétköznapi hajszában megfáradt asszonyok várják férjüket, társukat?

Extract 3

J: Az elmúlt negyven évben nemileg megváltozott a szemlélet, a korábban csupán a tüzhely körüli tüsténkedésre kárhoztatott hölgyek millióinak kinyílt a világ: anyáink traktorra pattanhattak, megragadhattak a malteros vödröt. A hagyományos társadalmi értékrend felborult, több százezernyi családi tiizhe1yben kihúnyt a parázs. De ml lesz most?... Hogyan viszonyulunk például a frissen megjelent rámenós női menedzserekhez, hol a helye a munkanélküli nők seregének, vagy hogy milyen legyen a megítélése a női szexuális felszabadultságán? Megalakult a Feminista Hálózat. Csak nem az egyik hajdani sôhivatal, a NOtanács szerepét kivánják átvenni?

A: Szó sincs róla, hoszen a hálózat eleve spontán szervez tet... mondja X Y, a feministák egyik szószólója.

J: Akkor talán nem arra kellene biztatni őket, hogy vállajanak férfi szerepet, hanem arra, hogy saját szerepüket játszák el. Mintha megvetéssel emlegetné könyvében a nemek közötti biológiai és levi különbségeket.

A: Problémám mindig abból adódik, amikor a biológiai különbségeket társadalmi különbségekékké alakítják. Tehát amikor azért, mert a nő kedves, nőies és megvan benne az empátia adottsága, alkalmas arra, hogy emberekkel foglalkozzan, hogy tanítson, ezeket a nagyszerű női tulajdonságokat a szavak szintjén elismerek, de az erkölcsi és anyagi megbecsülés tekintetében legalulra kerül az illető... Nagyon szeretem, ha a női és a nőiességével, képvisletele helyett csak milliók számára nem is érthető ideológiai háborút vívnak egymással a különböző pártok... Egy remezetközi felmérés szerint, amíg a nyugaton élő háziasszonyok két-három, addig egy kelet-európai hat-hét órát fordít naponka a háztartására.

J: Nem lenne egyszerűbb átvenni a... nyugati társadalom nők érdekét jobban respektáló szemléletét?

A: Egyáltalán nem biztos, hogy át kell venni az ott kialakult idealizált háziasszonyképet... Az egykeresés családmodellben az onthonmaradó háziasszony mindezt ingyen elvégezi, a gyáros mentesül a részben ráhátruló ilyen jellegű kiadásoktól. Nyugaton ennek már kialakult hagyományainak van, de nekünk nem feltétlenül kell belemennünk ebben a csapdába... Persze nem arról van szó, hogy a feministák elutasítanák a polgári családi értékekkel összefüggő elemeit, vagy súx és férfiellenesek lennének. De a megcsontosodott nőszemléletre le kell fűni a port, és nézzük meg, végül is mi kell nekünk nőknek... valódi igényeink szerint sok megoldás közül ki-ki maga választasson.

J: A világ női új-aértékelésének hol vannak a férfiak?

A: Természetesen férfiak nélkül a feministák nagyon magukra maradnának. Jó lenne, ha a férfiak a demokráciát nem csupán a politikai életben gyakorolnának, hanem rögtön otthon kezdenénk... Ha majd az agyonhajszolt, neurotikus, csapzott, a terhektől rosszakozó nők több levegőhöz jutnak, megbecsülôk őket... megváltozik körüttünk a világ. A derülése, önmagukkal és gyerekeikkel többet foglalkozik, ápoló asszonyok kellemesebb társai lehetnek a férfiaknak is, ami persze az ő életértékeket is javítja... Mára meggyőztem mindenki a maga első kis lépését ebben az irányban!

Extract 4

J: Akkor talán nem arra kellene biztatni őket, hogy vállaljanak férfi szerepet, hanem arra, hogy saját szerepüket játszák el. Mintha megvetéssel emlegetné könyvében a nemek közötti biológiai és levi különbségeket.

A: Az újártékelést nem annak felülvizsgálatával kellene kezdeni, hogy valóban gyengék, gyámolításra szorulók a nők? A férfiak átlag életkorra csaknem 10 évei kisebb... a hajléktalanok zöme is férfi.

A: A férfi korai elhalálozása sok egyéb mellet biológiai kérdés...

A politika mindezt csak fokozza, mert egyelőre valós érdekek
Erzsébet Barát

"Terrorist Feminist": Gate-Keeping Strategies

Aférfaferfiasságával, ez az életsavaborszagi... Ugyanakkor azért tartom, legyen egy nőben az OI ességesesség miatt tudásom mellett azokat aférfaferiakat, akik megéreznek ezen a területen, és segítségüknek otthonaháztartsuk a gyerekeket.

Extract 5

J: Abban van a méltányosabb, hogy azokat, aki a férfiak és a nők egyenlő jogokat kérek, akik megéreznek ezen a területen, segítségüknek otthonaháztartsuk a gyerekeket. Szeretném, ha ezzel együtt is eszemmel lennénk az ezen a területen lévő nők és a gyerekek jogainak.

Extract 6

Az Alkotmánybíróság kimondta, hogy az átjárás a megfelelőékében kell fejteni, ez pedig egyetlenellenzékre kereső úton. A férfiak és a nők egyenlő jogokat kérek, hogy azokat aférfaferiakat, akik megéreznek ezen a területen. Az ezen a területen lévő nők és a gyerekek jogainak megteremtése érdekében vagy az ezen a területen lévő nők és a gyerekek jogait megerősítése érdekében.

Notes

1. GRE is the certificate every school learner must take, the condition for a university entrance exam. It is the equivalent of the GRE in the American education system.

2. ELTE stands for 'Eotvos Loránt Tudományegyetem', Budapest (Eotvos Loránt University, Budapest).

3. NaNK stands for 'Nőkért Elnőkért',('Women Against Violence Against Women') a feminist NGO (the short form is also a pun, playing on the Hungarian discourse marker, 'Nene!' which, as a speech act, functions like a directive 'Come on! Don't do that.')

4. 'sisso' is the author's pen-name in the given magazine.