

**WOMEN IN POLITICS : A STUDY
OF AUNG SAN SUU KYI'S ROLE IN THE
DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT IN MYANMAR**

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C E R T I F I C A T E

Certified that the present dissertation on "**Women in Politics - A Study of Aung San Suu Kyi's Role in the Democratic Movement in Myanmar**", being submitted by **Ms. Rashmi** is worthy of consideration for the award of **M.Phil Degree** of Jawaharlal Nehru University. This is her own work and has not been published or presented for the award or any degree of this University or any other University in India.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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PREFACE

This dissertation intends to study women in political role, with a special reference to the role of Aung San Suu Kyi of Myanmar.

I dedicate this work of mine to my parents, who were always there for me.

At the very inception of this work, I would like to convey my thanks to a few people, without the help of whom, this dissertation would not have been possible.

First of all, I would like to express my indebtedness to Dr. Ganganath Jha, my supervisor. He was extremely forthcoming whether I needed reference material or mere psychological support. This dissertation would not have achieved the present form, had it not been for his constant help and guidance.

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Rashmi
(RASHMI)

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Since the early 1960's women's role in the process of development have been increasingly recognised and their contributions documented and analysed. But political scientists, particularly in the west, have been less willing to acknowledge women's extensive participation in political processes.

Women's political activities have, far too long, have been seen as marginal or non-existent. This view is reinforced by the relatively small number of women in position of power and leadership, particularly in the west.¹ The academicians in the past has been overplaying the issues of motherhood and 'feminine roles', thereby justifying their stand on a marginal role for women in politics. As a result, the western centered academic analysis of politics that has evolved ignores women and places them at the peripheries of the political processes.

In the third world also, women activities have been made invisible through a male dominated discipline of political theory as well as an earlier phase of feminism which had serious misconceptions about femininity, motherhood and

1. Haleh Afshar and Mary Maynard (ed.) Women and Politics in the Third World, University of York, UK, 1996, p.13.

the family.² Western feminism negates third world women's choices of paths of political activism which used the local prevalent ideologies and were often located within religious or maternal discourse.³

The Gender-related development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) introduced in the Human Development Report 1995, provides several conclusions, the most common thing being that women generally suffer on two counts - first, because the society as a whole is impoverished, and second, because they are women.⁴

The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) concentrates on participation, measuring gender inequality in key areas of economic and political participation and decision making.⁵

Political space has always been monopolised by men. Although women constitute half the electorate they hold only 10 per cent of parliament seats in the developing countries and 12 per cent in the industrial countries.⁶

Women are relatively better represented at local levels. In 46 countries women's representation in local governments, surpasses their representation in national parlia-

2. M. Barrett and M. MacIntosh, The Anti Social Family, London, 1982, p. 62.

3. K.Grieve, "Rethinking Feminist Attitude Towards Motherhood", Feminist Review, 25 March, 1984, pp. 38-45.

4. Human Development Report, 1996, p. 1.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

ment. In 1994, India reserved a third of panchayat seats to women. As a result, at least 800,000 women entered the local political pipeline. But some preliminary conditions have to be fulfilled for the purpose be served. The lesson of the freedom struggles all over the world is that the greater the participation of women in public affairs, at all levels - local, district, state, national or global, the greater is the share in power. However, the general tendency all over the globe is to send them back to the Barracs after the struggle is won and when entering the domains of power is to be decided. Hence as Prof. Drude Dahelrup⁷ propounds, unless women's presence in all decision making bodies become a 'critical mass' (atleast one-third), it cannot make any real impact. However, numbers alone do not make a critical mass but enough number with heightened consciousness and commitment can play a meaningful role in the developmental process.

Women's intellectual potential, often decisive electoral weight and capacity to act for change are still inadequately understood and turned to account. The interplay of the sociological factor and psychological resources in women is very important in shaping their participatory attitude in politics.

Politics has always been viewed as a male activity.

Men continue to believe that political activity is a mascu-

7. Prof. Drude Dahelrup... as quoted in B. Meena Rao and M. Vijaya Lakshmi. "Women and Development : Rhetoric and Reality", Mainstream, Vol. 35, no. 14, March 15, 1997, pp. 25-27.

line prerogative. The old theory of female incapacity has been replaced by a 'functional theory about the division of aptitude which is necessarily reflected in this division between men and women.⁸ In its modernised form this kind of 'functional' theory recognises the right of women to work outside the home and to participate in civic and political affairs, yet emphasizes their special concern with 'home policy' matters, i.e. motherhood and its problem, education and the family. Women's political activity, is therefore, more often than not, channeled into these areas of activity.

Fortunately, the world has witnessed great changes in perceptions on the gender issue over the last two decades. Age old prejudices and gender based inequality are giving way and we are finally drawing closer to our cherished goal of gender equality, harmonious development and lasting peace.

Women, no longer want to remain peripheral actor and want to play their rightful role in all sphere of life including economic and political life.

WOMEN IN MODERN MYANMAR : SOCIAL STATUS & POLITICAL DILEMMAS

Myanmar, situated in the Southeast Asian sub-tropical region between Thailand and Bangladesh, is one of the world's most withdrawn and least industrialised countries

8. Snehlata Panda, Determinants of political participation : Women and Public Activity, Ajanta Publications, New Delhi, 1990, p. 7.

governed as a British colony until 1947, independent Myanmar has become progressively more isolated, particularly following the military's assumption of state power in a 1962 coup. Successive military governments have suppressed foreign cultural influences and resisted integration into the world economy, while communist and ethnic insurgencies in Burma's border areas have snapped the nation's financial resources and contributed to the central government's increasing authoritarianism. In the words of Mya Maung⁹, Burmese socio-political and economic development can be characterized by "a monotonically declining trend towards regression and stagnation".

In this repressive and undeveloped country, however, Burmese customary laws, Buddhist values, and the national constitution create a framework of gender egalitarianism. In practice, women have achieved positions of social and economic prominence. Women enjoy nearly equal representation in higher educational institutions and in the medical profession, are very active in the trades, and are widely acknowledged to wield considerable social influence.¹⁰ At the same time, women are not permitted to participate in the active armed forces, and they occupy few senior level government posts.

9. Mya Maung, "The Burma Road from the Union of Burma to Myanmar", Asian Survey, (Vol. 30), 1990, p. 602-624.

10. Mi Mi Khaing, The World of Burmese Women, London. zed 1984, p.41.

WOMEN & DEVELOPMENT:

Feminist scholarship on women, development, and the state has brought in question the fundamental assumptions of conventional approaches to development.¹¹ Development planning held the implicit assumption that women's status improved as industrialisation progressed. Moreover, modernization and dependency theories assumed that industrialisation and modernization brought progress to both men and women.¹² However, the increasing exploitation and low standard of living of most third world women challenge the premises of these theories.

Women have been differently affected by development programmes, and often their status is marginalised and subordinated while men's improves.¹³ Militarization of the state provides the clearest example of the state as a male dominant culture with male oriented ideologies. These ideologies play a crucial role in the social contribution of gender relations, and in the process of women's subordina-

11. Sue Ellen M. Charlton, Sana Everett & Kathlees, Women, the State and Development, Ed., Albany : State University of New York Press, 1989, p. 131.

12. Lynne Brydon & Sylvia Chant, "Women in the Third World, New Brunswick, NJ : Rutgers University, 1989, p. 72.

13. Haleh Afshar : 'Women, Development and Survival in the Third World' Longman, London, 1991, p. 102.

tion.¹⁴

Southeast Asian employment rates for women in both urban and rural areas are high unlike other parts of the third world.¹⁵ In some Southeast Asian societies, traditional kinship structures have enabled women to have their own business, to work independently of men, and to have a substantive amount of control over family financial resources¹⁶. The issue for these societies, as they develop and industrialise is how to maintain rather than, achieve women's equality¹⁷. Moreover, respected Burmese women scholars remarked, prior to the imposition of marital law in 1988, that Burmese women already enjoy equal status, and there is no need for a women's movement¹⁸

The sexual equality by Burmese women may be due, in part, to the absence of modern industrialised organizations. In the West, these organizations served the interests of their shareholder and managers, who were male. Western scholars acknowledge that managerialism has a male-centered

14. Bina Agarwal : Structures of Patriarchy (Ed), Zed Books, London, 1988, p. 47.

15. Synne Brydon and Sylvia Chant, op.cit., p. 97

16. Virginia R. Crockett : " women in management in Indonesia", in Nancy J. Adder and Dafna. N.Izraeli (ed.) women in management world wide, Armonk, New York, 1988, p.76

17. Wazir-Jahan Karim : "Research on women in South east Asia : Current and future direction" in Aurna Rao (ed.) women's studies International : Nairobi and beyond, New York, Feminist Press, 1991, p.142.

18. Mi Mi Khaing, The world of Burmese women, zed, London, 1984, p.52.

ideology with values and behavioral standards that are patriarchal.¹⁹ Managerialism and its inherent characteristics of a hierarchy of authority, impersonal relationships, and a family-work dichotomy, hinder women's opportunities for organizational mobility and career advancement.

The absence of large-scale private capital investment and industrial development after Burmese independence meant that managerial patriarchy, for the most part, was common place in government institutions that were shaped by the British colonial administration,²⁰ and in the Burmese military. Adherence to Burmese style bureaucratic socialism and the shunning of patriarchal capitalism under General Ne Win's military rule from 1962 to 1988 isolated Burma from the managerial influences which have proven deleterious to women workers in industrializing southeast Asian economies.

Myanmar represents a unique situation in the Southeast Asian experience because of continuing military dictatorship and its inherent patriarchal ideology and the absence of democratic and industrializing processes. Burmese militaristic socialism, which permeates the economy and polity, impedes women's economic advancement in urban areas particularly, and threatens their former egalitarian social and economic status.

19. Jeff Hearn, Deborah Sheppard, Peta Janerred Sheriff & Gibson-Burrell, The Sexuality of organisation (Eds.), sage, London 1989. p.21

20. Lucian Pye : Politics, personality, and Nation Building. New Haven, Yale University, 1962., p. 72.

The Cultural Context of Gender Relations:

When compared to India, there is striking difference of status of women in India and Myanmar. Whereas in India an explicit male preference subordinated women within the family and in other social situations, Burmese women appeared to enjoy relative equality with men.²¹ The origins of customs sustaining what seemed to be an unusual equality between the sexes can be found in the 'Dhammathats', a series of ancient texts which describe the common law that governed the Burmese people during the centuries prior to the imposition of British colonial rule.

The Dhammathats are a major source of modern day customary law, also called Burmese Buddhist Law. Following the introduction of British legal authority, customary law gradually came to be confined to family and religious affairs.²² However, the Dhammathat codes relating to Marriage inheritance, and property rights have remained significant until the present time. In them, men and women enjoy equal rights in private as well as public affairs.

Marriage, for example, is recognised as a civil, as opposed to a religious contract, wherein wife and husband are on equal footing. Mutual consent of both partners is necessary for any marriage to take place; a family cannot force a

21. Melford. E. Spiro: Kinship and Marriage in Burma University of California, Berkeley, 1977, p. 43.

22. Maung Maung; "Law and custom in Burma and the Burmese family", Martinus Nijhoff, the Hague, 1963. pp. 72-73.

daughter into marriage against her will.

Private property, such as land and residence dwellings, is jointly owned by husband and wife. Both spouses' signatures are required to verify property transactions under common law. In the event of one partner's death, the surviving spouse inherits the property. Daughters and sons have equal claims to the inheritance. Divorce is obtained through mutual consent, after which property is divided equally between the former spouses. No law prohibits an individual from remarrying in the event of a spouse's death.

During the colonial period, special laws were promulgated to protect the rights of Burmese women who married foreign men. In many instances, men from male dominant cultures, such as India, demanded that their indigenous social and religious practices be respected when they married in Burma. Eventually Burmese laws were written to define the rights of men and women who were of different religions. These laws, such as the Buddhist "Women's Special Marriage and Succession Act of 1940", protected Burmese Buddhist women's equal rights when they married non-Buddhist men.²³ These laws are significant in that they evidence Burmese cultural resistance to the imposition of non-egalitarian gender practices.

However, an egalitarian social ethos, formalised by Burmese customary law, has co-existed with a belief in the

23. Maung Maung: Law and custom in Burma and the Burmese family, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hauge, 1963, p.88.

innate superiority of males. This derives in large part from Burmese Buddhism, which affirms that men alone can be monks who are capable of attaining Buddhahood. All young men become novice monks for a short period, and monks play a prominent role in the lives of every Burman. Men are believed to be in exclusive possession of 'hpon', which Spiro²⁴ deems "an ineffable spiritual entity", or charisma, which causes men to be intellectually, morally, and spiritually superior to women.

Respect for a man's 'hpon' has traditionally demanded deferential behaviour on the part of women toward their husbands. For example, in order not to offend or dishonour the 'hpon', women must lie on the man's left side in bed because his 'hpon' is on the right side²⁵ There are some sections of the Dhammathats that address women's behaviour : All men must be wary of the forty "blandishments", or wiles of women, while female improprieties, such as eating before a husband and entering into property transaction without his knowledge, deserve-punishment or chastisement.²⁶ Furthermore, it is customary for women to cook and serve their husband's

24. Melford E. Spiro : "Motivational ground for internalizing an ideology of male superiority : The Burmese Case", Journal of Psychoanalytic Anthropology', 1991, pp. 533-546.

25. Mi Mi Khaing : 'The World of Burmese Women', Zed, London, 1984, p. 111.

26. Maung Maung : 'Law and Custom in Burma and the Burmese Family', Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1963, p. 89.

food, to wash their clothes, and to obey their commands.²⁷

However, the Dhammathat prescriptions of appropriate female behaviour have become "obsoletes with the passage of time and the changes that society has undergone"²⁸ Yet, a Burmese scholar living in the West notes that the behavioural prescriptions still affect the psyche and the actions.²⁹

Based on his research, Melford Spiro³⁰ writes that it is generally the wife, not the husband, who acts as the dominant partner in a Burmese marriage. Family budgets are managed by the seniormost woman : Income earned by family members, often of several generations, is pooled, and then appropriated by her for each of the different household expenditures. Because wives exercise exclusive jurisdiction over family financial resources, husband must request an allocation of spending money from them-women exert a controlling influence on other aspects of their husbands behaviour, such as friendships, work, and leisure activities.

Anthropologist Geoffrey Gorer, Community on the strange balance of symbolism and power in the Burmese family, concluded that, "the dominant women act as though they were subservient ... and the henpecked passive men talk and strut and pose as though they were really in control, consulting

27. Melford. E. Spiro : 1991, opcit, p. 539.

28. Maung Maung, Ibid, 1963, opicit, p. 92.

29. Maureen Aung Thwin : "Burma Ms", Foreign Affairs, July-Aug., 1991, pp. 18-21.

30. Melford. E. Spiro, 1991, opicit, p. 540.

their wives surreptitiously, but announcing the decisions as if they were their own"³¹

What this suggests is that an ideology of male superiority, evidenced by the belief in 'hpon', requires differential behaviour for women, and men's exclusive potential for monkhood has had a minimal effect on the perception of women as workers or household leaders. Universal acceptance of women's equal or greater roles and responsibilities within the family has co-existed with a respect for women as competent political and economic participants.

Women's Political Participation:

In ancient and modern history, Burman and ethnic minority women have exercised a significant influence in public affairs. A few, either formally as queen or informally as wives, held considerable political power during the precolonial period.³² In the colonial era, Burmese women held important positions in the Rangoon city Corporation and the legislative council³³. Women were involved in the political agitation against the British and were prominent in the nationalist movement. In 1922, the Britain granted men and women in British Burma the right to vote.

31. Cited in Lurcian Pye : Politics, Personality, and Nation Building, Yale University, New Haven, 1962. p.74

32. Daw Mya Sein : "The Woman of Burma" , The Atlantic Monthly, 201(2), 1958, p. 122.

33. Joseph Silvestein : 'Aung San Suu Kyi : Is She Burma's woman of destiny?' Asian Survey, Vol. 30 , 30(1), 1990, p. 101.

Burmese women held their first formal demonstration against sex discrimination in 1927. In 1929, a woman was elected to the national legislature for the first time, and in the late 1950s, there were six women members of parliament.³⁴ Daw Mya Sein, who emerged as a national leader in the 1930s, is an example of a prominent Burmese woman who advocated that gender-related egalitarian customary practices be written into modern legal documents. Appointed as a delegate to the League of Nations and to the London Round table Conference in 1930 to discuss relations between the British and the Burmese, Daw Mya Sein has been described as "an unusual woman who symbolizes the Burmese tradition of female independence".³⁵ Women were influential in the formulation of Burma's first national constitution drafted in 1947. Constitutional guarantees of sexual equality included the prohibition of discrimination, equal opportunities for men and women in employment and in occupations, a requirement of equal pay for equal work, and universal franchise and political candidacy.³⁶

Following Bogyoke Aung San's assassination in 1947, his widow Daw Khin Kyi, who is also Aung San Suu Kyi's mother was named Ambassador to India. She was the first woman to hold such an important diplomatic position, yet other women

34. Daw Mya Sein, 1958, op cit, p.122..

35. Daw Mya Sein : "Towards Independence in Burma : The role of women", Asian Affairs, 59, Part 3, 1972, p. 289.

36. Mya Mya Thein : "Women Scientists and Engineers in Burma", Impact of Science on Society, 30(1), 1980, p.16.

have followed suit. In 1953, Prime Minister U Nu appointed Mrs. Ba Maung Chien to his cabinet, the first and only woman to ascend to this rank, although she later broke with U Nu to direct an opposition party in her native Karen State.³⁷ During the 1960s and 70s, under the socialist military government headed by general Ne Win, 9 women in 1974 and 13 in 1978 were elected to parliament.³⁸

Army major and medical doctor Sanda win, Ne Win's daughter, is widely known as the woman responsible for directing massacres of students and atrocities during the 1988 demonstration. She reportedly wields considerable influence over General Khin Nyunt, the most powerful member of the state Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) and most feared man in the country.³⁹

On the otherside of the political spectrum, women constituted about 10 percent of the National League for Democracy (NLD) candidates in the 1990 democratic election. The NLD won 80 percent of the 4 seats in the legislature, although they were never seated since the ruling SLORC refused to honour the election results.⁴⁰ Many women were among those arrested and jailed, following the 1990 elec-

37. Joseph Silverstein : "Aung San Suu Kyi : Is She Burma's Woman of Destiny?", Asian Survey, Vol. 30, 30(1), 1990, p. 270.

38. Ibid., p. 270.

39. Mya Maung : "The Burma Road from the Union of Burma to Myanmar", Asian Survey, 30, 1990, p. 603.

40. James Guyot, "Myanmar in 1990 : The unconsummated Election", Asian Survey, 21, 1991, p. 210.

tion, including Aug San Suu Kyi, the leader of the NLD.

Women's Economic Participation:

Burma is primarily an agricultural economy. Although lack of capital improvement in rural areas and fixed state prices for crops has barred migration to urban areas. Urban growth, however, has not been accompanied by an increase in urban work opportunities. Many Burmese living in the cities are unemployed, while tens of thousands have emigrated.⁴¹ carious, for women as well as men. Indeed, for what employment statistics are available, it seems that women have shared in a limited economic pie with men in the non-agricultural sector.

In 1983, the year of the last official census, total labour force participation (both sexes included) was 36 per cent. Forty six per cent of males age 10 and over were formally employed, compared to 26% of females.⁴² The difference between the labour force participation rate of men and women is most likely attributable to many women working in the home and as participants in the informal economy.

Thirty eight per cent of employed women and 34 per cent of employed men worked in the non-agricultural sector. A higher percentage of employed women (13%) than men (7%) held manufacturing jobs; a similar trend was found in the trades where formal positions were held by 18% and 8% of employed

41. David Steinberg : The Future of Burma, University Press of America, Landon, 1990, p.11

42. S. Gunasekaran & Mya Than : "Population Change in Burma : A Comparison of the 1973 and 1983 Census", Sojourn, 3, 1988, p.173.

women and men respectively.⁴³

Other occupation data from 1983, indicate that a slightly higher percentage of employed women (2.8) than men (2.2) were sengaged in professional and technical occupation.⁴⁴

Although women are well represented in the professions, they have not attained parity with men at higher level of decision making. According to 1983 census, substantially most employed men (0.5%) than women (0.1%) held administrative and managerial positions⁴⁵.

Military and party officials, who are all men dominate the higher level positions is the state controlled bureaucrics.⁴⁶

Burmese women have enjoyed relatively more upward mobility in higher educational institution. According to several female academics, are discrimination in hiring and in wages has been practically non-existent.⁴⁷

Official Statistics do not account for women's participation in the informal economic sector, which has grown increasingly important as the formal economy has stagnated. It is estimated that this informal sector may account for as

43. Ibid., p.173.

44. Ibid., 174.

45. Ibid., 176

46. David Steinberg, 1990, op cit, p.16.

47. Mya Mya Thein : "Women Scientists and Engineers in Burma", Impact of Sciences on Society, 30(1), 1980, p. 18.

much as 80 percent of the economy.⁴⁸ Women have historically played prominent roles as village commercial traders and are prevalent in both rural and urban market areas selling produce, freshly cooked foods, and many other items. Women are very active in the Burmese black market, whereby goods are smuggled in from neighboring countries for sale to the Burmese public. Estimates prior to the 1988 revolt put smuggling at five times the level of official trade.⁴⁹ The government tends to overlook black market activities, which provides essential service the formal economy cannot.

Hence, women's active economic participation is essential in enabling Burmese urban families to survive.

The Effect of Military Rule:

Military rule has had a particularly deleterious effect on women in Myanmar. Following the 1962 coup, the State progressively closed all avenues to social mobility and economic success except for military service.⁵⁰ Large private businesses, many of which were owned and managed by women, were nationalised. Military and civil service officials were appointed as managers, displacing women from

48. Maureen Aung Thwin : "Burmese Days", Foreign Affairs, 68, 1989, p. 147

49. Peter John Perry : "Military Rule in Burma : A Geographical Analysis", Crime, Law and Social Change, 19, 1993, p.30.

50. David Steinberg, 1990 op cit, p.21.

their former roles as senior managers and business owners.⁵¹
0Since it is impossible for women to ascend to senior-level military positions, they can no longer exercise political and organizational influence through state-controlled institutions. And while men may make a decision to enter or to avoid military serviced, women are not afforded the same choice.

Furthermore, the civil restrictions imposed by military leaders have precluded the development of advocacy or other interest groups capable of educating the government and the general public about women's issues. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that address women's concerns, prevalent in many developing countries; are absent in Burma. Among Burma's ethnic minorities in the highlands and border areas, however, women are active participants in both insurgency operations and in women's advocacy organizations.⁵²

The SLORC has also imposed contradictory productive and reproductive policies on Burmese citizenry, producing a negative effect on women. Burma lacks a national family planning programme, and the government's pro-natalist policy has encouraged large families and child spacing. Abortion is not legal except in medical emergencies, a category that

51. Emma Nyun Han : The Socio-Political Roles of Women in Japan and Burma?, University of Colorado, Boulder, 1972, p. 34.

52. Pippa Curwen : "The Kawthoolei Women's Organization", Cultural Survival Quarterly, 13(4), 1989, pp. 32-33.

daughter into marriage against her will excludes rape.⁵³

The absence of a well-developed health services infrastructure, particularly in the rural areas, a lack of health service personnel able to educate people about sexually transmitted disease and contraception, and unavailability of contraceptives will make it difficult to control population growth as well as to contain a burgeoning AIDS epidemic. These factors all contribute to constraining women's economic opportunities and limiting their career options by necessitating their attention to family health and domestic matters.⁵⁴

During 1993, the SLORC made some attempts to liberalize Burma's economic atmosphere. However, it has led to potentially damaging effect of foreign cultural and economic inundation to Burmese women, long revered for their modesty and conservatism.

Thus, we see that Burmese women and men have historically enjoyed a relative parity in social relations and in economic roles. This is due in large part to an egalitarian social ethos derived from Buddhist principles and a set of traditional customary laws premised on gender parity. The country's lack of industrialization and absence of managerial capitalist institutions with traditionally male dominant ideologies, may have preserved women's high status in

53. Janet Momsen : Women and Development in the Third World, Routledge, London, 1991, p. 11.

54. Ibid, p.14.

economic sectors that were outside the military's former purview. However, bureaucratic, governmental organisations are not exempt from the ideology of particularly.⁵⁵

High rates of literacy and educational levels have maintained women's competence in professional i.e. economic positions. What impedes women's further economic and organizational advancement, is military control of state apparatus and of the services sector, the political process, and the economy.

State authoritarianism and repression prevent the development of interest groups concerned with women's affairs, as well as the active lobbying of the government to implement policies benefiting women.⁵⁶

The experiences of other militarized and state-directed south-east Asian economies, hold many lessons for Myanmar. The absence of women's interest groups, which during the colonial era, encouraged the promulgation of equal rights legislation at independence, may ease the manipulation and exploitation of working women as Myanmar leaders open the country to foreign capital.⁵⁷ Since the Burmese military are in firm control and appear unwilling to relinquish power, we can expect that their influence on country's economic and

55. Bina Aggarwal, Structures of Patriarchy (ed), Zed Books, London, 1988, p. 16.

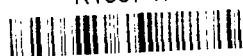
56. Jonathan Friedland and Bertil Lintner : 'A Policy of Pillage', Far Eastern Economic Review, Aug, 1991, pp. 56-58.

57. Noeleen Heyzer : Working Women in South-east Asia, Open University Press, Milton Heyres, England, 1986, p. 181.

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political organization and its overall development, will persist.

The most powerful non-military political figure in Myanmar is Aung San Suu Kyi. She is 50 year old leader of the struggle for human rights and democracy in Myanmar. She is the daughter of Burma's national hero, Aung San, who was assassinated when she was two years old, just before Burma achieved independence to which he had dedicated his life.

Educated at Rangoon, Delhi and at Oxford University, Aung San Suu Kyi then worked at United Nations in New York and in Bhutan, where his husband was also researching. For most of the following twenty years she was occupied raising a family in England, her husband being a British, before returning to Burma in 1986 to care for his dying mother.⁵⁸

Her return coincided with the outbreak of a spontaneous revolt against 26 years of political repression and economic declines. Aung San Suu Kyi, quickly emerged as the most effective and articulate leader of the movement.

How does one account for her meteoric rise and continued popularity in a country where the military has dominated all aspects of life for the past many years and where no women in modern times has even been seriously considered for national leadership? Is she destined to wear the mantle of leadership that her assassinated father

58. Aung San Suu Kyi : Freedom from Fear , Edited by Michael Aris, Penguin Books, New Delhi, 1991.

dropped more than 45 years ago, or is she a fleeting phenomenon?

A solemn and special session of the European Parliament of twelve countries meeting at strasbourg on 19th July 1991, awarded Aung San Suu Kyi, the 1990 Sakharov prize for freedom of thought. The President of Parliament said that he was awarding this prize to a brave Asian, a women whose name has been synonymous with the non-violent struggle for freedom and democracy.⁵⁹

On 14th October, 1991, Aung San Suu Kyi was awarded the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize. The Norwegian Nobel Committee in awarding the Nobel Peace Prize for 1991 to Aung San Suu Kyi, wished to honor this woman for her unflagging efforts and to show its support for the many people throughout the world who are striving to attain democracy, human right and ethnic conciliation by peaceful means.⁶⁰

In 1995, India awarded Aung San Suu Kyi with 'Nehru Peace Award' for her non-violent struggle for democracy in Myanmar.

In the face of three international award, she seems to be the undisputed leader of the democratic movement in Myanmar. Her role in the democratic movement is crucial for the people of Myanmar.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

CHAPTER II

DETERMINANTS OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION : WOMEN AND PUBLIC ACTIVITY

Political behaviour is an outcome of an individual's total personality and the political opinion reflects the characteristic modes of adjustment to life. The external social environment provides the stimuli. An individual responds to such stimuli but the political behaviour is an outcome of total personality.¹

Political scientists have investigated in the course of their studies, the sources, distribution and effects of psychological characteristics like efficiency, trust and interests. These characteristics serve as motivation for participation.² They keep in understanding personality traits which induce interests on disinterest towards political participation. These traits develop as a result of participation in democratic institutions.³

Political rights conferred by democratic systems serve as opportunities for the citizen to participate. However, opportunities provided by the system may not enable all the

1. Harold Lasswell : Power and Personality, Viking, New York, 1962, pp. 152-154.

2. Ibid, p. 154.

3. Ibid, p.154.

groups to participate at the same level.⁴ Interest in politics is created through the socialization process. This is evident from the relation between gender and political interest.⁵ The socialization process conforming to cultural norms continue to create interest in politics or inhibit interest. Culture may be permissive in some aspect and restrictive in some other aspects.⁶ Female roles are traditionally defined to be home oriented along which the learning process develops. Interest is, therefore, created in house keeping activities. However, there are women, who have overcome the restrictions without ever internalising 'masculine' or 'feminine' characteristics.⁷ For them, involvement in political activity never posed as a cultural constraint, because they choose to interpret cultural norms differently. Hence, the distinction between public or private spheres of activity is never internalised by women who have involved themselves in political discussions, campaigning or contesting elections.⁸

Therefore, the most important factor is the psychological orientation which creates interest for an involvement in

4. Martin S. Lipset : Political Man : The Social Bases of Politics; Peffer and Simon Inc, New York, 1960, p. 146.

5. Ibid, p.146.

6. Almond and Verba, "The Civic Culture", Little Brown, Boston, 1965, p. 252.

7. Vijay Agnew : 'Elite Women in Indian Politics, Vikas Publishing House, Delhi, 1979, p. 182.

8. Ibid, p.183.

politics.

Political beliefs and attitudes are nurtured by continuous learning. Beliefs are defined as "cognitions with an extra feeling of credibility and attitudes are cognitions with feeling of either attraction or repulsion attached."⁹ Beliefs and attitudes are shaped by (1) personality needs and drives (2) cognitive learning; and (3) learning which comes from behaving and then reward or punishment from that behaviour.¹⁰ To some extent heredity influences behaviour. But personality needs and drives leads to specific political orientations. The effect of environment is received by personality which may reinforce behaviour or change the environment.¹¹ An actor can move from one setting to another and thereby alter his stimulus complex.¹²

Psychological orientations serve as the most important resource for participation.

Orientation are not explicitly political; they include religious or ethical values, and are perceived among a majority of people where democratic institutions are absent or interpersonal relations have a predominance over the governmental institutions.¹³ Therefore, basing on the psy-

9. Almond and Verba, "1965, op cit, p.254.

10. Ibid, p.254.

11. Ibid, p.256.

12. Ibid, p.255.

13. George Simmel : Conflict and the Web of Group Appreciation, Wolff and Reinhard Bendix, New York, 1975, p.15.

chological Orientation towards politics, citizen may be categorised as (1) active; (2) supportive; and (3) non-political.¹⁴ It is, however, not true that these orientations are unchangeable or are not overlapping. People may be active in some sphere of politics and supportive and non-political in others.¹⁵

The level of psychological involvement determines the political attitude of a person. Political activity, ranging from apathetic to gladiatorial, is determined by the attitude and belief of a person which are neither negative nor positive. Person with intense psychological involvement in politics participate in political activities like campaigning, community activates and protest. Person with lesser interest participate in voting and contact activities. Individual lacking interest or with negative attitude to politics remains indifferent. Psychological involvement is, however, not constant as it may increase or decrease under a given environmental stimuli.¹⁶ For example during times of intense national uprising, interest in political activity is witnessed among a large section of the people which decreases when it subsides. Gender differences in the extent and nature of political participation is however balantanthy

14. Ibid, p.16.

15. Ibid, p.16.

16. H.N. Srinivas : "Changing Position of Indian Women", Thomas Huxley Memorial Structure, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1978.

evident in the field of politics.¹⁷

(i) Socialisation, Role Orientation and Psychological Involvement in Politics:

The conception of politics may broadly be categorised into two. One, politics, is an arena where self-interested competing individuals with a desire to control offices remain in power, the other concept has a moralistic tinge as it views politics primarily as a means for coming to grips with the issues and concerns of civic society, it also embraces the notion that politics is ideally a matter of concern for every citizen, not just for those who are professionally committed to participate in the political affairs of the community¹⁸. Most of the people have multiple values; they love their families, value the good opinion of others, want to make a good living, seek to understand the world around them; desire to control the circumstances of their environment and social life. People, however, resist acknowledging their preoccupation with some values, especially whenever these preoccupations do not coincide with the dominant cultural norms.¹⁹ The value priorities or intense predisposition which dominate one's life lead one to choose one course of action rather than another, to see events in one way rather than another. Therefore, personal

17. J. Norh : "Women in Development. Dependency and Exploitation", Development and Change, 8(2), April, 1983, p.24.

18. Almond and Verba, 1965, op cit, p.142.

19. Ibid, p.145.

values are strong determinant of citizen involvement in politics.²⁰

Socialisation in the family in the process of growing up is learning the framework of adult perspectives and behaviour. Attitudes of inclusiveness and exclusiveness learned in the family develop and become the foundation for identification with the community, party, state and nation.²¹ A child growing up in a family that is occupied with personal affairs, distrustful of the external world, hostile to all who are different, interested in large and remote, more abstract questions of community well being, is unlikely to identify with an inclusive group such as party or community problems and issues, unlikely to become involved in community affairs.²² Frames of attention, habits of concern, pattern of identification and involvement are known to be inculcated during the process of socialization²³. A sense of political efficacy comes easily to a child who has grown up among adults who speak and act as though they thought it possible to influence public events. During childhood family serves as a model²⁴. But group and political contacts, educational and societal institutions exert immense influence on adult

20. Ibid, p.146.

21. Gennings and Neimi : Generation and Politics, Princeton University Press, NJ, 1982, p.92.

22. Ibid, p.93.

23. Almond and Verba, 1965, op cit, p.23.

24. Ibid, p.23.

socialisation. A sense of self-confidence develops through participation in extra-curricular activities²⁵. Their achievements orientation are reinforced through participation in such activities. Later involvement in public activity is a development of such traits²⁶.

Role Orientations are the kind of behaviour which the political activities expect and exhibit in the performance of their political roles²⁷. Democratic leaders display the consideration, reciprocity, friendliness that characterise successful legislators. Almost all political leader have the desire to influence and become leaders. Therefore, role orientations are dependent on the personal factors like ability, knowledge, hardwork, dissent and other contributions to the party²⁸.

Psychological Involvement and Orientations serve as the most important resource for participation. The different approaches to theories of democratic participation suggest that these orientations as, understood in part, are demonstrations of the significance of politics and participation in politics²⁹. These orientations shape various cultures in which participation is in part seen as a duty, a source of

25. Ibid, p.24.

26. Ibid, p.24.

27. Robert Lane, Political Life, Free Press, New York, 1959, p.43.

28. Ibid, p.44.

29. Harold Laswell, Power and Personality, Viking, New York, 1962, p.49.

support, merely a sign of acquiescence, or attempt by people to use the government as a means to achieve their ends³⁰.

Women constitute more or less, half of the citizen in any century, yet their involvement is not as intense and wide as that of men.³¹ The reason may be sought in the societal environment which restricts women to come out of their private sphere and participate in public life³². The interplay of the sociological factors and psychological resources in women is very important in shaping their participatory attitude in politics³³. Some of these factors discussed below to understand why women have lower activity than men:

(a) Interest in Politics: One of the universal observations on low rate of women's participation in politics is their lack of interest in public affairs in general and politics in particular. The answer to these differences may be sought in the socialisation of children. Role stereotype socialisation of women creates more interest in the domestic sphere and less in the public sphere.³⁴ But childhood socialisation may undergo change under the impact of advanced

30. Ibid, p.50.

31. Verba, Nie and Kim : Participation and Political Equality, Holt Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1968, p.9.

32. Ibid, p.9.

33. Sapiro : Political Integration of Women, Harvard University Press, USA, 1975, p.72.

34. J.Maralek : Women and Sex Roles, Penguin Book Ltd., Harmondsworth, 1984, p.19.

education and exposure.³⁵ At the pre-adult and adult stages the influence of parents decreases. The internalisation of values at this stage may create participatory attitude if such an attitude is not already internalised in childhood³⁶.

(b) Political Awareness: An understanding of politics creates knowledge about the public events which in turn creates interest in politics. Political awareness too is internalised during childhood socialisation. But in role stereotyped socialisation where women are little encouraged to understand politics, the degree of awareness is low³⁷. Biological roles place constraints on political resources and also on political understanding. Educated women, with larger social interaction have greater awareness.³⁸ However, an important and interesting thing to be noted is that education and political education have no co-relation as such. It is possible that highly educated women do not have an interest in political knowledge, on the other hand, lesser educated women having high social relation and outside work have more political information and understanding³⁹.

35. Barbara Miller Soleman : In the Company of Educated Women, Asia Books, New Delhi, 1987, p.109.

36. Almond and Verba, 1965, op. cit, p.25.

37. Ibid, p.27.

38. Gayle Graham Yales : What Women Want, Harvard University Press, USA, 1975, p.61.

39. Ibid, p.65.

(c) Political Efficacy and Participation: An understanding of the political system serves as a pre-requisite for political involvement. But knowledge of the political events alone does not lead to involvement. It is the person's subjective political competence that leads to effective participation. A sense of political efficiency is an important aspect of a person's political personality. People with low levels of efficiency cannot effectively involve themselves in politics. Studies in gender and efficacy reveal that women have low level of efficacy compared to men.⁴⁰ Women who believe in the traditional role of women and invest their psychic and physical energy in domestic work are the most likely to be faced with middle age depression and crisis in self confidence⁴¹. Almond and Verba state men are more likely than women to feel that they can cope with the complications of politics and believe that their participation creates weight in the political process.⁴² This idea has become the conventional wisdom on women and politics. The political self of women lacks a favourable environment to develop due to the role stereotyped socialisation⁴³. Also, certain other factors like motherhood, marriage, privatisation, domestic work, etc., compose

40. Edward N. Muller : Aggressive Political Participation, University Press, Princeton, 1979, p.101.

41. Ann Oakley : House Wife, Allen Lane, London, 1974, p.36.

42. Almond and Verba, 1965, op. cit, p.82.

43. Ibid, p.83.

an additional set of deterrent in the development of the political self, besides external factors like education, participation, communication, pol. knowledge etc.⁴⁴

(ii) Impact of Education on Personality:

Educational institutions - education serve as the most important agent of socialisation.⁴⁵ It helps students in developing initiative, independent thought and judgement. The more opportunity given in the educational institutions to express independent judgement, the more a student develops self-directed orientation which help him/her later in life when he/she assumes responsibility as an official or a community leader.⁴⁶ The objective of education is building up of strong characters with a capacity for rational judgement and perception. We therefore see that the educational system has an important bearing on the personality of the political activists which links the independent choice and orientations with the roles that a person discharges later in life.⁴⁷

The main postulates with regard to education are; education creates consciousness which leads to the coming up of a separate group of people with distinct interests,

44. Ibid, p.84.

45. Ibid, p.92.

46. Miller, "Educational Self Direction and the cognitive functioning of the student", Social Forces, 63 (2), Jan., 1982 p.925.

47. Melvin.H Kohn and Schooler Carhne : "class, Occupation and Orientation", American sociological Review, 1969, p. 670.

values, life styles and behaviour.⁴⁸ Education changes one's interest leading to creation of a group with separate identity⁴⁹. The second assumption is education in some cases leads to acquisition of more knowledge through reading, discussion and exposure" ⁵⁰. Thirdly, education affects non-violent attitude. Higher education results in lower support for violent action in certain issues. The fourth assumption is, educated people are politically aware, have greater exposure and exercise the freedom to express with greater responsibility⁵¹. In a study by lipset⁵², he found that educated people have a greater degree of tolerance..ls1

III Formal and Non-formal Political Partical Participation: Women's Attitude and Orientation : A Comparative Analysis:

The concept of participation variously refers to psychological involvement, communication, activity, office holding or membership in political organisation, attempts to exercise power, etc.⁵³ Conceived in this sense the approach to political participation will be two-fold i.e. one, formal and the other non-formal.⁵⁴ The former would include activi

48. Talcot Parsons, "the School class as a social system", Harvard Educational Review, 1959 (21), p. 299.

49. *ibid*, p.299.

50. *ibid*, p.300.

51. *ibid*, p.300.

52. Martin. S. Lipset: the Political Man ; The social bases of politics, Peffer and Semen Inc, New York 1960.

53. L.F. thomas : "The IE Scales Ideological Bias and Political Participation", Journal of Personality, 1970, p. 38.

54. *ibid*, p.38.

ties that involve exerting power over governmental entities and their allied groups like political parties and the latter includes all other areas except the influence on governmental entities.⁵⁵

A number of studies reveal that people with greater ability are visible in the formal political sphere whereas those with lesser ability are invisible. This may be related to gender based participation in politics. Compared to men, women's formal political participation is less. The usual reasons advanced for invisibility of women is (they are), weak, & unable to overcome stereotype orientations like participatory men⁵⁶.

The low rate of women's participation in formal politics may also be due to the public/private dichotomy. Some feminist theorist (Boals, 1975, Elishtain, 1975 : Jacquett, 1974, 1976; Mikhell, 1973) state that privatization of women in the family has been the reason for their low rate of participation. Actually the hand that rocks the cradle has not ruled the world. In fact, rocking the cradle has been precisely what has prevented the hand from ruling the world. But such private, fragmented, interpersonal power did not add up to genuine, public political power. thus women are socialised to view issues belonging exclusively to the private sphere discharging responsibilities of reproduction

55. Ibid, p. 38.

56. Edward N. Muller : "Aggressive Political Participation", University Press, Princeton, 1979, p.105.

and housework⁵⁷. If women participate less than the men, it may be because it hinders expression of alienation and because it does not deal with those issues, that are in fact central to women's lives under the present sex role system.⁵⁸

The development in education, rapid urbanisation, media exposure, communication, etc. facilitated increase in the level of women's political consciousness and participation.⁵⁹ However, political activity is still dominated by men and is limited to the upper and middle class women. The large mass of women working as labour class are still away from the national mainstream and apathetic to the political process. This confirms that socio-economic status is closely related to political participation. The external environment plays a major role in stimulating political activity but individual perceptions of the situation is no less important in moulding participatory attitude⁶⁰.

57. B.E. Goodstad and L.A.Hjelle ; "Power to the powerless Locus of Control and the use of powers", Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 27, 1978, p. 190-192.

58. *ibid*, p.194.

59. H.C. Fink and L.A. Hjelle: "Internal and External Central and Ideology", Psychological Reports, 33, 1973, p. 967.

60. Rotter, Semann, Naud Liveravt : "External ontrol of Reinforcements: Major Variable in Behavioural Theory" in N.F. Watsbune (Ed), Decisions, Valus and Groups, Vol.II. University Press, Princeton, 1984, p.42.

(iv) Socialisation Process : change of Status and its Impact on the Attitude of Women:

The socialisation of male and females substantially affects their political orientations. Role socialisation transmits gender appropriate attitudes and behaviour for males and females.⁶¹ Mostly this transmission occurs in the family. However, its lasting impact on individual is debatable. Sex role socialisation is transmission of culturally defined masculine attitude to boys and men which are qualities of being independent, forceful, assertive and direct.⁶² Feminine role socialisation is directed towards compassion, submissiveness, gentility, sympathy etc.⁶³ But all men do not conform to masculine qualities, neither do all women to feminine qualities. There are people in both sexes manifesting masculine as well as feminine qualities.⁶⁴ There are also androgynous and undifferentiated people who reject masculine and feminine values. Therefore, their role orientations cannot be biologically differentiated.⁶⁵ *The family plays an important role in value transmission.*⁶⁶ Parental attitude helps in predicting the children's

61. Adorno, F.W. Theoder : et al The Authoritarian Personality, Harper, New York, 1970, p.48.

62. Ibid, p.48.

63. Ibid, p.48.

64. Kareh O Mason, John, L. Ezajka, and Sara Arbar : "Change in Women's Sex Role Attitudes", American Sociological Review, 41, 1976., pp.141-142.

5. Ibid, p.142.

66. Talcott Parsons and Robert Bales : Family, Socialisation Interaction Process, I.L. Free Press, Glenco, 1955, p.78.

attitude during adolescence. Socialisation theory holds that similarity in the attitude of parents and children which is transmitted from generation to generation is due to systematic socialisation by the parents.⁶⁷ Values of the parents are socialised by the children both by direct and indirect learning processes. The socialisation process in the family is so deep and enduring that attitudes and values learned in the family continue to influence the child till adulthood and even beyond⁶⁸ The family, therefore, plays a very special and important role in socialising the child.

ANALYSING WOMEN IN THE POLITICS OF THE THIRD WORLD:

In any discussion of gender relations and politics, the public / private split is a crucial notion which has both informed orthodox accounts and inspired feminist critiques. While much of this literature has been written in a western context, and despite its often universal tone about the first world, the influence that many of the ideas and concepts have had on political activity and its analysis in the Third World.⁶⁹

The inadequacy of the conventional politics literature indicates that several things have to be done before analysing women in Third World politics. First, women have to be put back into the study of formal politics. Second it

67. Kent M. Jennings : 'The Transmission of Political Values from Parents to Child; American Political Sciences Review, 42, 1968.

68. Ibid, p.140.

69. Halel Afshar and Mary Maynard (Ed) : 'Women and Politics in the Third World', University of York, UK, 1996, p.7.

is necessary to make clear how ostensibly neutral political processes and concepts, such as nationalism, citizenship and the state, are fundamentally gendered. Third, it is not enough simply to reintegrate women as actors in the study of conventional politics but those activities women are typically involved in outside the male-dominated institutional sphere must also be included in such analysis.⁷⁰

This challenge to the conventional construction of the political is crucially important, as without it much of women's political activity can be dismissed or marginalised as it does not fit easily into conventional categories and, as a result, the important role it play in the political process will be ignored.⁷¹

While conventional politics is largely seen as synonymous with electoral politics in the First World, this correlation does not hold so clearly in the Third World where authoritarian and military regimes and even revolutionary overthrow of the state have been more common place. It is now well documented that men and women participate differently in all forms of formal politics in both the First and Third World : in both getting issue on the political agendas and in policy making and implementation⁷².

70. H. Afshar and . Bennes (Eds) : Women and Adjustment Policis in the Third World, Macmillian, London 1992, p.4.

71. Ibid, p.6.

72. M. Ackelsberg : 'Feminist Analyses of Public Policy', Comparative Politics, 24(4), 1992, pp. 480-481.

In the past men's political behaviour has been seen as the norm by political scientists, and women's analysed in terms of its deviation from this male norm. As part of this, many myths and stereotypes about women's political participation have grown up, e.g. that women are passive, a political and conservative, which feminist political scientists have endeavoured to break⁷³.

There is, however, a marked tendency for women to participate less than men in formal politics the higher up the echelons of power you look.⁷⁴ At the grassroots level women on the whole make up a smaller percentage of the members of political parties than men. Inevitable, given the low numbers of women members of political parties, the number echelons to representative bodies are also low.⁷⁵ While women tend to participate in greater number in local level politics, the average percentage of women in national legislatures globally in 1987 was 10.⁷⁶

There tend to be even fewer women found in the executives of governments, whether they are authoritarian, elect-

73. V. Randall : Women and Politics, 2nd Edn. Macmillan, London, 1987, p.91.

74. V.S. Peterson and A. Runyan : Global Gender Issue, Co. Westview, Boulder, 1993, p.44.

75. Ibid, p.44.

76. Ibid, p.45.

ed, state socialist a revolutionary⁷⁷. Often, a very small number of women are appointed to posts which reflect the role that women so often play in the private sphere, e.g. women are often given responsibility for health, education, welfare and women's affairs.⁷⁸

In 1987-88, an average of only 3.5 per cent of the world's cabinet ministers were women and 93 countries, comprising 31 from Africa, 24 from Latin America and the Caribbean and 30 from Asia and the Pacific, had no women ministers at all.⁷⁹ Women are largely excluded from key areas such as economic policy, defence and political affairs. Even in the 'social' areas, women formed only 9 per cent of the ministers in Africa and 6 per cent or less in the rest of the third world.⁸⁰

There are several explanations for this pattern of participation in conventional politics. Many women are constrained by their roles in the private sphere, which prevent them from participating in the public sphere on the same terms as men and gaining the experience deemed necessary for a career in politics. However, it is not only

77. K. Staudt : "Gender Politics in the Buraucracy : Theoretical Issus in omparative Perspctive", in K. Staudt (Ed), Women International Development and Politics, PA : Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1989, p.11.

78. Ibid, pp.14-15.

79. United Nations : 'The World's Women 1970-90 : Trends and Statistics', Social Statistics and Indicators, Seris K. No. 8, New York : UN, 1991, p.16.

80. ibid, p.17.

the nature of many women's lives which prevents them from participating, but also the structure of formal politics. This ranges from the timing of meetings, the combative style and mechanisms, and more widespread discrimination against women, for example in selection procedures, which prevent them from rising in political parties.⁸¹

One phenomenon, which has been noted particularly in Asia and appears to go against these trends is the relatively high number of women leaders in the Third world such as Indira Gandhi, Benazir Bhutto, Corazon Aquino, Aung San Suu Kui, Violetta Chamorro etc.⁸² there are particular explanations for this which do not contradict the basic pattern.

Linda Richter⁸³ has argued that, among the factors which enable women to reach leadership position are elite status, high levels of female participation in the movement struggling for independence, and crucially important, links to politically prominent-male relatives, often accompanied by their martyrdom, e.g., their assassination. Richter⁸⁴ also claims that women leaders suffer important disadvantages over their male counterparts. They do not generally have an

81. T. Caldeira : 'Electoral Struggles in a Neighbourhood in the Periphery of Sao Paulo', Parties and society, 15 (1), 1986, p.45.

82. M. Genovese (ed): Women as National Leaders, Sage, London, 1993, p.113.

83. Linda Richter : Exploring theories of Female leadership in south and South-east Asia', Pacific affairs, 63(4), 1990-91, p.526.

84. Ibid, P.530.

institutional base, a regional constituency, an administrative track record or a military niche, often being seen as temporary leaders, making them vulnerable to coup attempts.

Why do women undertake political activity under certain circumstances, what form does this activity take, and how can women's movement be analysed in the third world context, are important questions that need to be assured. Recent attention has been focused on the form that women's political activities take, including whether women find new ways of doing politics.⁸⁵ Using approaches influenced by post-modernism and post-structuration, political action is seen, in part, as a struggle over dominant meanings, including dominant ideas of women, and aiming to change those meanings.

Women involved in the politics of everyday life do not see their activities as political.⁸⁶ However, in some contexts, for example under authoritarian rule, such activities are defined by the regime as oppositional, subversive and therefore come to be seen by both protagonists and others as political. Women's movement organise in a variety of different ways around a variety of different issues. One fundamental division which can be made is between those activities which are in defence of the status quo, i.e.

85. G. Waylen : 'Rethenking women's Political Participation and Protest Chile 1970-90', Political Studies 40 (2), 1992, p.300.

86. T. Caldeira : "Women, Daily Life and Politics", in E. Jelin (Ed), Women and Social Change in Latin America, Zed, London, 1990, p. 132.

trying to preserve the existing social order, and those which are attempting to change the status quo, i.e. can be broadly defined as oppositional.

It is clear, when looking at women in third World politics that third world women do not constitute an 'automatic unitary group'. Mohanty⁸⁷ believes that what constitute third world women as an oppositional alliance is a common context of struggle. She wants to get away from analyses which see third World women as victims, focusing instead on a dynamic oppositional agency of women.

87. C. Mohanty, A. Russo and L. Jerres (eds.): Third World Women and Politics of Feminism, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1991, p.79.

CHAPTER III

WOMEN IN POLITICS : A STATISTICAL PROFILE

The concept of democracy will only assume true and dynamic significance when political policies and national legislation are decided upon jointly by men and women with equitable regard for the interests and aptitudes of both halves of the population.

Does women's participation in politics make a difference? Does it advance democracy? As the twentieth century draws to its close, these are questions constantly being asked. In order to assess the degree of women's integration into politics and to understand how fast this process is proceeding in the various countries, these key areas are identified.

- (i) Women in political parties;
- (ii) Women's participation in the electoral process,
and
- (iii) Women in national parliaments.¹

(i) WOMEN IN POLITICAL PARTIES: Political parties are everywhere playing a growing and fundamental role in the running of institutions. In parliament, political groups

1. "Men and Women in Politics Democracy still in the making " A world comparative studies, Inter Parliamentary Union Reports and Documents, series No 28, Geneva 1997, P.11.

occupy a preponderant place and regulate the course of parliamentary life. Parties are thus a key player in the democratic process. This phenomenon makes it all the more important that women should find within political parties a place and position enabling them to represent their aspirations and to assert themselves.²

Often accounting for half or more of their country's population, women are known in general to be present in good or even high proportions in the basic structure of political parties³ the strengthening of the democratic system in the public consciousness, coupled with the unanimous, popular support given it as the only acceptable form of government, has increased political participation of women in various areas of public life.⁴ It is therefore legitimate to advance that the democratization or the mere invigoration of political life make for the improved integration of women, and that women in turn, play a part that helps to consolidate democracy and even to renew political life.⁵

The interplay between 'from above' and 'from below' is often highlighted as a fundamental characteristic of the integration of women in politics. This interplay between

2. Ibid., p. 12.

3. "Women and Political power" IPU Reports and Documents, Series No. 19, 1992, P.14

4. Ibid., p. 14.

5. P.Beetham : "Liberal Democracy and the limits of Democratization," Political Studies, 40, 1992, pp. 40-53

the integration of women's issue into the state and the spread of the women's movement or activities provides one of the explanation of the comprehensive mobilization and notable progress made in the Nordic countries.⁶ It is thus a combination of pressure from below especially from the social movements, and the system's comparatively high degree of responsiveness towards new groups and demands (the Political opportunity structure) that are among the decisive factors with respect to the integration of women into politics.⁷ It is also important to point out that an understanding of the political significance of gender focuses both on changes in political culture and on changes in relation to gender.(See figures 1 and 2).

All the parties, in various forms and degrees, are very much aware of the need for greater participation by women in politics and for different measures to that effect. But is this perception of the importance, of the integration of women into the political process reflected by their presence in senior posts within parties.(Reference to figures 1 & 2).

The scarcity of women in exclusive posts in parties is quite plain. Generally speaking, it is their elites that parties nominate to stand for Parliament, so that the position of women in the internal party hierarchy has a direct

6. 'Men and Women in Politics, Democracy still in making' A World Comparative study, IPU Reports and documents, Series NO. 28, Geneva 1997, P.16.

7. Ibid, p.18

influence on their situation in Parliament.⁸ It is not infrequent that women who are well placed in the party hierarchy gain access to Parliament, and if the parties in question have a firm parliamentary base, move on to ministerial duties.⁹

The status of women's participation in party decision-making structure is worth viewing in the light of information on senior posts held by women in Parliaments. A degree of consistency will be seen: there are indeed few women at the top of the party hierarchy (10.8%), as there are in Parliaments (11.7%) and in decision making positions therein (7.1% of Assembly Presidents).¹⁰ There is nevertheless a significant difference between the two situations: in the parties, there are often many women at grass roots level and few at the top, while in Parliaments there are generally few women at either end of the chain.¹¹ (Reference to figures 1 and 2).

Parts of the answer to the limited parliamentary representation of women should therefore be sought within political parties, especially in their hierarchy and electoral practices. As to women, they know that they are often

8. Ibid., p.18.

9. Ibid., p. 19.

10. "Men and Women in Politics; Democracy still in the making", A World Comparative Study, IPU Reports and Documents, Series No. 28, Geneva, 1987, p.16.

11. Ibid., p. 16.

numerous among the grass roots activists and they are increasingly conscious of their electoral clout. They are thus beginning to react against the very narrow space in which they remain confined when it comes to power structures.¹²

To make up for the scant representation of women in their decision making bodies, some parties have generally at the instance of women-introduces a quota system for their governing bodies, in the form either of a specific percentage or of a written or implicit rule concerning the proportion of men and women to make up the governing body. The same parties have often established a quota for legislative elections, but it will be noted that the proportion of parties applying an internal quota is well above that of parties having fixed a quota or even a mere customary guideline for legislative elections.¹³

To an even greater extent for women than for men, active involvement in a political party makes it necessary to strike a balance, which often remains unsatisfactory and fragile, between party activities, family priorities and obligations, and professional activities.¹⁴ The increased

12. M.F. Katzenste in: "Towards Equality: Cause and Consequence of the Political prominence of women in India", Asian Survey, 18(5), 1978, p. 474.

13. G.Waylen : "Women and Democratization; Conceptualising Gender Relation in Transition Politics", World Politics, 46(3) 1994, pp.328-329.

14. Ibid., p. 333.

number of women in parties and, in some countries, changing values and mores making for a new balance in the sharing of household tasks between men and women, have not always been matched in parties by any adjustment of their often long standing practices.¹⁵

WOMEN IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

Rights to vote and to stand for election are two complementary rights, which are the very source of women's participation in the electoral process as voters or candidates. (See Table 1).

It goes without saying that in some countries like Iceland, Finland etc., no special step to encourage women are needed. Apart from the fact that automatic placement on electoral rolls and compulsory voting obviate the need to encourage the population to register and vote, the general electoral culture and widespread individual awareness among citizens (women in particular) of the importance of voting can render superfluous step specially targeting women or even the electorate at large.¹⁶

The fact nevertheless remains that, in the electoral context, the public authorities, political parties and a host of non-governmental organisation do take steps aimed

15. Ibid, p.333.

16. 'Women in Parliaments: 1945-1995', IPU Reports and Documents, Series No. 23, 1995, p.21.

specifically at women. It even appears that, for many reasons, women's electoral clout is becoming increasingly recognized, thus giving rise more and more frequently to action aimed at encouraging them to contribute to the electoral process.¹⁷

In many countries, women - having come later to politics than men - are less well prepared than men to be candidates. Apart from hesitations linked to personality, family situation and the constraints of active political commitment, an ambient political culture not very open to women, combined with traditions or taboos hostile to public action by women, can make it difficult for women to seek nomination by a party or even more so, to stand as independent candidates.¹⁸ (See Table 2).

No nomination means no candidature, but without moral and strategic support and without logistic and financial support there can be no electoral success. The political parties, take no special steps to support women's candidatures more specifically. In fact candidates enjoys identical support, regardless of gender. (See figures 3 to 8).¹⁹

The diagram are based on the data collected in the Survey attempts to provide indicators to women's electoral

17. Ibid. p.25

18. 'Women and Political Power', IPU Reports and Documents, Series No. 19, 1992, p.19.

19. Ibid., p.20.

success.

Quotas introduced by a political party may involve a measure designed to ensure that women occupy a proportion of the parliamentary seats won by the party at an election, or a measure to guarantee that the internal decision-making structures include women.

Generally speaking, the quota imposed by law aims to affect the outcome of the election: to ensure that a given percentage of the seats are held by women; in this its effect is similar to that of the system of reserved seats. On the other hand, the quota established by political parties for elections to Parliament aims to affect the candidatures: to ensure that a certain percentage of candidates are women or that neither sex is represented by more than X% on the electoral lists.²⁰

Whether they stem from the law on the autonomous decision of a party, all these measures have a single goal to compensate, at least partially, for the absence of women in elective office and senior posts in politics. (See table 3 and 4).

While quotas may have clearly positive effects in some cases and in particular contexts, there may be varying degrees of enthusiasm regarding the impact of the scheme²¹.

20. "The participation of women in the decision-making process in political and parliamentary life", IPU Reports and Documents, Series No.16, Geneva, November, 1989, p.61.

21. Ibid, p.62.

What is the practical effect of quotas in relation to their objective ? The following diagram (pg.76) try to assess the numerical impact of quotas on the basis of four indicators: ;quota established by the party considered; proportion of women candidates put forward at the most recent legislative elections; proportion of seats won by these candidates; and proportion of seats held by the party concerned in Parliament. That impact is shown to be very unequal and not always conclusive, either in respect of the actual implementation of the quota or in regard to the electoral outcome.(See figure 9).

(iii) WOMEN IN NATIONAL PARLIAMENT:

Everywhere in the world, women make up a generally small minority in national Parliaments. Parity of representation - which alone would reflect the composition of the population of virtually all countries and is at present promoted by a growing number of non-governmental organisations in many parts of the world has nowhere been achieved²². The Nordic countries are alone in the world in returning to Parliament a fairly substantial proportion of women since, with 36.4%, their average representation tops one-third of the seats to be filled.²³(See table 5).

22. Based on the Survey by IPU, "Men and Women in Politics: Democracy still in the making", Series No. 23. Geneve, 1997, p.81.

23. Ibid., p.83

The record world average was reached in 1988, with 14.8% of women MPs.²⁴ The world and regional ranking of some countries may, on closer examination, come as a surprise. However, the figures are only the visible part of the iceberg. The historical and political background of the countries in question, their social, cultural, ideological and even religious background, their institutional and electoral system, the spectrum of their political parties, their electoral culture, the dynamism of civil society, and so on, are all factors that need to be weighed up when interpreting the figures.²⁵

The situation regarding the presidency of Parliament or of a House shows that, historically speaking, women have seldom had occasion to occupy the post of President, and that his situation persists today.²⁶

Even more often than in countries recently adopting a parliamentary system, it is in countries of long parliamentary tradition that the greatest reluctance is noted regarding the election of women to the highest function in an assembly. However, long standing the recognition of women's rights to vote and to stand for election may be some of these countries have not yet ever taken the step, cases in

24. Ibid, p.84.

25. Ibid., p.84.

26. Ibid.,p.84.

point being France and the United States of America.²⁷
(See table 6-10 and figure 10 and 11).

The political space occupied by women in Parliament depends as much on their number in relation to that of men as on the qualitative impact of their participation.

Being essentially statistical in nature the survey data shed only partial light on the issue. The nevertheless reveal a situation where Parliaments today are still male bastions.²⁸

There must be a 'critical mass'²⁹ of women for their influence to be effectively felt. One thing is, however, certain that women have to prove themselves more capable than men to a greater extent. There is every possibility that the women have to overcome more obstacles than the man to occupy her rightful and equal place.

Myanmar, which is contiguous to Bangladesh, has witnessed the emergence of a powerful woman contesting for political power. Though Sheikh Hasina and Begum Khalida Zia have been voted into power in Bangladesh in recent years and subsequently women have been allowed to play their role in national polity. Suu Kyi has been derived her leadership

27. Based on IPU Survey - 'Men and Women in Politics: Democracy still in the making, A World Comparative Study, IPU Reports and Documents, Series No. 28, Geneva, 1997, p. 88.

28. Ibid., p. 89.

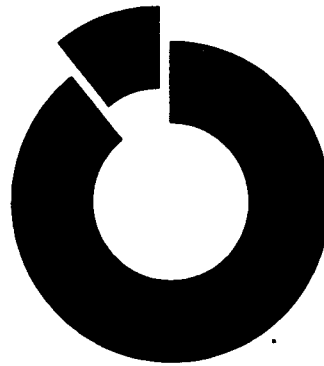
29. As propounded by Prof. Drude Dahelrup quoted in M. Meena Rao and M. Vijaya Lakshmi: "Women and Development: Rhetoric and Reality", Mainstream; Vol. 35, No. 14, March, 15, 1997, p. 26.

role through conspiracy and authoritarian tactics. she has been prevented to be the premier, because she is married to a foreigner. The SLDRRC has indulged in character assassination of Suu Kyi and women's role in national polity is being denied. But the electorate has a different perception as the results of 1990 elections have proved. As and when the free and fair elections are held in Myanmar, and as and when Suu Kyi allowed to context, the role of women in Burmese polity is bound to be more substantial.

SENIOR POSTS HELD BY WOMEN IN POLITICAL PARTIES

Party Leader: President or First Secretary

WOMEN
10.8%

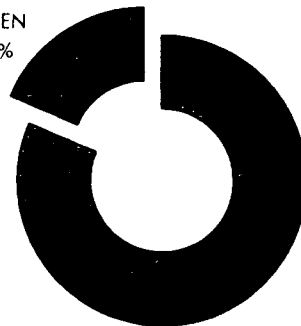


MEN
89.2%

418 parties considered in 86 pays
45 women Presidents
(The few cases of 'collegiate leadership' are not taken into consideration)

Deputy President or Deputy First Secretary of a Party

WOMEN
18.7%

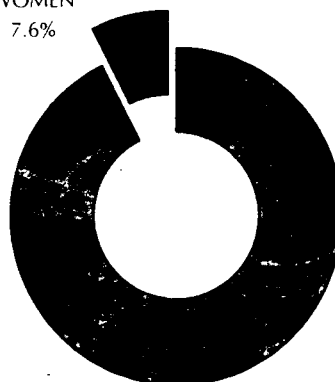


402 parties considered in 84 countries
75 women Deputy Presidents or Deputy First Secretaries

MEN
81.3%

Party Secretary General (as opposed to party President or First Secretary)

WOMEN
7.6%



383 parties considered in
86 countries
30 Secretaries General

MEN
92.4%

Figure 1

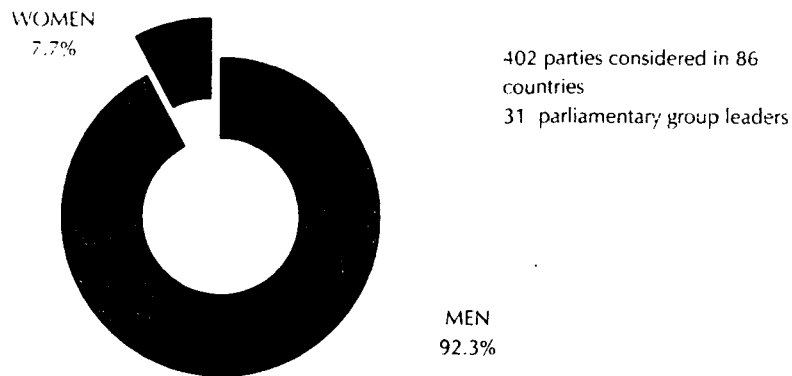
Source : 'Men and Women in Politics: Democracy still in the making', A World Comparative study, IPU Report and Document, Series no 28, Geneva, 1997

SENIOR POSTS HELD BY WOMEN IN POLITICAL PARTIES

Parties with at least one woman in their governing body



Parliamentary Group Leader



Party Spokesperson



Figure : 2

Source: 'Men and Women in Politics: Democracy Still in Making, A World Comparative Study, I.P.V Report and Document, Series no 29, Geneva 1997.

Table : 1

Source : 'Women and Political Power' IPU Report and Document', Series no 19, 1992

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

Chronology of the recognition of women's rights to vote and to stand for election

1788	United States of America (to stand for election)	1952	Bolivia** , Côte d'Ivoire, Greece, Lebanon
1893	New Zealand (to vote)	1953	Bhutan, Guyana (to vote), Hungary (to vote), Mexico (to stand for election), Syrian Arab Republic**
1902	Australia*	1954	Belize, Colombia, Ghana
1906	Finland	1955	Cambodia, Eritrea (?), Ethiopia, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru
1907	Norway (to stand for election)*	1956	Benin, Comoros, Egypt, Gabon, Mali, Mauritius, Somalia
1913	Norway**	1957	Malaysia, Zimbabwe (to vote)**
1915	Denmark, Iceland	1958	Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Hungary (to stand for election), Lao P.D.R., Nigeria (?)
1917	Canada (to vote)*, Netherlands (to stand for election)	1959	Madagascar, San Marino (to vote), Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania
1918	Austria, Canada (to vote)*, Estonia, Georgia*, Germany, Ireland*, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Poland, Russian Federation, United Kingdom*	1960	Canada (to stand for election)** , Cyprus, Gambia, Tonga
1919	Belarus, Belgium (to vote)*, Luxembourg, New Zealand (to stand for election), Netherlands (to vote), Sweden*, Ukraine	1961	Bahamas*, Burundi, El Salvador (to stand for election), Malawi, Mauritania, Paraguay, Rwanda, Sierra Leone
1920	Albania, Canada (to stand for election)*, Czech Republic, Slovakia, United States of America (to vote)	1962	Algeria, Australia**, Monaco, Uganda, Zambia
1921	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belgium (to stand for election)*, Georgia**, Lithuania, Sweden**	1963	Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kenya, Morocco, Papua New Guinea (to stand for election) (?)
1924	Kazakstan*, Mongolia, Saint Lucia, Tajikistan	1964	Bahamas**, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Papua New Guinea (to vote), Sudan
1927	Turkmenistan	1965	Afghanistan, Botswana, Lesotho
1928	Ireland**, United Kingdom**	1967	Ecuador**, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Yemen (D.P.R.), Zaire (to vote)
1929	Ecuador*, Romania*	1968	Nauru, Swaziland
1930	South Africa (Whites), Turkey (to vote)	1970	Andorra (to vote), Yemen (Arab Republic), Zaire (to stand for election)
1931	Chile*, Portugal*, Spain, Sri Lanka	1971	Switzerland
1932	Maldives, Thailand, Uruguay	1972	Bangladesh
1934	Brazil, Cuba, Portugal*, Turkey (to stand for election)	1973	Andorra (to stand for election), Bahrain (right recognized ?), San Marino (to stand for election)
1935	Myanmar (to vote)	1974	Solomon Islands (?), Jordan
1937	Philippines	1975	Angola, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe, Vanuatu
1938	Bolivia*, Uzbekistan	1976	Portugal**
1939	El Salvador (to vote)	1977	Guinea Bissau
1941	Panama*	1978	Republic of Moldova*, Zimbabwe (to stand for election)
1942	Dominican Republic	1979	Marshall Islands (?), Micronesia (Fed. States), Palau
1944	Bulgaria, France, Jamaica	1980	Iraq, Vanuatu**
1945	Croatia, Guyana (to stand for election), Indonesia, Italy, Japan*, Senegal, Slovenia, Togo	1984	Liechtenstein, South Africa (Coloureds + Indians)
1946	Cameroon, D.P.R. of Korea, Djibouti (to vote), Guatemala, Liberia, Myanmar (to stand for election), Panama**, Romania**, The F.Y.R. of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yugoslavia	1986	Djibouti (to stand for election), Central African Republic
1947	Argentina, Japan**, Malta, Mexico (to vote), Pakistan, Singapore	1989	Namibia
1948	Belgium**, Israel, Niger, Republic of Korea, Seychelles, Suriname	1990	Samoa
1949	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile**, China, Costa Rica, Syrian Arab Republic (to vote)*	1994	Kazakstan, Republic of Moldova*, South Africa (Blacks)
1950	Barbados, Canada (to vote)** , Haiti, India	1997	United Arab Emirates (?)
1951	Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Nepal, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines		

Rights to vote and to stand for election not yet recognized to women in Kuwait

* Right subject to conditions or restrictions

** Restrictions or conditions lifted

Table : 2

source: 'Men and women in Politics: Democracy still in Making', A World comparative study, IPU Report and Documents, Series no 28, Geneva 1992.

CASES IN WHICH MULTI-MEMBER MAJORITY VOTING APPLIES:

Parties which indicated that at least one woman stood for election in each constituency in question

Argentina	PJ, UCR, FG, UCD, AL, MID, US
Bolivia	MNR-MRTKL, CONDEPA, MBL, EJE/P
Cameroon	RDPC
Canada	NDP
Dominica	UVP
Ecuador	APRE, PRE, ID, DP, PSC
Namibia	SWAPO, DTA, DCN, MAG
United Republic of Tanzania	CCM, CUF, UFP, NCCR, CCDM
Venezuela	MAS

Parties which stated that they applied other mechanisms, without specifying which:

Botswana	BDP
Canada	PCP, LP, NDP
Mexico	PRI, PAN, PRD
Mongolia	MNDP, MSDN, MPRP
United Kingdom	LDP

CASES IN WHICH PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION APPLIES

Parties which stated that they included at least one woman or a given percentage of women in each electoral list:

In this connection, please see on page 67 the table entitled « *Quotas of women candidates established by rules or custom by some political parties for legislative elections.* »

Parties which stated that every closed list systematically includes at least one woman in a winnable position:

Andorra	Nova Democracia
Austria	OVP
Bolivia	MIR-ADN-PDC, CONDEPA, EJE/P
Czech Republic	CSSD
Ecuador	APRE, PRE, ID, DP, PSC
Guyana	PPP, PNC, WPA
Mexico	PRD
Namibia	SWAPO
Romania	DP-NSF
Slovakia	HZDS, KdH
Sweden	FP

Parties which stated that their lists alternate between men and women:

Australia	ALP
Bolivia	CONDEPA
Costa Rica	PLN, PUSC
Germany	B90/G
Georgia	NDP
Sweden	SAP, FP, VP, MpG, KDS

RELATIVE LINK BETWEEN THE PROPORTION OF WOMEN MPs AND THE VOTING SYSTEM

(diagram for single or lower Houses on the basis of information concerning 162 countries, broken down by percentage of women MPs)

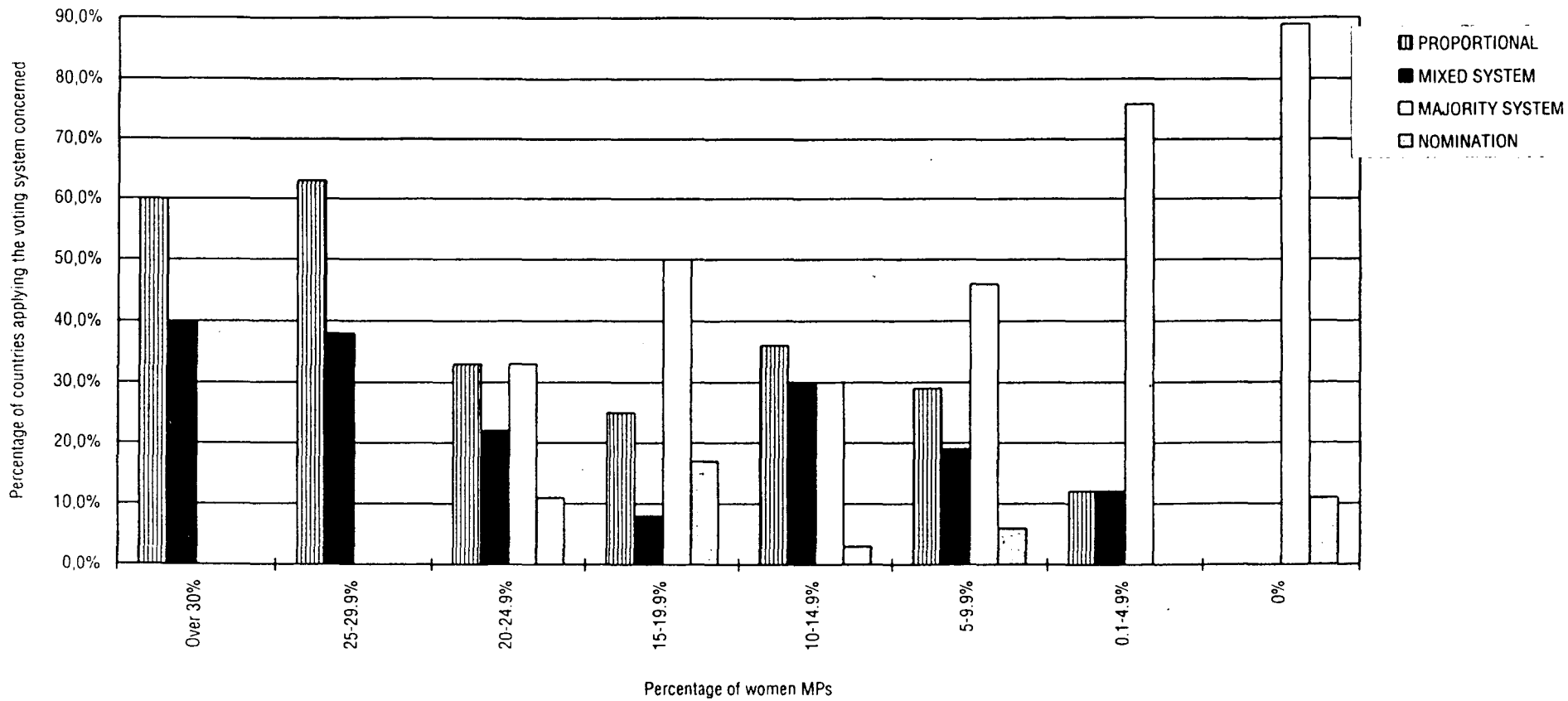


Figure: 3
 Source: 'Men and Women in Politics: Democracy Still in Making', World Comparative Study, IPU report and documents, Series no 28, Geneva 1992.

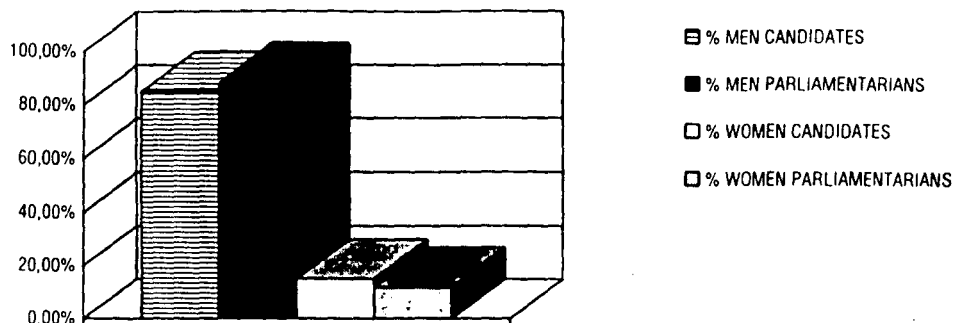
RESPECTIVE CHANCES OF MEN AND WOMEN OF BECOMING MPs IN COUNTRIES WHERE THE FOLLOWING 4 INDICATORS ARE AVAILABLE:

- women and men candidates/total candidates - women and men MPs/total MPs

Both Houses considered

I - WORLD AVERAGE

average based on 75 countries for which the 4 indicators were available

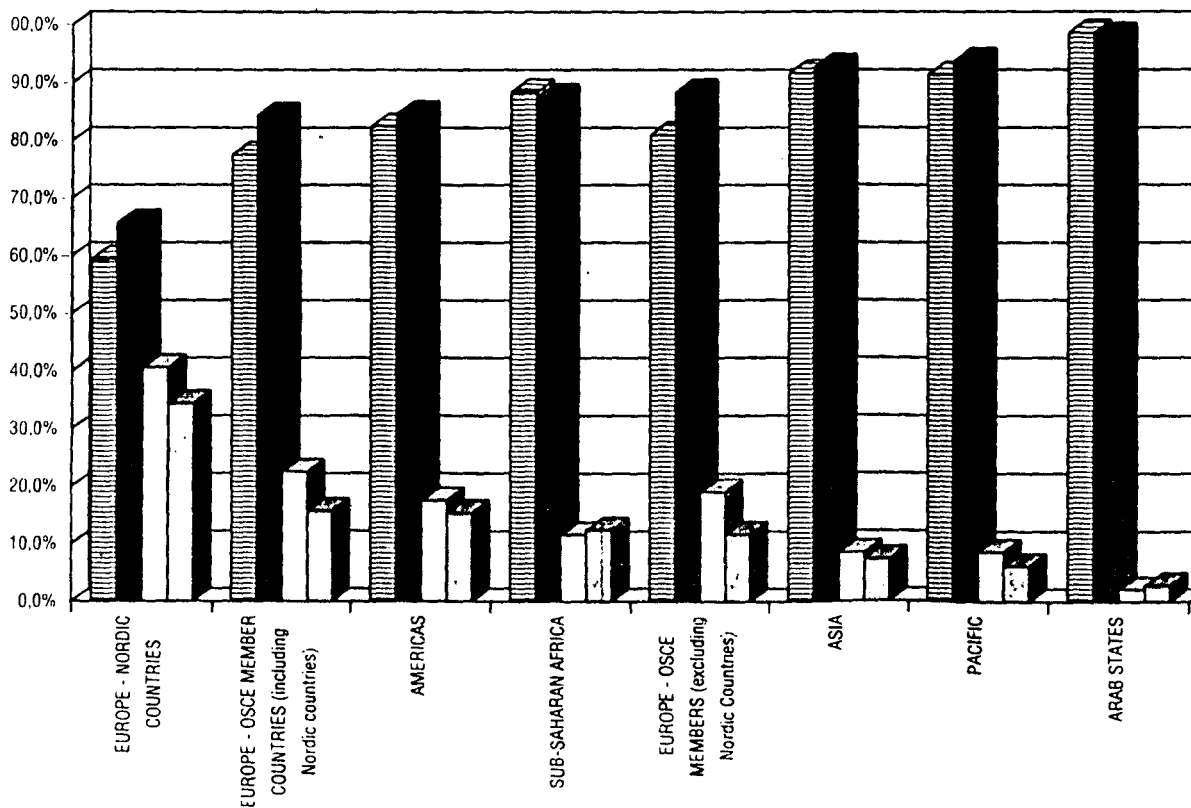


COUNTRIES COUNTED IN WORLD AVERAGE:

Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czech Rep., Dem. Peop. Rep. of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Grenada, Guyana, Iceland, India, Iran (Islamic Rep. of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Lao People's Dem. Rep., Latvia, Lithuania, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Rep. of Korea, Rep. of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tonga, Tunisia, Ukraine, Zambia, Zimbabwe

II - REGIONAL AVERAGE

regions in descending order of the proportion of women MPs



COUNTRIES COUNTED IN REGIONAL AVERAGES:

EUROPE - NORDIC COUNTRIES: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden

EUROPE - OSCE MEMBER COUNTRIES: Armenia, Austria, Cyprus, Czech Rep., Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Rep. of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom

AMERICAS: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA: Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Namibia, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe

ASIA: Cambodia, Dem. Peop. Rep. of Korea, India, Iran, Japan, Lao People's Dem. Rep., Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Rep. of Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand

PACIFIC: Australia, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga

ARAB STATES: Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia

Figure: A
 Source: 'Men and Women in Politics' Democracy Still in Making', A World Comparative Study, IPV Reports and Documents, Series no 28, Geneva 1997.

Both Houses considered
EUROPE - OSCE MEMBER COUNTRIES

(countries listed in descending order of proportion of women MPs - both Houses considered)

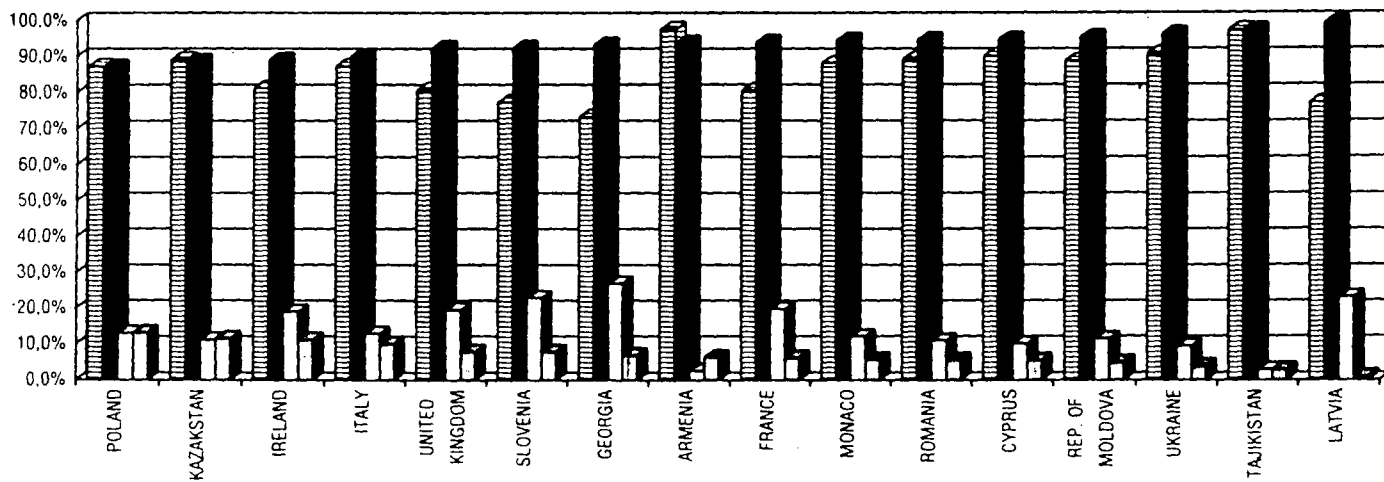
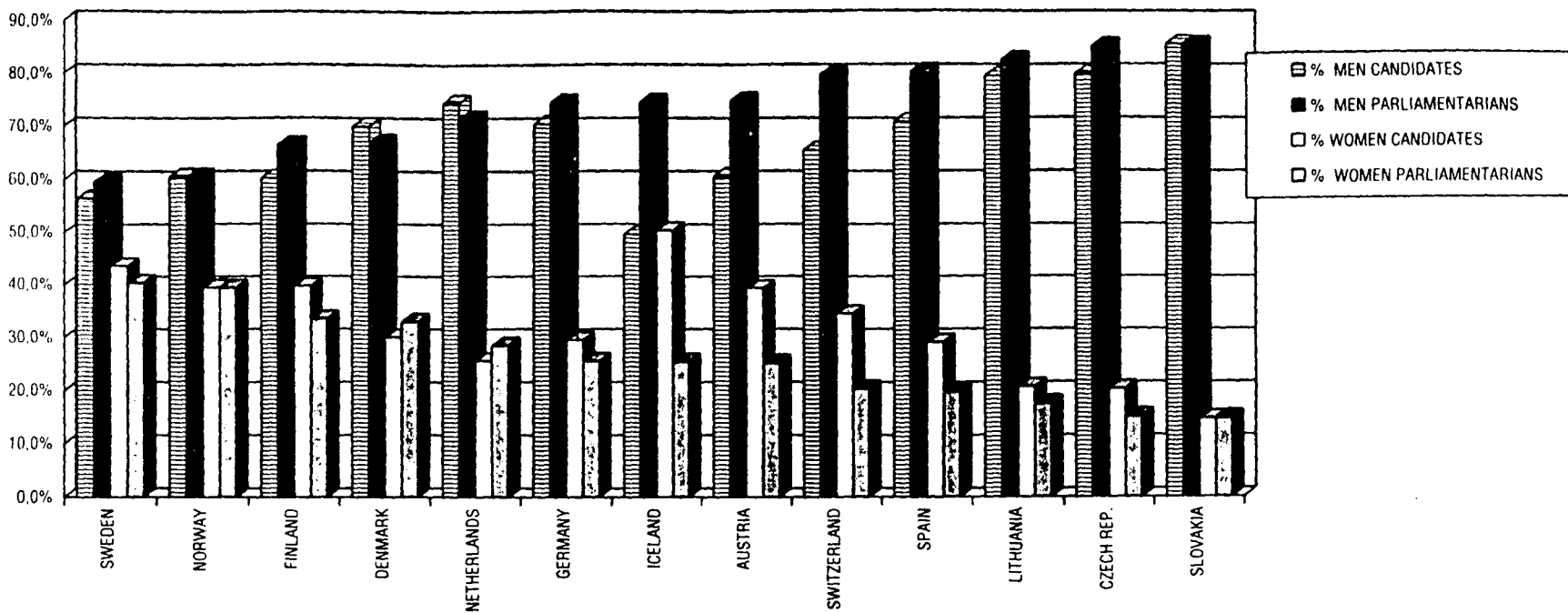
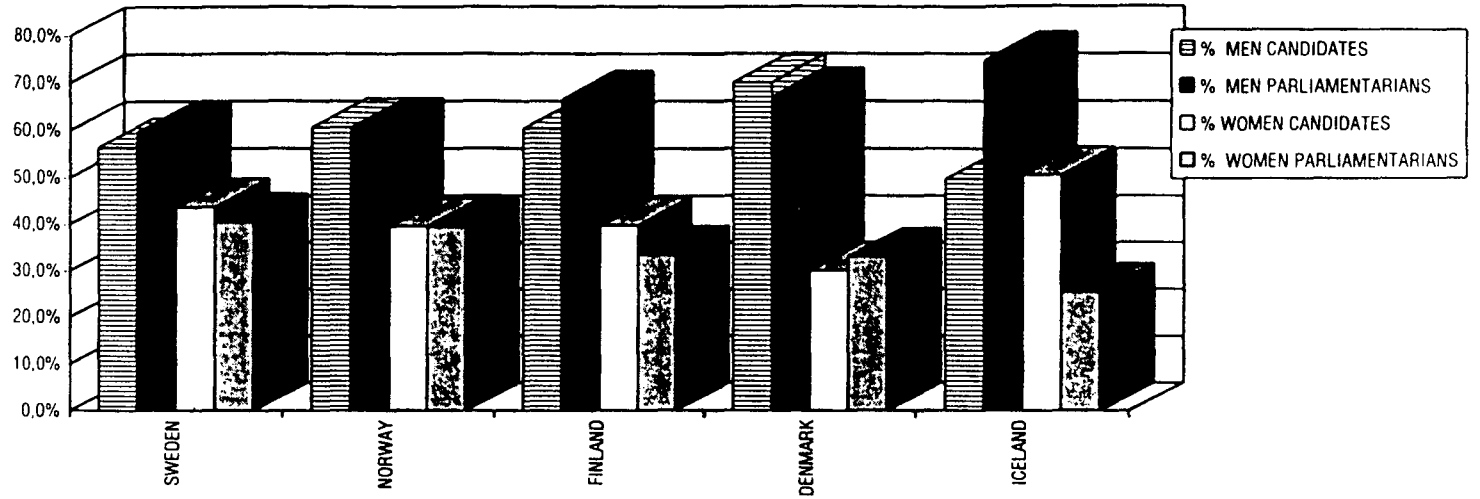


Figure: 5
 Source: 'Men and Women in Politics: Democracy Still in Making', A World Comparative Study, IPU Reports and Documents, Series no 28, Geneva 1992.

Figure: 6
 Source: 'Men and Women in Politics: Democracy Still
 in Making', A World comparative study, IPV
 Reports and Documents, series no 28, Geneva 1997.

EUROPE - NORDIC COUNTRIES

(list of countries in descending order of proportion of women MPs - both Houses considered)



AMERICAS

(list of countries in descending order of proportion of women MPs - both Houses considered)

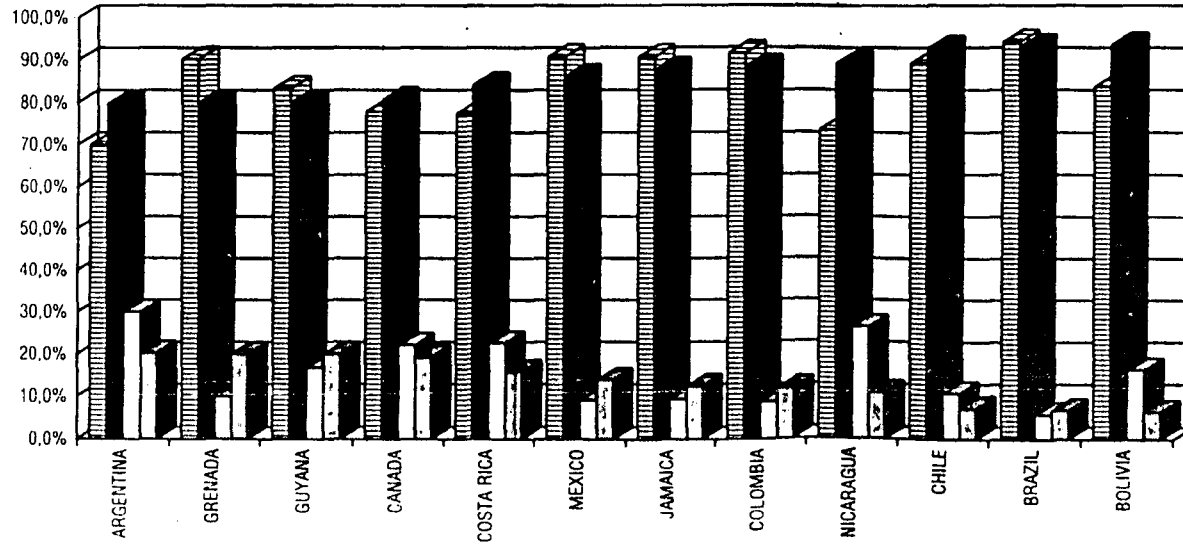
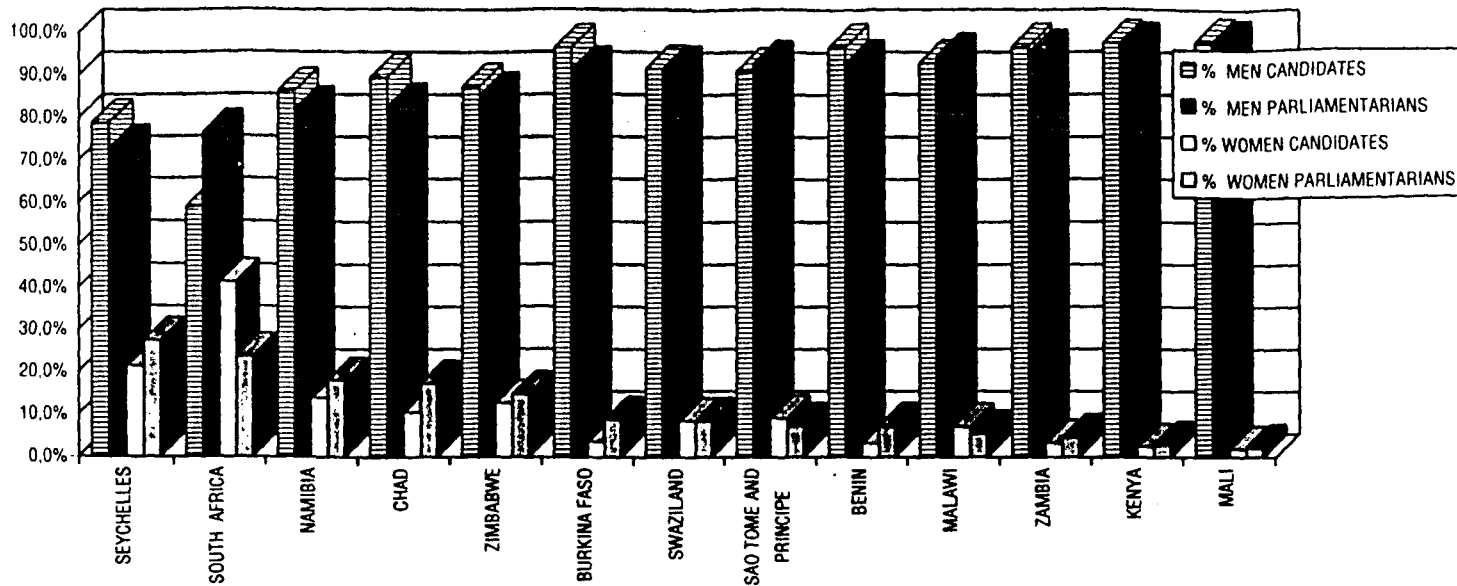


Figure 7
 Source: 'Men and Women in Politics: Democracy Still
 in Making', A World Comparative Study, IPV Reports
 and Documents, Series no 29, Geneva 1997.

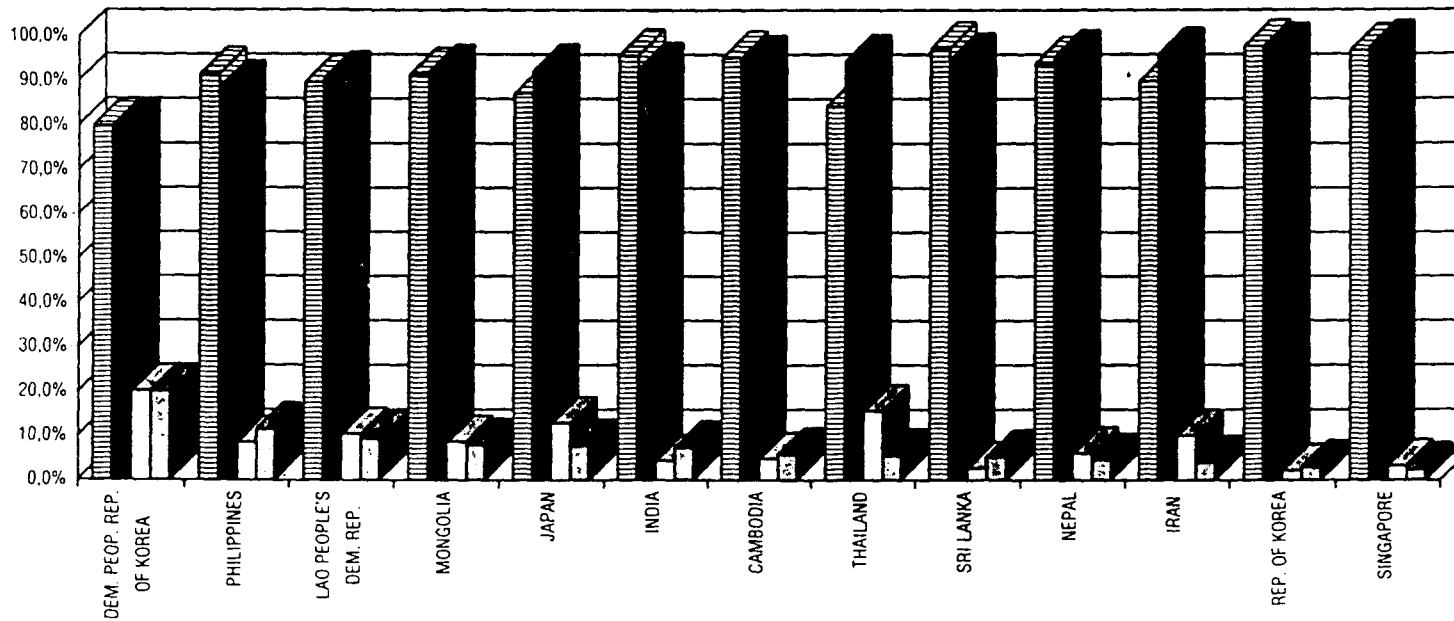
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

(list of countries in descending order of proportion of women MPs - both Houses considered)

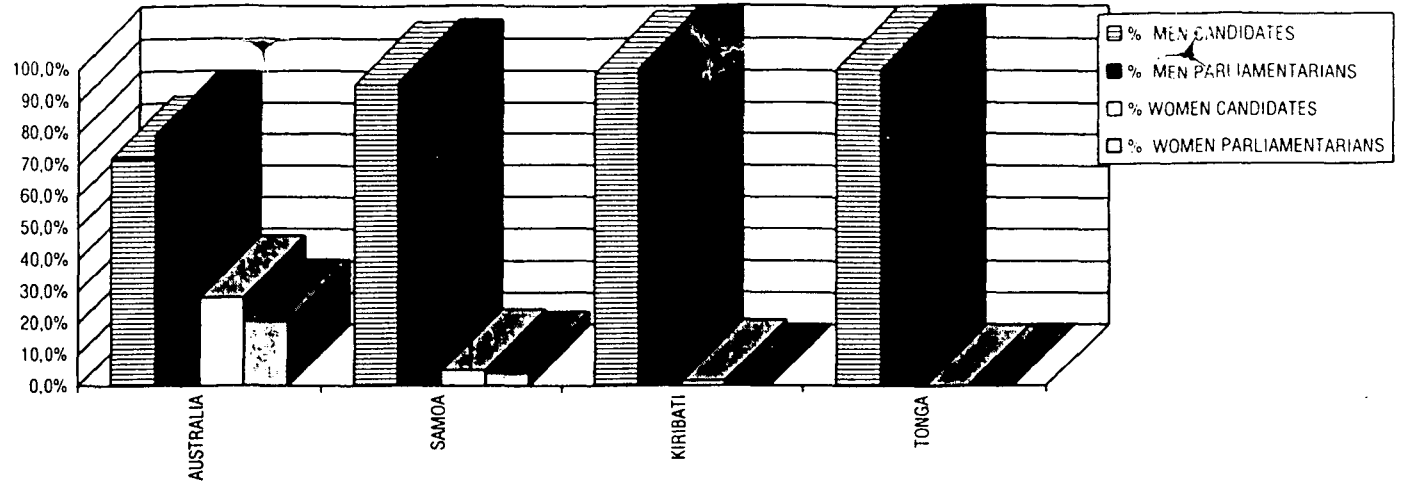


ASIA

(list of countries in descending order of proportion of women MPs - both Houses considered)



(list of countries in descending order of proportion of women MPs - both Houses considered)



ARAB STATES

(list of countries in descending order of proportion of women MPs - both Houses considered)

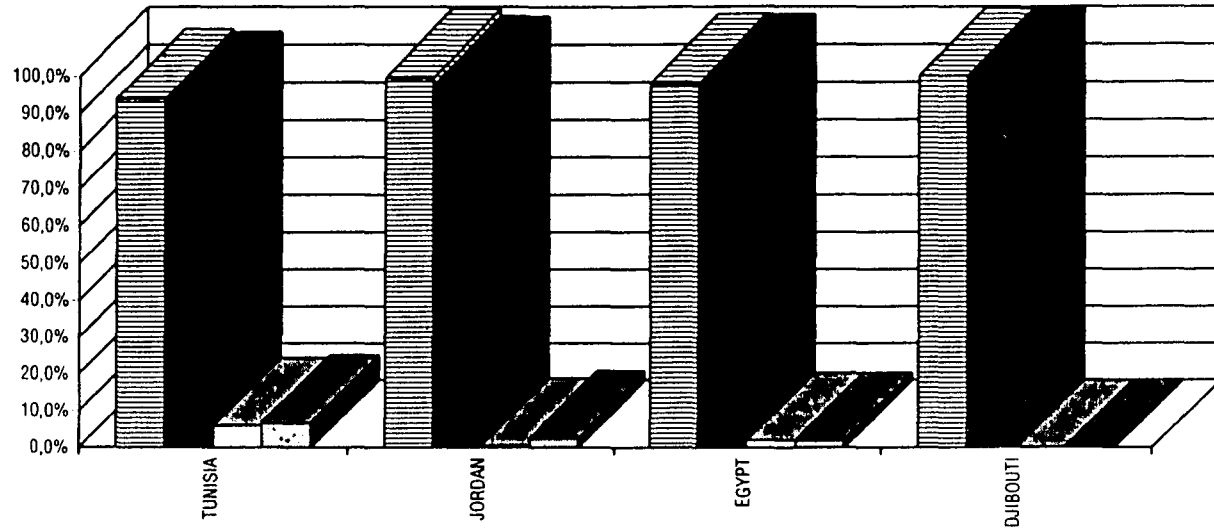


Figure : 8

Source : 'Men and Women in Politics': Democracy,

Still in Making: A World Comparative Study,

I.P.V Reports and Documents, Series no 28, Geneva

1997.

Table: 3

Source: 'Men and Women in Politics: Democracy Still in Making', A World Comparative Study, IPU Reports and Documents, Series no 23, Geneva 1997

COUNTRIES WHERE NATIONAL LEGISLATION ESTABLISHES MECHANISMS WHICH MAY OR CAN FACILITATE WOMEN'S ACCESS TO PARLIAMENT

- Countries where national legislation establishes a quota of women in Parliament: 6 countries
- Countries where national legislation provides for a proportion of seats in Parliament to be reserved for women (election by the Parliament or nomination by the Executive): 5 countries
- Countries where all or some MPs are appointed: 43 countries

States with a Parliament (excl. countries with none of these mechanisms)	National legislation establishing a compulsory quota of women MPs	National legislation providing for a proportion of seats to be reserved for women	National legislation providing for the nomination of MPs who may be women
Algeria	no	no	National Transitional Council : 200/200
Antigua and Barbuda	no	no	Senate : 17/17
Argentina	30%	no	no
Bahamas	no	no	Senate : 19/19
Bangladesh	no	Parliament : 30/330	no
Barbados	no	no	Senate : 21/21
Belgium	candidatures : 33.3%	no	no
Belize	no	no	Senate : 8/8
Bhutan	no	no	Tshoghu : 45/150
Brazil	20%	no	no
Burkina Faso	no	House of Representatives : 10/178	House of Representatives : 178/178
Canada	no	no	Senate : 104/104
Chile	no	no	Senate : 9/46
Croatia	no	no	House of Zupanije : 5/63
Dem. People's Rep. of Korea	20%	no	no
Dominica	no	no	House of Assembly : 9/30
Egypt	no	no	People's Assembly : 10/454
Fiji	no	no	Senate : 34/34
Grenada	no	no	Senate : 13/13
India	no	no (30% being considered)	Lok Sabha : 2/545; Rajya Sabha : 12/24
Indonesia	no	no	House of Representatives : 100/500
Ireland	no	no	Senate : 11/60
Italy	no	no	Senate : 9/326
Jamaica	no	no	Senate : 21/21
Jordan	no	no	Senate : 40/40
Kazakhstan	no	no	Senate : 7/47
Kenya	no	no	National Assembly : 12/202
Kiribati	no	no	House of Assembly : 1/41
Lesotho	no	no	Senate : 11/33
Liberia	no	no	Transitional Legislative Assembly : 35/35
Malaysia	no	no	Senate : 43/69
Maldives	no	no	Citizens' Majlis : 8/40
Mauritius	no	no	National Assembly : 4/66
Namibia	no	no	National Assembly : 6/78
Nepal	5%	National Council : 3/60	National Council : 10/60
Philippines	?% (1)	no	House of Representatives : 46/250
Rwanda	no	no	Transitional National Assembly : 70/70
Saint Kitts and Nevis	no	no	National Assembly : 3/15
Saint Lucia	no	no	Senate : 11/11
Saint Vincent and Grenadines	no	no	House of Assembly : 6/21
Singapore	no	no	Parliament : 6/87
Swaziland	no	no	Senate : 20/30
Thailand	no	no	Senate : 260/260
Trinidad and Tobago	no	no	Senate : 31/31
Uganda	no	National Resistance Council : 39/270	no
United Arab Emirates	no	no	National Council : 40/40
United Rep. of Tanzania	no	National Assembly : 37/275	National Assembly : 42/275
Zambia	no	no	National Assembly : 8/159
Zimbabwe	no	no	Parliament : 20/150

QUOTAS OF WOMEN'S CANDIDATURES SET BY PARTIES, BY RULE OR CUSTOM,
FOR LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS

(Information restricted to survey results)



Argentina	PJ	35.0%	Georgia	CUG	?
	UCR	30.0%		NDP	?
	FREPASO	30.0%	Greece	ND	20.0%
	UCDe	30.0%	Guyana	PPP	?
	AL	30.0%		PNC	?
	DP	30.0%		WPA	?
	FG	30.0%	Iceland	WA	100.0%
	Modin	30.0%		PA	40.0%
	MID	30.0%		SDP	40.0%
	US	30.0%		PM	40.0%
Armenia	Shamiram	100.0%	India	Asom Gana Parishad	35.0%
	UNSD	20.0%	Ireland	Fine Gael	aim: 40.0%
	CPA	?		Labour	20.0%
	NDU	?	Japan	KOMEI	planned: 30.0%
Australia	A. Greens	50.0%	Mexico	PRD	30.0%
	ALP	35.0%	Namibia	SWAPO	?
Austria	Greens	50.0%		DTA	?
	ÖVP	33.0%		DCN	?
	Social Democrats	?		MAG	?
Belgium	Volkunie	25.0%	Norway (1)	LP	50.0%
Bolivia	MIR-ADN-PDC	30.0%		CP	50.0%
	EJE/P	10.0%		Conserv. Party	50.0%
	MNR-MRTKL	?		SLP	50.0%
	CONDEPA	?		CDP	50.0%
	MBL	?		PP	50.0%
Brazil	PTB	20.0%		Liberal Party	50.0%
Canada	NDP	aim: 50.0%		REA	50.0%
Costa Rica	PUSC	aim: 40.0%	Romania	PDSR	25.0%
	PLN	m/w planned: 40.0%		PD (FSN)	25.0%
Czech Republic	KSCM	?	Senegal	PS	25.0%
Denmark	SDP	w/m + aim: 40.0%	Slovenia	ALSD	33.3%
Ecuador	APRE	50.0%	South Africa	ANC	33.3%
	PRE	25.0%	Sweden	SDP	50.0%
	ID	25.0%		VP	50.0%
	DP	10.0%		Mp.G	50.0%
	PSC	4.0%		FP	40.0%
Equatorial Guinea	CSDP	?	T.F.Y. Rep. of	PDP	4.0%
Fiji	FLP	20.0%	Macedonia		
France	PS	(1996): 30.0%	United Kingdom	Labour	aim: 50.0%
Germany	B90/Greens	50.0%	Uruguay	Socialist Party	38.0%
	PDS	50.0%	Venezuela	AD	30.0%
	SPD	33.0%		MAS	30.0%

(1) All political parties in Norway have a rule - formal or traditional - to aim to include 50% of women in their lists.

Table: 4

Source: 'Men and Women in Politics: Democracy still in Making', A World Comparative Study, IPU Reports and Documents, Series no 27, Geneva 1997.

QUOTAS/IDEAL RATIOS OF FEMALE CANDIDATURES SET BY SOME PARTIES, IN THE LIGHT OF ELECTORAL RESULTS

Diagrams for parties for which the following 4 indicators were available:

- quota; - % of women candidates presented by the parties; - % of seats in Parliament won by these candidates; - proportion of seats won by the party/total seats in Parliament
(in descending order of the % of women having won a seat in Parliament for the parties concerned)

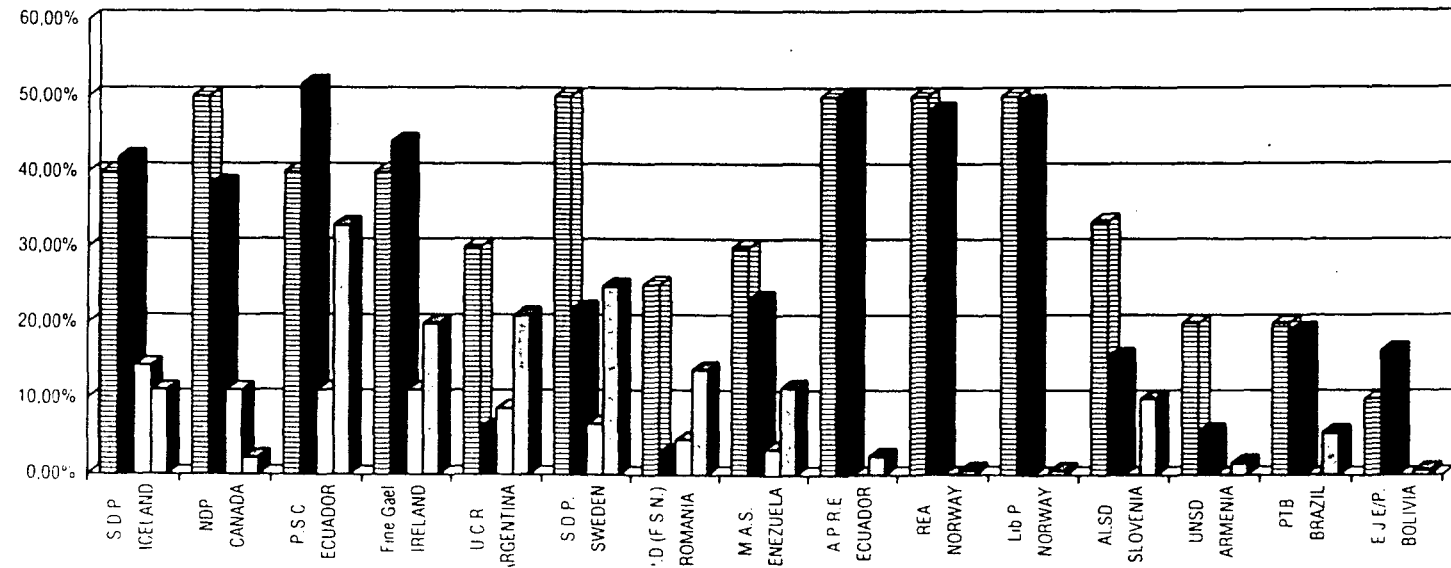
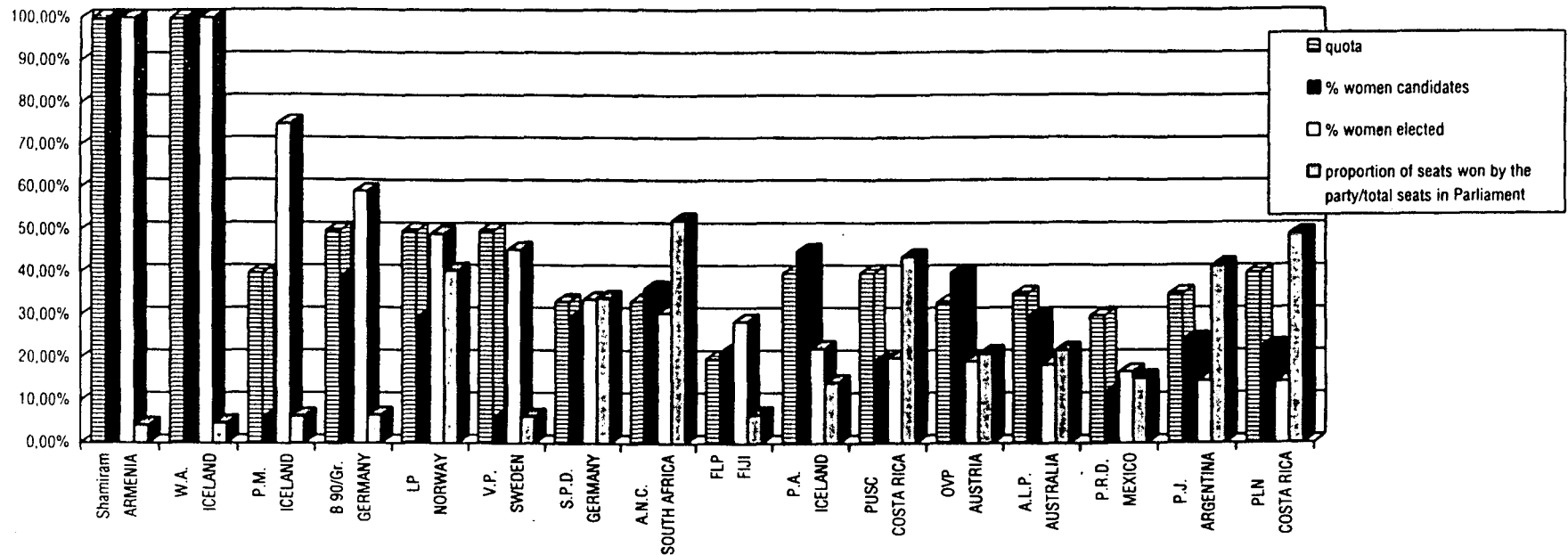


Figure : 9
 Source : 'Men and Women in Politics: Democracy Still in Making', A World Comparative Study, IPU Reports and Documents, series no 28, Geneva 1997.

Table: 5
 Source: 'Men and women in politics: Democracy still in Making', A World Comparative Study, IPU reports and documents, series no 28, Geneva 1997.

WOMEN IN NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS

SITUATION AT 1 JANUARY 1997

WORLD AVERAGE

<u>Both Houses combined</u>		<u>11.7 %</u>	
Total MPs			40,753
Gender breakdown for			38,493
Women			4,512
Men			33,981
<u>Single House or lower House</u>	<u>12.0 %</u>	<u>Upper House or Senate</u>	<u>9.8 %</u>
Total MPs	34,839	Total MPs	5,914
Gender breakdown for	32,831	Gender breakdown for	5,662
Women	3,956	Women	556
Men	28,875	Men	5,106



REGIONAL AVERAGES

Classification

		<u>Single House or lower House</u>	<u>Upper House or Senate</u>	<u>Both Houses combined</u>
1.	Nordic countries	36.4 %	---	36.4 %
2.	Asia	13.4 %	9.9 %	13.1 %
3.	Americas	12.9 %	11.5 %	12.7 %
4.	Europe - OSCE member countries incl. Nordic countries	13.8 %	8.5 %	12.6 %
5.	Pacific	9.8 %	21.8 %	11.6 %
6.	Europe - OSCE member countries excl. Nordic countries	11.6 %	8.5 %	10.9 %
7.	Sub-Saharan Africa	10.1 %	13.6 %	10.4 %
8.	Arab States	3.3 %	2.1 %	3.3 %

Table : 6

Source : 'Men and Women in Politics: Democracy still in Making,' A World Comparative Study, IPU Reports and Documents, Series no 28, Geneva 1997.

WOMEN IN NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS AS AT 1 JANUARY 1997

World classification

Countries in descending order of the percentage of women in the lower or single House

Order	Country	Lower or single House				Upper House or Senate			
		Elections	Seats	Women	% W	Elections	Seats	Women	% W
1	Sweden	09 1994	349	141	40.4	---	---	---	---
2	Norway	09 1993	165	65	39.4	---	---	---	---
3	Finland	03 1995	200	67	33.5	---	---	---	---
4	Denmark	09 1994	179	59	33.0	---	---	---	---
5	Netherlands	05 1994	150	47	31.3	05 1995	75	17	22.7
6	New Zealand	10 1996	120	35	29.2	---	---	---	---
7	Seychelles	07 1993	33	9	27.3	---	---	---	---
8	Austria	12 1995	183	49	26.8	11 1994	64	13	20.3
9	Germany	10 1994	672	176	26.2	10 1994	68	13	19.1
10	Iceland	04 1995	63	16	25.4	---	---	---	---
11	Argentina	05 1995	257	65	25.3	12 1995	72	2	2.8
12	Mozambique	10 1994	250	63	25.2	---	---	---	---
13	South Africa	04 1994	400	100	25.0	04 1994	90	16	17.8
14	Spain	03 1996	350	86	24.6	03 1996	256	34	13.3
15	Cuba	02 1993	589	134	22.8	---	---	---	---
16	China	1992- 93	2978	626	21.0	---	---	---	---
16	Eritrea	02 1994	105	22	21.0	---	---	---	---
16	Switzerland	10 1995	200	42	21.0	10 1995	46	8	17.4
17	Dem. People's Rep. of Korea	04 1990	687	138	20.1	---	---	---	---
18	Grenada	06 1995	15	3	20.0	06 1995	13	?	?
18	Guyana	10 1992	65	13	20.0	---	---	---	---
18	Luxembourg	06 1994	60	12	20.0	---	---	---	---
19	Viet Nam	07 1992	395	73	18.5	---	---	---	---
20	Namibia	12 1994	72	13	18.1	12 1994	26	?	?
20	Uganda	06 1996	276	50	18.1	---	---	---	---
21	Canada	10 1993	295	53	18.0	1994	104	24	23.1
21	Turkmenistan	12 1994	50	9	18.0	---	---	---	---
22	Lithuania	10 1996	137	24	17.5	---	---	---	---
22	United Rep. of Tanzania	10 1995	275	48	17.5	---	---	---	---
23	Chad	04 1993	52	9	17.3	---	---	---	---
24	Rwanda	11 1994	70	12	17.1	---	---	---	---
25	Costa Rica	02 1994	57	9	15.8	---	---	---	---
26	Suriname	05 1996	51	8	15.7	---	---	---	---
27	Australia	03 1996	148	23	15.5	03 1996	76	23	30.3
28	Czech Republic	05 1996	200	30	15.0	11 1996	81	?	?
29	Slovakia	10 1994	150	22	14.7	---	---	---	---
29	Zimbabwe	04 1995	150	22	14.7	---	---	---	---
30	Mexico	08 1994	500	71	14.2	08 1994	128	16	12.5
31	Ireland	11 1992	166	23	13.9	02 1993	60	8	13.3
32	Kazakhstan	12 1995	67	9	13.4	12 1995	47	4	8.5

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Order	Country	Lower or single House				Upper House or Senate			
		Elections	Seats	Women	% W	Elections	Seats	Women	% W
33	Bulgaria	12 1994	240	32	13.3	---	---	---	---
33	Saint Kitts and Nevis	07 1995	15	2	13.3	---	---	---	---
34	Poland	09 1993	460	60	13.0	09 1993	100	13	13.0
34	Portugal	10 1995	230	30	13.0	---	---	---	---
35	Estonia	03 1995	101	13	12.9	---	---	---	---
36	Indonesia	06 1992	500	63	12.6	---	---	---	---
37	Guatemala	11 1995	80	10	12.5	---	---	---	---
38	Cameroon	03 1992	180	22	12.2	---	---	---	---
39	Albania	05 1996	140	17	12.1	---	---	---	---
40	Azerbaijan	11 1995	125	15	12.0	---	---	---	---
40	Belgium	05 1995	150	18	12.0	05 1995	71	16	22.5
41	Colombia	03 1994	163	19	11.7	03 1994	102	7	6.9
41	Dominican Republic	05 1994	120	14	11.7	05 1994	30	1	3.3
41	Jamaica	03 1993	60	7	11.7	03 1993	21	3	14.3
41	San Marino	05 1993	60	7	11.7	---	---	---	---
41	Senegal	05 1993	120	14	11.7	---	---	---	---
41	United States of America	11 1996	435	51	11.7	11 1996	100	9	9.0
42	Hungary	05 1994	386	44	11.4	---	---	---	---
43	Cape Verde	12 1995	72	8	11.1	---	---	---	---
43	Italy	04 1996	630	70	11.1	04 1996	326	26	8.0
43	Trinidad and Tobago	11 1995	36	4	11.1	11 1995	31	9	29.0
44	Nicaragua	10 1996	93	10	10.8	---	---	---	---
44	Peru	04 1995	120	13	10.8	---	---	---	---
44	Philippines	05 1995	203	22	10.8	05 1995	24	4	16.7
45	Barbados	09 1994	28	3	10.7	09 1994	21	6	28.6
45	El Salvador	05 1994	84	9	10.7	---	---	---	---
46	Russian Federation	12 1995	450	46	10.2	01 1996	178	1	0.6
47	Guinea-Bissau	07 1994	100	10	10.0	---	---	---	---
48	Panama	05 1994	72	7	9.7	---	---	---	---
48	Zambia	11 1996	155	15	9.7	---	---	---	---
49	Syrian Arab Republic	08 1994	250	24	9.6	---	---	---	---
50	Angola	09 1992	220	21	9.5	---	---	---	---
50	Saint Vincent & the Grenadines	02 1994	21	2	9.5	---	---	---	---
50	United Kingdom	04 1992	651	62	9.5	01 1995	1190	82	6.9
51	Dominica	06 1995	32	3	9.4	---	---	---	---
51	Lao People's Democratic Rep.	12 1992	85	8	9.4	---	---	---	---
52	Bangladesh	06 1996	330	30	9.1	---	---	---	---
53	Latvia	09 1995	100	9	9.0	---	---	---	---
54	Equatorial Guinea	11 1993	80	7	8.8	---	---	---	---
55	Botswana	10 1994	47	4	8.5	---	---	---	---
56	Côte d'Ivoire	11 1995	168	14	8.3	---	---	---	---
57	Bahamas	08 1992	49	4	8.2	08 1992	16	3	18.8
58	Liechtenstein	10 1993	25	2	8.0	---	---	---	---
59	Croatia	10 1995	127	10	7.9	02 1993	68	3	4.4
59	Mongolia	06 1996	76	6	7.9	---	---	---	---
60	Honduras	11 1993	128	10	7.8	---	---	---	---
60	Malaysia	04 1995	192	15	7.8	04 1995	69	12	17.4

Table: 7

.... could

Table: 8

Ser	Country	Lower or single House				Upper House or Senate			
		Elections	Seats	Women	% W	Elections	Seats	Women	% W
1	Slovenia	11 1996	90	7	7.8	---	---	---	---
1	Tuvalu	11 1993	13	1	7.7	---	---	---	---
2	Mauritius	12 1995	66	5	7.6	---	---	---	---
3	Chile	12 1993	120	9	7.5	12 1993	46	3	6.5
3	Israel	05 1996	120	9	7.5	---	---	---	---
4	Sao Tome and Principe	10 1994	55	4	7.3	---	---	---	---
5	Benin	03 1995	83	6	7.2	---	---	---	---
5	India	04 1996	545	39	7.2	04 1996	245	19	7.8
5	Uruguay	11 1994	99	7	7.1	11 1994	31	2	6.5
7	Guinea	06 1995	114	8	7.0	---	---	---	---
7	Romania	11 1996	328	23	7.0	11 1996	143	3	2.1
3	Bolivia	06 1993	130	9	6.9	06 1993	27	1	3.7
3	Georgia	11 1995	235	16	6.8	---	---	---	---
3	Tunisia	03 1994	163	11	6.7	---	---	---	---
1	Algeria	05 1994	183	12	6.6	---	---	---	---
1	Brazil	10 1994	513	34	6.6	10 1994	81	6	7.4
2	France	03 1993	577	37	6.4	09 1995	321	18	5.6
3	Armenia	07 1995	190	12	6.3	---	---	---	---
3	Greece	09 1996	300	19	6.3	---	---	---	---
3	Maldives	12 1994	48	3	6.3	---	---	---	---
3	Sierra Leone	02 1996	80	5	6.3	---	---	---	---
4	Uzbekistan	12 1994	250	15	6.0	---	---	---	---
5	Venezuela	12 1993	203	12	5.9	12 1993	50	4	8.0
5	Cambodia	05 1993	120	7	5.8	---	---	---	---
5	Malta	10 1996	69	4	5.8	---	---	---	---
7	Liberia	03 1994	35	2	5.7	---	---	---	---
3	Malawi	05 1994	177	10	5.6	---	---	---	---
3	Monaco	01 1993	18	1	5.6	---	---	---	---
3	Nauru	11 1995	18	1	5.6	---	---	---	---
3	Thailand	11 1996	393	22	5.6	03 1996	260	21	8.1
3	Cyprus	05 1996	56	3	5.4	---	---	---	---
3	Antigua and Barbuda	03 1994	19	1	5.3	03 1994	17	3	17.6
3	Sri Lanka	08 1994	225	12	5.3	---	---	---	---
3	Sudan	03 1996	400	21	5.3	---	---	---	---
1	Zaire	04 1994	738	37	5.0	---	---	---	---
2	Republic of Moldova	02 1994	104	5	4.8	---	---	---	---
3	Japan	10 1996	500	23	4.6	07 1995	252	35	13.9
3	Lesotho	03 1993	65	3	4.6	05 1993	33	8	24.2
4	Fiji	02 1994	70	3	4.3	06 1992	34	3	8.8
5	Samoa	04 1996	49	2	4.1	---	---	---	---
5	Iran (Islamic Rep. of)	03 1996	248	10	4.0	---	---	---	---
7	Ukraine	12 1995	450	17	3.8	---	---	---	---
3	Burkina Faso	05 1992	107	4	3.7	12 1995	176	21	11.9
3	Madagascar	06 1993	134	5	3.7	---	---	---	---
3	Andorra	12 1993	28	1	3.6	---	---	---	---
3	Haiti	06 1995	83	3	3.6	06 1995	27	0	0.0
2	Central African Republic	09 1993	85	3	3.5	---	---	---	---

... could

Order	Country	Lower or single House				Upper House or Senate			
		Elections	Seats	Women	% W	Elections	Seats	Women	% W
91	Belize	06 1993	29	1	3.4	06 1993	8	3	37.5
91	Nepal	11 1994	205	7	3.4	06 1995	60	5	8.3
92	The F.Y.R. of Macedonia	10 1994	120	4	3.3	---	---	---	---
93	Swaziland	10 1993	65	2	3.1	10 1993	30	6	20.0
94	Kenya	12 1992	202	6	3.0	---	---	---	---
94	Republic of Korea	04 1996	299	9	3.0	---	---	---	---
95	Tajikistan	02 1995	181	5	2.8	---	---	---	---
96	Paraguay	05 1993	80	2	2.5	05 1993	45	5	11.1
96	Singapore	08 1991	81	2	2.5	---	---	---	---
97	Turkey	12 1995	550	13	2.4	---	---	---	---
98	Lebanon	08 1996	128	3	2.3	---	---	---	---
98	Mali	03 1992	129	3	2.3	---	---	---	---
99	Solomon Islands	11 1995	47	1	2.1	---	---	---	---
100	Bhutan	01 1996	150	3	2.0	---	---	---	---
100	Egypt	11 1995	454	9	2.0	---	---	---	---
100	Ethiopia	05 1995	550	11	2.0	05 1995	117	?	?
101	Congo	10 1993	125	2	1.6	10 1996	60	2	3.3
102	Kyrgyzstan	02 1995	70	1	1.4	02 1995	35	4	11.4
103	Jordan	11 1993	80	1	1.3	11 1993	40	2	5.0
103	Mauritania	10 1996	79	1	1.3	04 1996	56	0	0.0
104	Togo	02 1994	81	1	1.2	---	---	---	---
105	Yemen	04 1993	301	2	0.7	---	---	---	---
106	Morocco	09 1993	333	2	0.6	---	---	---	---
107	Comoros	12 1996	43	0	0.0	---	---	---	---
107	Djibouti	12 1992	65	0	0.0	---	---	---	---
107	Kiribati	07 1994	41	0	0.0	---	---	---	---
107	Kuwait	10 1996	50	0	0.0	---	---	---	---
107	Micronesia (Fed. States of)	03 1995	14	0	0.0	---	---	---	---
107	Palau	11 1996	16	0	0.0	11 1996	14	1	7.1
107	Papua New Guinea	06 1992	109	0	0.0	---	---	---	---
107	Saint Lucia	04 1992	18	0	0.0	04 1992	11	4	36.4
107	Tonga	01 1996	30	0	0.0	---	---	---	---
107	United Arab Emirates	11 1995	40	0	0.0	---	---	---	---
	Belarus	11 1995	260	?	?	---	---	---	---
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	09 1996	42	?	?	09 1996	15	?	?
	Ecuador	05 1996	82	?	?	---	---	---	---
	Gabon	12 1996	120	?	?	---	---	---	---
	Ghana	12 1996	200	?	?	---	---	---	---
	Iraq	03 1996	250	?	?	---	---	---	---
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	01 1994	750	?	?	---	---	---	---
	Marshall Islands	11 1995	33	?	?	---	---	---	---
	Niger	11 1996	83	?	?	---	---	---	---
	Vanuatu	11 1995	50	?	?	---	---	---	---
		11 1996	128	?	?	02 1994	40	1	7.8

Table: 9

40	Republic of Moldova	02 1994	104	5	4.8	---	---	---
41	Ukraine	12 1995	450	17	3.8	---	---	---
42	Andorra	12 1993	28	1	3.6	---	---	---
43	The F.Y.R. of Macedonia	10 1994	120	4	3.3	---	---	---
44	Tajikistan	02 1995	181	5	2.8	---	---	---
45	Turkey	12 1995	550	13	2.4	---	---	---
46	Kyrgyzstan	02 1995	70	1	1.4	02 1995	35	4
	Belarus	11 1995	260	?	?	---	---	---
	Bosnia & Herzegovina	09 1996	42	?	?	09 1996	15	?
	Yugoslavia	11 1996	138	?	?	02 1994	40	1

III. ASIA

(Regional average - Lower or single House: 13.4%)

Order	Country	Lower or single House				Upper House or Senate		
		Elections	Seats	Women	% W	Elections	Seats	Women
1	China	1992- 93	2978	626	21.0	---	---	---
2	Dem. People's Rep. of Korea	04 1990	687	138	20.1	---	---	---
3	Viet Nam	07 1992	395	73	18.5	---	---	---
4	Indonesia	06 1992	500	63	12.6	---	---	---
5	Philippines	05 1995	203	22	10.8	05 1995	24	4
6	Lao People's Dem. Republic	12 1992	85	8	9.4	---	---	---
7	Bangladesh	06 1996	330	30	9.1	---	---	---
8	Mongolia	06 1996	76	6	7.9	---	---	---
9	Malaysia	04 1995	192	15	7.8	04 1995	69	12
10	Israel	05 1996	120	9	7.5	---	---	---
11	India	04 1996	545	39	7.2	04 1996	245	19
12	Maldives	12 1994	48	3	6.3	---	---	---
13	Cambodia	05 1993	120	7	5.8	---	---	---
14	Thailand	11 1996	393	22	5.6	03 1996	260	21
15	Sri Lanka	08 1994	225	12	5.3	---	---	---
16	Japan	10 1996	500	23	4.6	07 1995	252	35
17	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	03 1996	248	10	4.0	---	---	---
18	Nepal	11 1994	205	7	3.4	06 1995	60	5
19	Republic of Korea	04 1996	299	9	3.0	---	---	---
20	Singapore	08 1991	81	2	2.5	---	---	---
21	Bhutan	01 1996	150	3	2.0	---	---	---
	Pakistan	suspen.	---	---	---	03 1994	87	3

IV. AMERICAS

(Regional average - Lower or single House: 12.9%)

Order	Country	Lower or single House				Upper House or Senate		
		Elections	Seats	Women	% W	Elections	Seats	Women
1	Argentina	05 1995	257	65	25.3	12 1995	72	2
2	Cuba	02 1993	589	134	22.8	---	---	---
3	Grenada	06 1995	15	3	20.0	06 1995	13	?
3	Guyana	10 1992	65	13	20.0	---	---	---
4	Canada	10 1993	295	53	18.0	1994	104	24
5	Costa Rica	02 1994	57	9	15.8	---	---	---
6	Suriname	05 1996	51	8	15.7	---	---	---
7	Mexico	08 1994	500	71	14.2	08 1994	128	16
8	Saint Kitts and Nevis	07 1995	15	2	13.3	---	---	---
9	Guatemala	11 1995	80	10	12.5	---	---	---
10	Dominican Republic	05 1994	120	14	11.7	05 1994	30	1
10	Jamaica	03 1993	60	7	11.7	03 1993	21	3
10	Colombia	03 1994	163	19	11.7	03 1994	102	7
10	United States of America	11 1996	435	51	11.7	11 1996	100	9
11	Trinidad and Tobago	11 1995	36	4	11.1	11 1995	31	9
12	Nicaragua	10 1996	93	10	10.8	---	---	---
12	Peru	04 1995	120	13	10.8	---	---	---
13	Barbados	09 1994	28	3	10.7	09 1994	21	6
13	El Salvador	05 1994	84	9	10.7	---	---	---
14	Panama	05 1994	72	7	9.7	---	---	---
15	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	02 1994	21	2	9.5	---	---	---
16	Dominica	06 1995	32	3	9.4	---	---	---

Table: 10

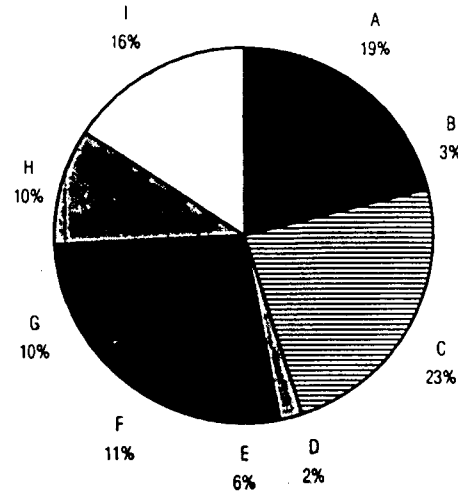
Source: 'Men and Women in Politics: Democracy still in Making', A World Comparative Study, IPU Report and Documents, Series no 28, Geneva 1997.

INDICATIVE SURVEY OF POSTS OF PRESIDENT OF PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES HELD BY WOMEN

I - WORLD OVERVIEW

(Based on information for 97 countries)

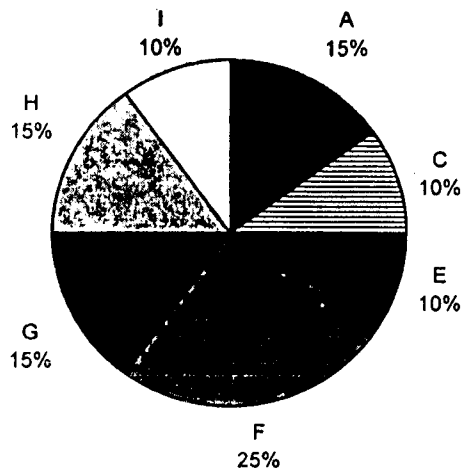
- A: Judicial and constitutional affairs
- B: Security and defence
- C: Social, family, health and labour affairs
- D: Finance
- E: Foreign affairs
- F: Economic, agricultural, trade and industrial development questions
- G: Education, cultural affairs and communications
- H: Land use, communications network and environment
- I: Others



II - PROJECTION ACCORDING TO THE PROPORTION OF WOMEN MPs

1. Countries with more than 30% women in Parliament

(Based on information for 5 countries)



2. Countries with between 20% and 29.9% women in Parliament

(Based on information for 15 countries)

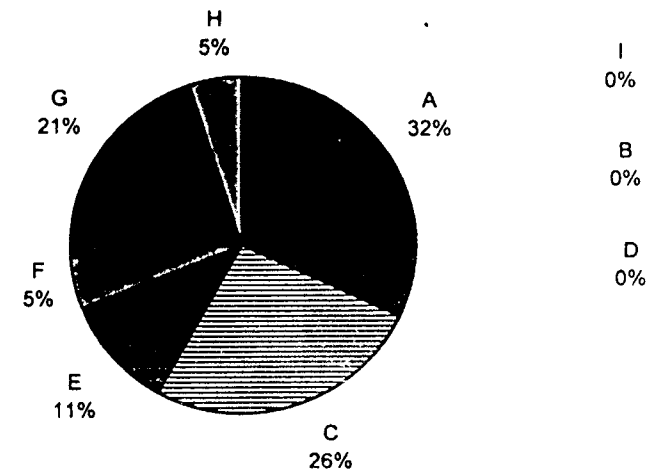
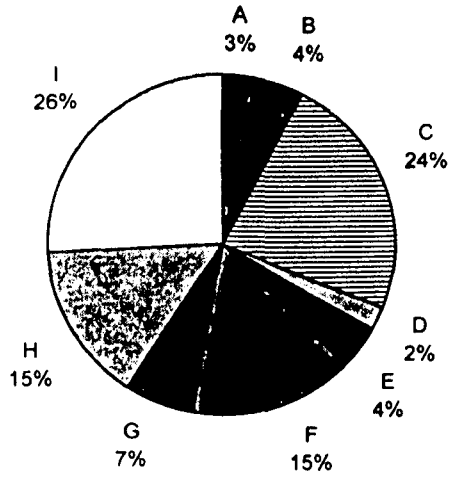
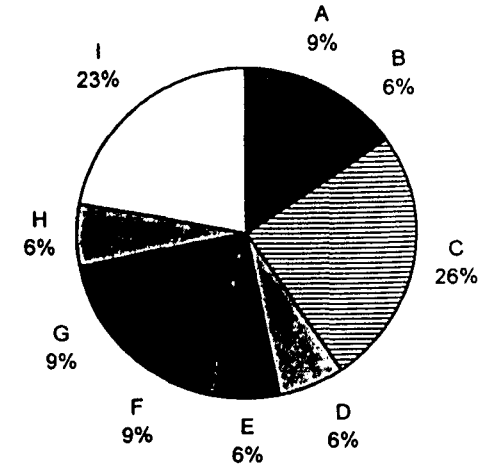


Figure: 10
 Source: 'Men and Women in Politics: Democracy Still in Making', A World Comparative Study, IPU Reports and Documents, Series no 29, Geneva 1997.

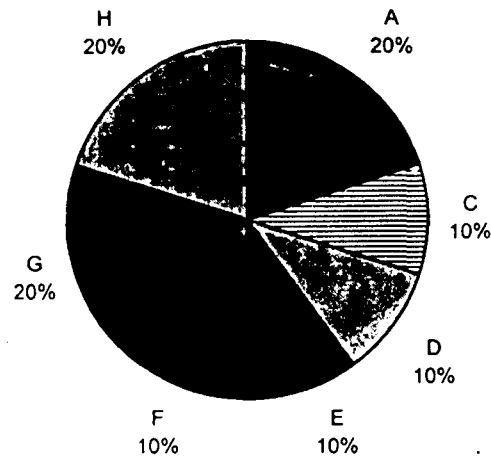
3. Countries with between 10% and 19.9% women in Parliament
(Based on information for 29 countries)



4. Countries with between 5% and 9.9% women in Parliament
(Based on information for 30 countries)



5. Countries with less than 5% women in Parliament
(Based on information for 18 countries)



- A: Judicial and constitutional affairs
- B: Security and defence
- C: Social, family, health and labour affairs
- D: Finance
- E: Foreign affairs
- F: Economic, agricultural, trade and industrial development questions
- G: Education, cultural affairs and communications
- H: Land use, communications network and environment
- I: Others

Figure: 11
 Source: 'Men and Women in Politics: Democracy and
 in Making', A World Comparative Study, IPU Reports and
 Documents, Series no 28, Geneva, 1997.

CHAPTER - IV

AUNG SAN SUU KYI'S ROLE IN THE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT IN MYANMAR

Aung San Suu Kyi is a pro-democracy activist, struggling to restore democracy in Myanmar.

Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi, aged 52 yrs, returned as a stranger to Burma in 1988, got involved in the pro-democracy uprising and became its charismatic leader when she shook the foundations of authoritarian rule and in the process proved a leader of international fame.

Until 26th August 1988, when she first entered the struggle, few among the people in the midst of the peaceful revolt against a military backed dictatorship knew or had any idea who Aung San Suu Kyi was or for what she stood for.¹ Although she has not previously been involved in politics, but a newspaper report² described her as magic among the public. The magic stems from the fact that she is the daughter of Aung San, the leader of the post II World War nationalist movement, who was assassinated on the eve of Burma's independence. Gen. Dow Aung San's name is the most revered in the nation and his memory is still alive. He is considered the 'Father of the Nation' in Burma. From the

1. Josef Silverstein: "Aung San Suu Kyi: Is she Burma's woman of Destiny?" Asian Survey, 30(10); Oct.1990, p.1007.
2. New York Times, 26 August, 1988.

moment his daughter stepped into the political arena, she has been at the centre of Burma's political struggle.

In reality, from her earliest childhood, Suu Kyi has been deeply pre-occupied with the question of what she might do to help her people. She never for a minute forget that she was the daughter of Burma's national hero, Aung San.³

It was Aung San, who led the struggle for independence from British colonial rule and from the Japanese occupation. He vaulted to national attention in the University student strike of 1936, and later secretly negotiated with the Japanese to aid the Burmese revolutionary struggle. Trained by the Japanese during the IIInd World War, he and his associate among the legendary 'Thirty Comrades' entered Burma with the invading Japanese army who promised independence. When the Pacific war began he formed the Burma Independence Army and led it into Burma, where units fought against the British. During the war, when Japan gave Burma independence, he became Minister of Defence, but when he and others around him became disillusioned with the Japanese, he organised a revolt of the Burma army and join with the Allies in recovering his country from the Japanese. In the post-war period, he led the nationalist coalition, the AFPFL, and won Burma's independence through peaceful negotiations with the

3. Michael Aris : 'Introduction to Suu Kyi', in Freedom from fear, (ed) by Michael Aris, Penguin Books, New Delhi, 1991.

British.⁴ He was assassinated while leading the constituent assembly in writing a constitution for independent Burma. His death robbed the nation of the one man whom Burmans and non-Burmans alike trusted. No leader after him had the political support he engendered nor the ability to translate his vision of a united, peaceful and prosperous Burman into reality⁵

Aung San Suu Kyi, who was born on 19th June, 1945, has only the dimmest recollections of her father. However, everything she has learned about him inclined her to believe in his selfless courage and his vision of a free and democratic Burma. At Oxford she steadily acquired a large collection of books and papers in Burmese and English about him. According to her husband Michael Aris,⁶ there is a certain inevitability in the way she like him, and has now become an icon of popular hope and longing. As in her own words "My father died when I was too young to remember him, but I made an attempt to discover the kind of man he had been by collecting and reading material on his life"⁷

4. Joseph Silversten, 'Political Legacy of Aung San, Coirnwel University, Ithaca, 1972, p. 102.

5. Ibid, p.104

6. Michael Aris: 'Introduction to Suu Kyi', in Freedom from fear, Ed. My Michael Aris, Penguin Book Ltd., New Delhi, 1991.

7. Aung San Suu Kyi : 'Freedom from Fear', Penguin Books Ltd., New Delhi, 1991, pg.3.

In the daughter as in the father there seems an extraordinary coincidence of legend and reality, of word and deed. As Ma Than E says that firm roots of, Suu Kyi indomitable spirit and unusual personality, lie in the ineffaceable memory of her father General Aung San and in her upbringing of her remarkable mother Daw Khin Kyi.⁸ And yet prior to 1988 it had never been her intention to strive for anything quite so momentous. Having married a British academic, she had stayed out of Burma for some years. It had seemed, as though she was destined to a quiet and peaceful life as an academician and as a mother of two kids. But fate seemed to have something else in store for her. In fact when she left Oxford for Burma to care for her ailing mother she had been set on writing a doctoral thesis on Burmese literature for London University. She had also entertained hopes of one day setting up an international scholarship scheme for Burmese student and a network of public libraries in Burma.⁹ Nevertheless, she always use to have in mind, that if her people ever needed her, she would not fail them.

Ms Suu Kyi had never envisaged a political role for herself, nor intended to jump into politics so suddenly. In

8. Ma Than E : "A flowering of the spirit: Memories of Suu and her Family" in Aung San Suu Kyi's, Freedom from Fear, Penguin Books Ltd., New Delhi, 1991, p.241.

9. Source of Information - Aung San Suu Kyi: 'Freedom from Fear', Penguin Books Ltd., New Delhi, 1991, p.17.

the memorable year of 1988, students and political activists in the country took the street demanding full democracy. The nationwide protests were quelled and the military leaders tightened the screw much to anguish of a democratic world.

It was a spur of the moment decision and Suu Kyi could not resist the Burmese clamour for freedom and democracy - the two cardinal principles she was wedded to.¹⁰

But, when she landed in the thick of the pro-democracy struggle, Suu Kyi was inextricably pulled into the vortex of this national movement. She plunged head long into it and soon emerged as a national figure around whom the people and the main political party, the National League for Democracy (NLO), rallied.

She joined the pro-democracy forces and the leadership qualities in her, as also the principles of non-violence came to the fore.¹¹ All that Aung San Suu Kyi had to draw or were her very finely cultivated sense of commitment and her powers of reason. Also she was blessed and burdened with her unique status as the daughter of national hero. Although the regime had appropriated his image for their own purposes, his reputation was still inviolate in the hearts

10. Bertil Lintner, Aung San Suu Kyi and Burma's unfinished renaissance, Bangkok; Peacock Press, 1990, p.12.

11. Bertil Lintner: 'Aung San Suu Kyi and Burma's unfinished renaissance', Peacock Press, Bangkok, 1990, p.22.

of the common people. Moreover Suu Kyi had never lost her Burmese identity and values through all the years abroad. Her knowledge of the Burmese heritage, her wonderful fluency in her own language and, very important, her refusal to give up her Burmese citizenship despite her marriage to an Englishman - all these factors contributor to make her engagement to the democratic, ¹² movement unavoidable, when she came to attend her sick mother in Burma in 1988.

Although Aung San Suu Kyi has instant name and recognition and acceptance as the daughter of the father of the nation and a national hero, she has a number of qualities of her own which prepared her well to sustain her in the political arena in her own right. First, she is intelligent and well educated. During the first fifteen years of her life, she was schooled in Burma, where she developed her knowledge and use of Burmese as any other child of her day. Later, in India and Great Britain, she continued her education and in 1967 earned a degree at St Hugh's College, Oxford, where she studied politics, philosophy and economics.¹³ She later learned the Japanese language, and during 1985-86, Aung San Suu Kyi was a visiting scholar at Kyoto

12. Ibid., p.25.

13. Information from, Josef Silverstein: "Aung San Suu Kyi: Is She Burma's woman of Destiny ?" Asian Survey, 30(10); Oct., 1990, pg.1007-19.

University¹⁴. In 1987 she was a fellow at the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies in New Delhi ¹⁵. At the time of her return to Burma in 1988, she was enrolled in the London School of Oriental and African Studies, where she was working for an advanced degree¹⁶. Secondly, she was widely travelled in 1969, two years after learning Oxford, she went to New Year where she was employed at the U.N. Secretariat. In 1972, ;after marrying a British scholar, a Tibetan specialist, Michael Aris, they lived in Bhutan where she worked for the Bhutan Foreign Ministry as a research officer on UN affairs. Two years later the family moved to England, where her husband assumed an appointment at Oxford in Tibetan and Himalayan studies.¹⁷ During the 1970's and 1980's she made frequent trips to Burma to visit her ageing mother; while there, she had many opportunities to observe conditions at first hand - the decline in the economy, the hardships of the people and the corrupt authoritarian rule of the military.

In the nationwide turbulence which followed Ne Win's resignation on 23rd July 1988 and the immediate refusal by

14. Ibid, p.1008.

15. Ibid, p.1008.

16. Ibid, p.1009.

17. Information from Bertil Linker: 'Aung San Suu Kyi and Burma's unfinished renaissance', Peacock Press, Bangkok, 1990, p.78.

his party to agree to a referendum on Burma's future, Suu Kyi's house quickly became the main centre of political activity in the country and the scene of such continuous comings and goings as the curfew allowed¹⁸. Every conceivable type of activist from all walks of life and all generations poured in Suu Kyi talked to them all about human rights, an expression which had little currency in Burma till then¹⁹. She began to take her first steps into the malestrom beyond her gate.

By the time Suu Kyi's mother died on 27th December, nine months after her first stroke, it seemed as if several empires had come and gone. The carnival of mass demonstrations had turned repeatedly to bloodshed as the authorities tried to stem the tide of revolt sweeping the country²⁰.

Three heads of the state were forced by the people's movement to resign in quick succession, though ultimate power remained vested in the military officers loyal to Ne Win²¹. The army controlled by those officers finally staged a coup on 18th September and brought in their State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC). They reiterated the

18. Bertil Sintner : 'Outrage: Burma's Struggle for Democracy', Hongkong, 1989, pg.56.

19. Ibid, p.56.

20. Ibid, p.60.

21. Ron May, "Analysing recent events in Burma", Australian Journal of International Affairs, 44, 1990, pp.291-94.

promise of free and fair elections while clearing the streets with gunfire. Aung San Suu Kyi and her close associates promptly formed their party, the National League for Democracy (NLD).²²

Aung San Suu Kyi shares her father's belief in democracy and its achievement through peaceful means. Her insistence that violent and non-violent means belong strictly separable domains of human action reflects her personal experience of sad consequences of their mixture in Burmese History²³. Perhaps more important, it reflects careful study over many years of the ideas, problems and constraints which shaped her father's short life. While Aung San Suu Kyi has been directly inspired by his example, the problems of continued militarism and factionalism which he foresaw and which overtook him at his assassination, led her very early to see general principles of moral, social and political action which not only incorporate the lessons of his life but would also help to re-establish and sustain the framework of Burmese democracy which remained tentative and fragile at his death²⁴. In the Burmese situation, out of the inherently disorderly phenomenon of spontaneous mass upris-

22. Ibid, p.294.

23. Philip Kreages: 'Aung San Suu Kyi and the Peaceful Struggle for Human Rights in Burma', in Aung San Suu Kyi's Freedom from Fear', Penguin Books Ltd., New Delhi, 1991, pg.290.

24. Ibid, p.291.

ing, further disturbed and disrupted by violent military suppression; there has emerged a clear leader, advocating non-violent methods, who commands widespread admiration and support: Aung San Suu Kyi. Her position is at once formidable and extremely vulnerable. She is physically at the mercy of a military regime which retains power by use of force; yet the military has not dared to apply physical violence to her.

From the word go, Ms. Suu Kyi, once into the movement, kept harping on the compelling need to keep it non-violent. Otherwise, it could turn into an extremist force, with students on the streets. Her appeal and inner peace, found a ready echo and relevance among the Buddhist Burmese²⁵. She moulded the pro-democracy forces to become a real threat to the military leadership, and remain non-violent, even after some merciless killing down of the youth on the streets of the country.

The principle of non-violent struggle for democracy, reflect the inspiration which Aung San Suu Kyi derived from her study and reflection on Gandhi's philosophy and practice of non-violent civil disobedience.²⁶ They were demonstrated repeatedly in the conduct of her campaign of public meetings

25. Ibid, p.292.

26. Philip Kreager: "Aung San Suu Kyi and the Peaceful Struggle for Human Rights in Burma", in Aung San Suu Kyi's 'Freedom from Fear', Penguin Books Ltd., New Delhi, 1991, pg.285.

and demonstrations; and they remain no less evident in her cool response to the intimidation and slander which the military government has continued to direct against her. Long term observers of the Burmese scene stress that it was Aung San Suu Kyi who first introduced the issue of human rights into Burmese political discussion.²⁷ In fact Aung San Suu Kyi has played a unique role in the Burmese struggle for human rights.

In her political struggle, she called for the creation of an impartial interim government; to oversee a national election in which the people were free to form parties, choose leaders and contest for power.²⁸ However, she herself was not really interested in the power syndrome, saw no role for herself in this process or future government. 'A Life of politics', she said at the end of August 1988, 'holds no attraction for me. At the moment, I serve as a kind of unifying force because of my father's name and because I am not interested in jostling for any kind of position.'²⁹

As a pragmatist, she responded to changing conditions, in both her role and speech. In response to the military's seizure of power on 18th September, 1988, she joined in the

27. Ibid, p.285.

28. Joseph Siwerstein, 1990, op.cit, p.1011.

29. The Times, London, 29th August, 1989.

founding of the NLB and became its General Secretary³⁰ She spoke out sharply against the murder in the streets of non-violent demonstrations by the soldiers as they consolidated their power. She spoke out strongly as the military increased its violation of human rights, intimidation and repression. She continued to call for peaceful change through free and fair elections, but this became more difficult as the military rules began to arrest her followers and harass her. As she travelled about the country her attacks became more focussed upon the behaviour of the military, which she eventually described as fascist, and an obstruction to peaceful change. By June 1989 she publicly accused Ne Win of being the real leader of the military government; the source of the people's hardships and the man who destroyed everything her father stood for and tried to achieve.³¹

She recognised, very early, that the military had no real intention of allowing free and open politics to flower. Registration as a political party meant the right to display a signboard, hold gathering of less than five and obtain extra petrol so that it was theoretically possible to move

30. Bertil Lintner: 'Aung San Suu Kyi and Burma's unfinished renaissance', Peacock Press, Bangkok, 1990, p.35.

31. Ibid. p.40

around and build support.³² But, in reality, the decree made it impossible to hold meetings, print and distribute party literature and say anything which might be construed as criticism of the military present and past. In reality, there was also no freedom of press.³³ Despite all this, like her father, Aung San Suu Kyi showed courage in the face of adversity. The military feared her popularity with the people and did not know how to respond to it. Eventually, even before the army led coup, the military intelligence and police launched the idea that she was manipulated by the communists.³⁴ The military junta arrested Thakin Tin Mya, a former member of the Burma Communist Party (BCP) politburo and, later central committee member of the army's own Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP), who they said was advising her, despite vehement refutation by Aung San Suu Kyi.³⁵

In November, her co-party leader, Aung Gyi, made similar charges, saying that she was surrounded by BCP members and demanded that she remove them.³⁶ Again, she denied any BCP influence on either her thinking or her action and,

32. Joseph Silversten, 1990, op cit., p. 1014.

33. Ibid., p. 1015.

34. Ministry of Information, 'Communist Party's conspiracy to take over State power', Rangoon, 1989.

35. Christian Science Monitor, 15th June, 1989.

36. New York Times, 24 June, 1989.

backed by the other NLD leaders, expelled Aung Yyi from the party. But the change would not go away; during the next few months the military spokesmen picked up and repeated the accusations. In June 1989, a government spokesman equated her party with the banned BCP, the first time that either Aung San Suu Kyi or her party was directly attacked.³⁷ Despite her earlier refutation of the charges, the military rulers persisted in this line of attack.

Initially, they overlooked her violation of their order on public gatherings. But as she travelled around the country and drew crowds in the thousands and dominated the political scene, they responded. First, the military warned people away from her rallies and, when she departed after an appearance, arrested local members of her party. Second, they began to attack her personally, also attacked her as working for foreign nations, ready to sell out the country if she gained power; and they attacked her for being anti-Buddhist.³⁸ She ignored the first, but responded vigorously to the second and third charges.

During the spring of 1989, a political crisis began to build up as Aung San Suu Kyi spoke out more forcefully, the crowds at her rallies increased and foreign journalist sought her out for interviews and published her ideas and

37. New York Times, 24 June 1989.

38. New York Times, 9 January, 1989.

comments world wide.

There has been an incident, where the army captain armed the rifles at her with the orders of countdown, however, the order later being countermanded - the incident marked an escalation in the military's effort to intimidate her.³⁹

As anniversaries came due marking specific past attacks upon students, Aung San Suu Kyi and her party planned memorial celebrations. At the 21st June memorial, she and several students were in the process of paying homage when the military opened fire and killed one person. As tensions built, she called off a memorial service on 7th July, but planned to honour her father on 19th July, the date of his assassination.⁴⁰ The military sought to control the ceremonies and invited her to join their leaders in marking the events; she refused, saying she would honour her father in her own way. In the face of the tensions caused by this train of events Aung San Suu Kyi called off her memorial visit in order to prevent bloodshed.⁴¹

Raising the potential of her leadership, the SLORC opted to put her under house arrest for 'transgression of

39. Bangkok Post, 16th April, 1989.

40. Bertil Lintner: 'Aung San Suu Kyi and Burma's unfinished Renaissance', Peacock Press, Bangkok, 1990, p.96.

41. Josef Silverstein: 'Aung San Suu Kyi: Is she Burman's woman of Destiny?', Asian Survey, 30(10) Oct., 1990, p.1007.

laws'. They cut off all her communications with her followers and the outside world. The army also detained several other leaders of the movement, including Jin U, the chairman of the NLD.⁴²

Aung San Suu Kyi in response to her house arrest demanded a transfer to Insein Jail in Rangoon and asked to be kept under the same conditions as supporters who were arrested as part of the crackdown on her party.⁴³

She immediately began a hunger strike when her request was ignored. The strike, during which she accepted water only, lasted twelve days. The military government explicitly denied that her hunger strike was taking place, although it was widely reported in the international media. Aung San Suu Kyi's hunger strike was described at the time as 'the most serious challenge the Burmese military government has faced'.⁴⁴

In December, 1989, Aung San Suu Kyi allowed her name to be put forward as a candidate for a seat in the forthcoming election. Although, the election commission initially approved her candidacy, it was challenged by National Unity Party (NUP) - the new name for the army's former party, the BSIP. Despite, various appeals, the election commission,

42. Ibid, p.1017.

43. The Time, 29 July, 1989.

44. The Times, 6 August, 1989.

cancelled her candidature, ostensibly on charge that she was in contact with dissident groups fighting against government forces.⁴⁵ To my mind, the army didn't want the popular Aung San Suu Kyi to fight election and hence legitimising her position in Burma's political scenario.

It is assumed by all who have followed events in Burma that if Aung San Suu Kyi had been allowed to stand for elections, she would have won. But she was not allowed to run, and her leading supporters were either jailed or forced into hiding for fear of arrest. In addition the NLD had no leader with the prominence (beside Suu Kyi and Tin U, who were arrested), therefore, it had to rely upon local party organisation and the bravery of the ordinary people to achieve victory in the face of harassment from, and intimidation by, the military.⁴⁶

Despite the obstacles created by the military to intimidate the people, the outcome of the election proved to be one of the real surprises to emerge under military rule. The NLD was the overwhelming choice of the people. It won 392 seats in the 485 constituencies where elections were held. Twenty six other parties won seats, with the NUP

45. Bangkok Post, 18th February, 1990.

46. Joseph Silverstein, 1990, op.cit, p.1016.

winning a mere ten.⁴⁷

In the real sense, election was not really between several parties competing, but a sort of 'referendum' in which the NLD represented democratic aspirations, while the NUP stood for the old system. Election proved to be a platform for the people to voice their dissatisfaction against the military rule. Even though Aung San Suu Kyi was not a contestant, it was clear to all that the people had voted for her and against the military and its proxy.

The victory of the NLD did not bring political change in Burma. The military, have brushed aside the verdict and continue to detain all leaders and tighten its military hold on the country.⁴⁸ The military generally argued that the election would produce only a constituent assembly, with a mandate to write a new constitution. Once the new constitution was written and approved, there would be a second election to fill the offices created by the new basic law. They embellish the theme that new constitution had to produce a strong government, had to guarantee the unity of the state and would have to have the approval of all 135 minorities resident in the land, only then would they transfer the

47. James Guyot: "Myanmar in 1990: The unconsummated election", Asian Survey, 21,1991, p.207.

48. Ibid, p.208.

power.⁴⁹

Meanwhile, the elected members of the national assembly were not content to wait. Those who were still free, reached Manerplaw on 18th December, 1990, the head abater of the Karen and proclaimed a rival government to the military.⁵⁰ The National Coalition government of the Union of Burma (NCGUBO, led by Dr. Sein Levin, was given the backing of the Democratic alliance of Burma (DAB), which is a broad coalition of ethnic parties and religious groups who seek a peaceful end to the civil war and a return to civilian democratic rule in Burma.⁵¹

With legal and moral force, and the backing of DAB, they seek to fill the void in political leadership and to unite Burmans and minorities in a truly national coalition against military rule.

All these events took place while Aung San Suu Kyi was under house arrest and it is unknown whether or not she was consulted secretly and involved in shaping them.

Aung San Suu Kyi was expected to serve a six year detention, which ended.⁵² The SLORC could have certainly

49. Ibid, p.210.

50. Bertil Lintner, 'Outragein Burma', (2nd Edn.) White Lotus, London 1990, p.143.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid, p.143.

found an excuse to extend her term, or release her before putting her back under house arrest. But it looked as though it was a somewhat propitious time for the forces working for the restoration of democracy. Myanmar was wanting to gain further recognition in South-east Asia and perhaps planning to join the regional grouping called ASEAN.

Japan, one of the main donors in this region, was holding back from its commitments and not letting the private sector implement many projects which were agreed upon. It brought pressure on the SLORC to release Ms. Suu Kyi before aid and investments flowed in more freely from Tokyo.⁵³

Since there was no other commitment the Junta saw no reason to detain the Nobel laureate. So on July 11, she was set free and allowed to see and receive people.

The western powers, who had been campaigning for her release and were largely instrumental in getting her the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, heaved a sigh of relief. Some of them expected the military rulers to follow up on her release and initiate a process for the restoration of democracy.

Ms Suu Kyi knew the military leadership better and in one of her interviews said that she hoped that her release

53. Ron May: "Analyzing recent events in Burma", Australian Journal of International Affairs, 44, Sept. 1990, pp.291-294.

meant something positive. In her own words - "I am just one person. It is not only a change in situation of one person. We want it to be in the situation of the 45 million people in this country".⁵⁴

She told her supporters that her release was only the first, 'half-step', but more concrete measures were necessary if the SLORC was for the restoration of democracy. From the beginning she kept asking the junta for a dialogue with all sections of opinion.⁵⁵

While Aung San Suu Kyi was still in house arrest, the military rulers understood that alienating the people was counter-productive so they got to work on re-habilitation. They gradually started approaching neighbouring countries for help to revive the economy and enable the people to eke a living.⁵⁶

Now, almost two years after her release, the junta continues to rule and has managed to secure some major investments from Japan, China and South-east Asia. but these are primarily in the service sectors.⁵⁷ Myanmar has now sought membership of the ASEAN, and has now been given

54. The Hindu, Sunday Review, March 24, 1996.

55. Ibid.

56. Far Eastern Economic Review, Asia 1991, Yearbook, Hongkong, p.86.

57. Ibid, p.87.

observe status in the prestigious grouping.⁵⁸,

The SLORC set up a National convention of over 700 people to draft a new constitution for Myanmar. It wants to provide a constitutional role for the armed forces in the political system, and if possible disqualify Aung San Suu Kyi from assuming any leadership role. It is using or rather twisting a provision in the 1948 constitution, which puts restrictions on foreign national or agents. She is now being dubbed a 'foreigner' because she is married to a Briton.⁵⁹

The NLD of Ms. Suu Kyi has walked out of the National convention set up by the junta, to draft the new constitution. This was because the NLD opposed moves to constitutionally provide a 20 to 25 percent of the parliamentary seats for the armed forces. While acknowledging a role for the armed forces in the defence and security of the country, Ms Suu Kyi is against providing a political role for them, because it militates against her ideals of democracy and power to the people.⁶⁰

There are no signs of a dialogue. The National League for Democracy has quit the National convention, and is

58. Far Eastern Economic Review, Asia 1991 Yearbook, Hongkong, p.90.

59. The Hindu, Sunday, 29 September, 1996.

60. Ibid., p.87.

preparing for a greater struggle to restore democracy. Suu Kyi remains calm, patient, hopeful and committed to her people and to non-violence. It may take time she admits, but she is confident that military rulers cannot hold back democracy from the people.⁶¹ She is quietly working on a plan to educate the people and spread awareness.

All she expects from the rest of the world is moral support and pressure on the junta. She wants foreign investors to think twice if they are doing the right thing for the Burmese and what good their investments bring to the people.⁶²

The west is losing patience with Myanmar. Its repeated attempts to persuade ASEAN to do something tangible are not getting the required response. The US sanctions on Myanmar, has mounted pressure on the SLORC, yet there are no signs of any democratic ruling.⁶³

Though, Aung San Suu Kyi's release had raised high expectations, the journey to democracy has still not begun. The path choose by Aung San Suu Kyi is not smooth and the journey may be long. However, the success could pave a new road for democracy not only in her country, but for the

61. Interview published by V. Jayanth, in 'The Hindu', 24th March, 1996.

62. Ibid.

63. The Hindu, Sunday, May 4, 1997.

whole region which has not experienced the true spirit of democracy, human rights or freedom of expression.

CHAPTER - V

CONCLUSION

The emergence of Aung San Suu Kyi at the very centre of the Burmese struggle for human rights, and democracy, and the unique role she has been able to play, are the consequence of three important facts which have bound her life inextricably to the modern history of Myanmar.

The first is that she is the daughter of the unquestioned architect of independent Burma in the modern period, Aung San. His role was that of a unifying figure of unblemished character with a strong vision of a free, democratic Burma. His assassination, on the eve of independence, along with the cabinet members of the transitional government he headed, had tragic implications for the stability of the new country. Not surprisingly, Aung San has become a powerful symbol and martyr of Burmese freedom. His legacy has made Aung San Suu Kyi an appropriate symbol of the people's legitimate rights and aspirations.

Second, the identification of daughter and father carries with it the terrifying prospect of history repeating itself. The historical legacy which Aung San Suu Kyi represents, is undoubtedly very awkward for the military government; a second martyrdom would hardly be to its advantage, whether in the short or the long term.

The third and the crucial fact about Aung San Suu Kyi's unique place in Burma today stands out very clearly. Facts of parentage may have provided her with immediate and special public recognition, her heartfelt and determined insistence on higher principles is certainly appropriate to the deep reverence in which the memory of her father is generally held. But is the guidance she has brought to a highly unstable situation, sustained by the personal force, courage and sound judgment manifest in her words and actions, that continues to provide the main hope for Burma.

In the background of political turmoil in Myanmar, and the role Aung San Suu Kyi has played up till now, the most pertinent question which comes to one's mind is

- Will Aung San Suu Kyi play a major role in shaping the future destiny of Burma?
- Will she carry on the legacy of her father and wear the mantle of leadership for struggle against military?
- Will her struggle lead to restoration of democracy in Myanmar?
- Is Aung San Suu Kyi, Myanmar's women of destiny?

It appears so at this time. There is no other person who has achieved her status, love and respect from the people of Burma and the support from foreign government who have appealed on her behalf. She is her father's daughter-intelligent, honest, tough and fearless. Most of all she has no past connections with the failures of the democratic

governments of U Nu or the corrupt incompetent and brutal dictatorship of Ne Win and his military successors.

By not allowing her to run in the first free election since 1960, the military may have inadvertently helped to raise her stature with the people.

If Aung San Suu Kyi had been permitted to run and win, what sort of leader would she be? Given her intellect and emergence as a rigorous campaigner and excellent speaker there is no reason to doubt that, as leader of an elected parliament that was free to govern the nation, she would have no hesitation in accepting the responsibility and challenges imposed by leadership.

In the face of three international awards for her fight for human rights and democracy in Myanmar, Aung San Suu Kyi seem to be the undisputed leader and truly a women of destiny for Myanmar.

Whatever may be the outcome of constituent assembly that the military is slowly shaping and directing, the people are likely to look to her for its approval or rejection, as Aung San Suu Kyi remains the people's leader who was denied the right to fulfil her role.

Even after her release, her movement is restricted according to the whims and fancies of the military junta, and the freedom remains just in name.

For many in Burma, she appears to be the re-incarnation of her father and destined to carry out his unfinished job

of leading Myanmar into the modern world.

But if she is Myanmar's women of destiny, she stands to inherit more problems than her father imagined, and although she is intelligent and informed about Myanmar, she has given no clear answers to the question of how democracy can be institutionalised, how national unity can be achieved, how the economy can be improved or how the violations of human and political rights by the military in the past and present will be rectified.

The Burmese people have been in search of leadership since the death of Aung San and many believe that they have found it in his daughter. So long as she remains untried, in a responsible position and isolated from the people, they will continue to hold and believe that she is the one who can get them on a new course. But until she is given the chance to use her new found skills of democratic politics, in the crucible of parliamentary politics and bears the responsibility for her decision, no one will actually know if she is destined to lead Burma towards a new and better life than its people have had or if she will be forced to compromise and accept the realities of Myanmar that have developed over the past 45 years. But for now, she is the only hope for the future of Myanmar politics, the only star in the black skies, truly the heroine of Myanmar.

While analysing Aung San Suu Kyi's role in the democratic movement, several general conclusions can be drawn

out for the woman in political arena.

While it may not be so for all the cases, majority of the women in politics is due to their political patriarchal lineage. This political legacy has been to their advantage in their rise to political prominence, especially so in a traditional society. As has been the case with Aung San Suu Kyi, who was circumstantially forced into the democratic movement due to her father's Aung San's legacy of politics. In Southeast Asia, there is also the case of Megawati Sukarnoputri of Indonesia, who is weathering a political storm, after being ousted as leader of the main opposition Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) or the case of Corazon Aquino of the Philippines, who was also forced to lead the democracy movement due to her political lineage.

It is generally seen that the determining influence of education is enormous on the women participant in the socio-political system. By and large, other things being equal, education has held the key to social and political power and influence. We of course have a few individual or leaders who are practically illiterate or uneducated and yet command a good deal of power in the political system. But it would be more correct to say that the educated or trained people have generally played a more powerful and influential role.

Women's relationship to formal organised politics has often been one that highlights the tensions and contradictions in the working of those politics. So, the lack of

women in formal political structures demonstrates not only the institutional sexism generated by such politics, but also forces us to examine, whether, those political structures are worth fighting for. The poor participation of women in politics is perhaps an indication of their disillusionment with the unhealthy trend in politics.

Women's activity in politics are often institutionally devalued. Women's resistance, whether expressed as formal politics or as struggle within communities, have often not been seen for what they are, that is, as challenges to the state, or to nationhood, or to patriarchal formations, or indeed, as challenges to all three.

One way to see the relative powerlessness of women in development decision making is due to them being caught in a triad of dependency. In this context, the dependency triad describes the situation that exists in virtually every country in the world, one in which women are dependent upon men in formal politics at the local national and international level. Equally important is the recognition that these three levels are increasingly interrelated.¹

Traditional cultural norms, the productive roles of women, political values and structures, and the position of the country(nation-state) in the international system, are

1. Sue. Ellen M. Charlton, Women in Third World Development, Westview Press, Boulders and Wondon, 1984, p.13.

factors that are of primary importance and those that initially define the status, women hold in a particular society and the role they play in politics.

Thus, under representation, under election, and underpower are three characteristics that have emerged of the participation of women in politics. Women's impact on the political process reflects, how women get affected by the political process not just as individuals but also as a group.

However, the "impact" not only means talking of achieving an impact through political process of improving women's conditions, but also of introducing women's voice into the larger decision-making process. There is the need to introduce several measures at once in a coordinated manner for the sake of effective participation of women. Today, all our countries face global, political and economic challenges that are partly beyond our control, and many are undergoing radical institutional and structural changes, whose long-term social, political and economic effects are extremely hard to manage in view of an unsatisfactory international order and insufficient economic cooperation.

In such a context, no country can any longer afford to overlook any portion of its human resources. This means re-directing our perspectives and policies. Our policies must hence forth, at all levels, be shaped and applied not just by men but with the full and equal participation of women.

To conclude, it can be observed that Aung San Suu Kyi epitomises women's force in politics, which is yet to emerge fully. She truly represents the women political force, not just for women in politics, but for all those women who wants to have a role in power politics.

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