

Deontology and Female *Eudaimonia* in the World Polity: A Grotian Perspective

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Issues of gender inequality are embedded in many cultures, transcending both history and geography. In many such cultures, prescriptive ontologies of woman as the Other usually constrain the autonomy of women so that they frequently have limited identities separate from men. Consequently, women are often perceived as trapped in physiology, language, time not measured by historical events, and by institutions not of their own making (De Beauvoir 1989/1949).

The late 20th century human rights tradition, exemplified by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), formulates a concept of human rights to include rights essential to human development, such as rights to economic development (e.g., employment at a fair wage), adequate housing, health care, and education that applies to all humanity, regardless of gender (UN 2002). UNDHR illuminates, from a deontological perspective, a framework of *eudaimonia* – of human “flourishing” based on the individual’s application of his or her own capabilities to effect choice and agency and the exogenous means to pursue action within a civic, political, social, cultural, and economic institutional framework, sustained by community, nation-state, and world polity (Sen 1982, 1984, and 1993; Nussbaum 2000; UN 2002).

This tradition of human rights promulgated in UN human rights regimes has its provenance, to a great extent, in the political theories of Hugo Grotius (1583-1645). In his vision of a comprehensive world polity sustained by a shared world culture, human *eudaimonia* depends not only on national economic development but also on human development. Economic

development, Grotius posits, is only possible when it sustains, and is sustained by, human sociability: the impetus to self-preservation that we all share, enabled by purposive rationality, coupled with self-interested cooperation, upheld by rights and obligations in a world polity bound by law (1916/1609; 1949/1625; 1957/1625).¹ In effect, wellbeing in the world polity – be it individual, national, or international – is only possible because of the institutionalization of laws and rights that bind all of us into a common world polity. Arguably, Grotian principles of rights-based self-preservation and morality supported by trade have been redefined as covenants of human and economic rights, which, when propagated by world-juridical institutions and incorporated in national institutions, have, in effect, become the basis for international law (Butler 1990; Vincent 1990; Buerghenthal & Murphy 2002).

Against the background of Grotius' concepts world polity based on governance by consent of the governed, freedom of trade, and the promulgation of human rights in various United Nations-sponsored human rights initiatives, this study analyzes data from diverse sources to explore the extent to which human and political rights, civil liberties, development, and their interdependencies may contribute to the potential for achieving *eudaimonia*. In this context, *eudaimonia* applies both to the individual and the community and is predicated on physical and social wellbeing sustained by the appropriate institutions embedded in the polity.

This study explores three dimensions of the potential for female *eudaimonia* that, collectively, offer a modern gender-based perspective of Grotian sociability. The first dimension focuses on female survival and reproduction; this aspect of *eudaimonia* focuses on purposive rationality and self-preservation as these apply to the essential survival of the household. The second dimension measures female participation in the economy, in effect, Grotian sociability in the context of the labor market. In many parts of the world, female entry into the labor market

correlates with a greater likelihood of female independence and marriage at a later age, mitigating the effects of androcentricity and androcracy (UNHDP 1990 and subsequent years; UNIFEM 2000 & 2002). The third dimension of female *eudaimonia* explored in this study focuses on education and literacy, the basis of informed participation in civil and political society. From the perspective of Grotian sociability, literacy and education enhance the quality of purposive rationality, self-preservation, and self-interested cooperation and, thus, increase the potential for female *eudaimonia*. Increased education and literacy have the potential for making more information available to women to sustain their own and their children's wellbeing. To guide the analysis, the study addresses the following research question: What are the effects of international development on the potential for achieving gender equality and female *eudaimonia*?

The research question provides the basis for two hypotheses to explore the effects of the Grotian world polity dimensions on female *eudaimonia*: governance by consent of the governed and participation in the world economy. The greater a country's adherence to world polity norms of democratic governance, the higher its potential for female *eudaimonia*, *ceteris paribus*. The greater a country's participation in the world economy, the greater its female *eudaimonia* potential; the greater the country's external debt, the lower its female *eudaimonia* potential, *ceteris paribus*.

Because 1989 and 2000 are important cultural markers in the world polity, the study concentrates on the period 1989-2000. 1989 witnessed the fall of the Berlin Wall, symbolizing the impending dissolution of the Soviet hegemony. 2000 marks the end of a millennium and hearkens back to the millennial Year of Jubilee tradition in European culture.

Female Eudaimonia Potential: Statistical Models

From the perspective of Grotian sociability, the achievement of female *eudaimonia* depends not only on individual initiative and the application of human capabilities but also on institutional interactions – predicated on finding the proper balance between enlightened self-interest and deontology, self-preservation and law – that are conducive to achieving *eudaimonia*. In order to explore these concepts further, this section presents two different statistical models to analyze the importance of national income and national commitments to civil society and social welfare as dimensions of the national potential for female *eudaimonia*.

Research Design

The section first presents a factor model of different dimensions of the potential for female *eudaimonia*, followed by a multivariate model that focuses on female *eudaimonia* in which the results of the factor analysis function as dependent variables. These models provide different perspectives on an institutional framework in which support for the individual's pursuit of personal wellbeing is bounded, in essence, only by deontological and legal constraints shared by the community.

Data Sources

The statistical models use data drawn from different sources; for example, World Bank data that focus primarily on economic development (national accounts), UN Human Development (UNHD) data that focus on human development, and Freedom House data from 1972 to 2000 for dimensions of civil and political society. These data are augmented by data from Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and UNHD reports.

Data Limitations

Various constraints affect the statistical analysis. The data reflect gender biases. World Bank data, for example, tend to focus on economic indicators that primarily valorate the monetary aspects of national economic systems to the detriment of the nonmonetary economic contributions, usually made by women, that are essential to the provisioning and maintenance of families and households. Waring (1999), for example, discusses the exclusion of women's work from the UN System of National Accounts (UNSNA). Augmenting World Bank data with UN data does not completely overcome this money-economy bias. Frequently, one must extrapolate underlying dimensions of female *eudaimonia* and gender equality to surmount the limitations of both World Bank and UN data. Another problem is that data are only for a limited number of countries and not for the entire time span that bounds the analysis. In spite of these constraints, however, the data are sufficient to extrapolate worldwide patterns for the period under analysis.

Operationalization of Variables

The study uses a number of different variables as dimensions of Grotian sociability that applies not only to individuals but also to nation-states as they participate in the world polity. 1960-2000 participation in UN Human Rights Conventions constitutes a dimension of Grotian deontology of rights sustained by law that applies to individuals in the world polity. Nation-states are expected to participate in these Conventions as evidence of their adherence to world polity and world cultural norms (Meyer, Boli, & Ramirez 1997). Similarly, foreign aid as a percentage of GNI is a measure of Grotian deontology as it applies to nation-states. Trade and external debt measure participation in the world economy, providing Grotian dimensions of economic development based on international trade (UN 2002; UNSTAT 2005). The Freedom House indices of civil liberties and political rights provide variables of democratic governance

that reflect the Grotian notion that the freely given consent of the governed provides the foundation for governmental legitimacy.

From an institutional perspective, Grotius' contemporary society was fundamentally androcentric and androcratic. Although, the modern world polity strives for the Enlightenment goals of justice and progress, the modern world polity is still predominantly androcentric and androcratic. To augment the Grotian world polity dimensions of human right regimes, governance, and participation in the world economy, the study uses specific variables as tropes for aspects of female *eudaimonia*. The percentage of brides age 19 years or younger functions as a proxy for the institutional nexus of marriage and patriarchy in a society (Therborn 2004). It should be remembered that, in many societies, young brides are considered vital to the perpetuation of the household, not only because of their expected fecundity but also in terms of their personal economic contributions to the household. Female and maternal survivability rates, national fertility rate, and infant survivability percentage reflect the institutionalization of health care for women and children and indicate the deontological responsibilities of the polity for sustaining female *eudaimonia* in the household. From a gender perspective, these variables reflect Grotian notions of self- perseverance.

Primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of female education and projections of female literacy indicate degrees of support for women's and girls' participation in civil, political, and economic institutions. Education and literacy inform the abilities for purposive rationality, self-preservation, and self-interested cooperation vital to Grotian sociability. Moreover, literacy and education are essential for realization of one's capabilities in the context of community and society.

March 1, 2010

The percentage of female non-agricultural employees (percentage of the total number of non-agricultural employees) and the size of the female labor force are indirect measurements of androcentricity in labor markets. From a gender and labor market perspective, they address Grotian notions of purposive rationality and self-preservation by participation in the market place.

Table 1 provides summary statistics for these variables.

Table 1 – Summary Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Observations
1960-2000 UN HRC Participation	.2	.6	0	8	N = 8168
Aid % GNI	8	12.7	-.7	242.3	N = 4403
Brides 19 and Older (%)	16	13	0	74	N = 757
Civil Lib. & Pol. Rights ²	4.6	5	0	14	N = 7106
Education 1st Level (% Girls)	47.1	3.6	6.7	62	N = 2137
Education 2nd Level (% Girls)	47	6.8	12.7	94.5	N = 1880
Education 3d Level (% Girls)	46.4	13.8	6.2	100	N = 1424
External Debt % GDP	85.8	109.5	.14	1598.2	N = 1903
Female Adult Lit. Rate (%)	75.9	26.1	4.8	103.6	N = 2218
Female Labor. Force (%)	39.3	8.4	10.2	53.7	N = 2580
Female Non-Agr. Emp. (%)	38.4	11.7	3.8	57.8	N = 1974
Female Survival (%)	85	12.7	31.3	95.6	N = 675
Female Youth Lit. Rate (%)	90.2	13.7	24.2	99.9	N = 2206
Fertility Rate	96.8	1.7	92	99	N = 2081
Infant LT 5	93	7	68	99.6	N = 581

March 1, 2010

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Observations
Survival (%)					
Infant Survival (%)	96.3	4	80.9	99.8	N = 990
Maternal Survival (%)	99.7	.5	97.7	100	N = 522
Trade % GDP	74.6	43.3	3.7	294.7	4798

Female Eudaimonia Potential: A Factor Model

A principal component factor (PCF) analysis of the data indicates that a three-factor varimax rotation is appropriate. Table 2 summarizes these factors.

Table 2 – Three Dimensions of Female *Eudaimonia* Potential

Female Eudaimonia Potential: Focus on the Household – Female Survival and Reproduction	Female Eudaimonia Potential: Focus on Employment	Female Eudaimonia Potential: Focus on Education and Literacy
Average interitem correlation: 0.8 Number of items in the scale: 6 Scale reliability coefficient: 1.0	Average interitem correlation: 0.7 Number of items in the scale: 2 Scale reliability coefficient: 0.8	Average interitem correlation: 0.7 Number of items in the scale: 5 Scale reliability coefficient: 0.9
Brides 19 and Older (% Total)	Female Non-Agricultural Employment (% Total)	Education 1st Level (% Girls)
Fertility Rate	Female Labor Force (% Total)	Education 2nd Level (% Girls)
Maternal Survival (%)		Education 3d Level (% Girls)
Female Survival (%)		Female Adult Literacy (%)
Infant Survival (%)		Female Youth Literacy (%)
Infant Less Than 5 Years Survival (%)		

The first factor focuses on the effects of national public welfare institutions (e.g., implementations of public health and demographic policies) on the potential for female *eudaimonia* in the household, represented by fertility rate projections and by the probabilities of female, infant, and maternal survival in the institutional contexts of marriage and patriarchy (i.e., % Brides 19 Years or Older). The second factor focuses on the potential for female *eudaimonia* in labor markets. The third factor focuses on literacy and education and the potential for female

eudaimonia. Education and literacy enhance the potential for female *eudaimonia* in the household by facilitating access to extra-household communication (e.g., access to newspapers, postal systems, or the internet), socialization, and acculturation. Additionally, education and literacy facilitate entry into the economic sphere of the polity, especially into the professions and technical crafts.

The three factors have strong inter-item correlation coefficients (i.e., $\alpha \geq 0.6$) and high scale reliability coefficients: 1, 0.8, and 0.9, respectively. The second factor, employment, is perhaps the weakest, having only two components. However, the strong, semantically cohesive focus of this factor may be sufficient to overcome the limited number of components.

Female Eudaimonia Potential and the World Polity: A Cross-Sectional Time-Series Model

The factor model provides the basis for developing a cross-sectional time-series model to examine various relationships between female *eudaimonia* potential and different dimensions of participation in the world polity model. The analysis tests the two hypotheses discussed earlier.

Table 3 summarizes the cross-sectional time-series regressions that test these hypotheses.³

Table 3 – Cross-Sectional Time-Series Regressions: World Cultural Norms, World Political Participation, and Female *Eudaimonia* Potential

Dependent Variable	Explanatory Variable	Coefficient (Std. Err.)	Group variable = Country R ² : Within Between Overall	Number of Observations, Groups, Observations per Group Wald χ^2
Regression 1: Female <i>Eudaimonia</i> Potential: Household – Female Survival and Reproduction			Within = .47 Between = .43 Overall = .45	Obs = 131 Groups = 111 Obs per Group: Min = 1 Avg = 1.2 Max = 3 Wald χ^2 = 94.33**
	Civil Liberties and Political Rights	-.41 (.12)** 4		

March 1, 2010

Dependent Variable	Explanatory Variable	Coefficient (Std. Err.)	Group variable = Country R ² : Within Between Overall	Number of Observations, Groups, Observations per Group Wald χ^2
	1960-2000 UN Human Rights Convention Participation	-.65 (.36)		
	Aid Pct GNI	-.27 (.07)**		
	External Debt Pct GDP	-.02 (.01)*		
	Trade Pct GDP	.04 (.01)**		
	Constant	93.03 (1.5)**		
Regression 2: Female <i>Eudaimonia</i> Potential: Employment			Within = .13 Between = .07 Overall = .08	Obs = 950 Groups = 116 Obs per Group: Min = 1 Avg = 8.2 Max = 13 Wald χ^2 = 126.79**
	Civil Liberties and Political Rights	-.1 (.02)**		
	1960-2000 UN Human Rights Convention Participation	-.13 (.05)*		
	Aid Pct GNI	-.07 (.01)*		
	External Debt Pct GDP	-.004 (.002)*		
	Trade Pct GDP	.03 (.003)**		
	Constant	37.4 (.81)**		
Regression 3: Female <i>Eudaimonia</i> Potential: Education and literacy			Within = .31 Between = .48 Overall = .5	Obs = 578 Groups = 99 Obs per Group: Min = 1 Avg = 5.8 Max = 13 Wald χ^2 = 239.49**
	Civil Liberties and Political Rights	-.37 (.04)**		
	1960-2000 UN Human Rights Convention Participation	-.16 (.11)		
	Aid Pct GNI	-.16 (.02)**		
	External Debt Pct GDP	-.002 (.003)		
	Trade Pct GDP	.06 (.01)**		
	Constant	55.74 (1.33)**		

The regressions use the same explanatory variables but different dimensions of female *eudaimonia* potential as dependent variables. The first regression focuses on the household dimension of the potential for female *eudaimonia*; the second regression on employment; and the third on education and literacy. The data cluster around the years 1990, 1995, and 2000.

As the right-most column of Table 3 indicates, the data panels are unbalanced; however, this should not detract from the value of the data for analyzing overall world polity trends. Likewise, the explanatory powers of the regressions differ. Compared to the first and third regressions, the explanatory power of the second regression is relatively weak, explaining approximately 8% of the overall variance between observations (R^2 overall = .08).

The civil liberties and political rights variable has the greatest effect on the household dimension of female *eudaimonia*. This determinant has an inverse relationship with the dependent variable of the regression: the lower the score, the higher the level of political rights and civil liberties. Thus, in the first regression a 1-point decrease in a nation-state's civil liberties and political rights dimension correlates to a 0.4-point increase in that country's potential for female *eudaimonia* in the household, holding all other variables constant; i.e., the more free the citizens of a nation-state, the greater the potential for female *eudaimonia* in that nation-state.

The effects of 1960-2000 participation in UN Rights Conventions are ambiguous for all three dimensions of female *eudaimonia*. It is statistically significant only in the second regression, which focuses on the employment dimension. The aid ratio is statistically significant in all three regressions, with the strongest relationship in the first regression. For every 1 % increase in a country's aid ratio there is a corresponding 0.3-point decrease in that country's household dimension of female *eudaimonia*, *ceteris paribus*. If one considers aid ratio as an

indirect indicator of low national levels of income and poverty, the inverse relationship between this variable and the dependent variables in any of the three regressions is not surprising.

The effects of external debt are strongest in the first regression: every 1% increase in the external debt ratio correlates with a 2.4-point decrease in the potential for female *eudaimonia*. The effect of trade is strongest, albeit slight, on the household dimension of female *eudaimonia*. A 1% increase in a country's trade as a percentage of GDP correlates with less than a 1-point increase in that country's level of female *eudaimonia* potential in household, *ceteris paribus*.

Female Eudaimonia Potential in the World Polity: Model-based Trends and Inferences

The analysis indicates that the hypotheses posited for this study generally hold true. Of the various world polity dimensions examined, the correlation between the Grotius-inspired dimension of human rights and female *eudaimonia* is perhaps the most problematic. As the regressions indicate, participation in UN Human Rights Conventions has only indifferent effects on the potential for female *eudaimonia*, supporting the contention that a decoupling between world political and cultural norms and local *praxis* is not unexpected but, indeed, is highly likely (Meyer, Boli, & Ramirez 1997). For example, even though Article 28, §2, of CEDAW specifically forbids raising exceptions incompatible with the Convention's intent and purpose, the exceptions raised by different nation-states seeking to preserve their own national cultural or religious institutions that are inimical to the rights of women have limited the efficacy of the Convention (UN 2002, p.166). Similarly, Article 10, §1, of the Optional Protocol to CEDAW does not inspire much confidence in the Protocol's effectiveness in investigating claims of discrimination against women because a nation-state may opt out of the Protocol at its ratification of, or accession to, the Protocol by not recognizing the competence of the Committee (UN 2002, p170; Buergenthal, Shelton, & Stewart 2002).

In effect, the deontological predicates based on human rights tend to be self-referencing and self-reinforcing. Free countries tend to support UN Human Rights Conventions because they represent what democratic countries consider to be among the best features of their forms of governance. Countries that may be failing economically, socially, or politically may participate in UN Human Rights Conventions because such participation sustains and reinforces their identities as sovereign nations, although they have no intention of living up to the norms and stipulations set forth in these Conventions.

In contrast to the ambiguous correlations between participation in UN human rights regimes and the different dimensions of female *eudaimonia* potential in the world polity, there are important correlations between world polity norms of democratic governance and the potential for female *eudaimonia*, indicating the strength of Sen's contention that civil and political freedoms are essential to sustaining human *eudaimonia* (Sen 1999). Furthermore, these regressions confirm, to different degrees, the importance of the world polity dimensions of international aid, trade, and debt and their effects on the potential for achieving and sustaining female *eudaimonia* in the world polity.

Conclusion

As the analysis of the data presented in this study indicates, the achievement of female *eudaimonia* is difficult, not only because it transcends the private and public spheres of polity but also because it involves different actors and their complex interdependencies. The accomplishment of female *eudaimonia* occurs at the nexus of the spheres of household and polity, where public institutions provide a framework for the operations of individual agency and choice to determine one's own definition of wellbeing and to apply one's capabilities accordingly. Although levels of female *eudaimonia* may have increased in the world polity, for

many women, the attainment of *eudaimonia* is constrained by institutionalized patriarchy in the private sphere of the household and by androcentricity in the public spheres of the work place and government, which are frequently endowed with sacral qualities by culture and tradition, exemplified by practices in the household, the economy, education, and politics.

The data indicate that the potential for female *eudaimonia* can improve over time, although progress may be slow and incremental. The cross-sectional time-series analyses point out that success in one dimension of female *eudaimonia* can reinforce success in other dimensions, especially when this success is reinforced by public institutions that sustain human rights supported by civil liberties and political rights. Although there are world-cultural norms that apply to female *eudaimonia*, there is a marked decoupling, to use Meyer's phrase, between world-cultural principles and local practices. For example, the data indicate that world-cultural deontological norms formalized in UN Human Rights Conventions – such as CEDAW – have, at best, indifferent effects on the potential for female *eudaimonia*.

The research undertaken in this study leads to a preliminary conclusion that, with the increased transnational flows of goods and capital, common conceptions of the world polity will change, yet the importance of world-cultural deontological norms in the discourse on human rights, gender equality, and the potential for female *eudaimonia* will remain. Grotius' vision of human sociability – with its emphasis on purposive rationality, enlightened self-interest and self-preservation, governance with the consent of the governed, and the inherency of human rights in human ontology – as the basis for economic development is still relevant today, even if its full implementation has not yet been fully realized.

March 1, 2010

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¹ I use the term *sociability* with its fully textured meaning, based on its Latin provenance of *sociāre*, to join, unite; *sociālis*, allied, confederated, companionable; *socius*, confederate, companion (C.T. Onions, 1966; Barnhart 1988). These terms can be applied to relationships between individuals, confederations of individuals, and alliances among nations.

² Factor based on Freedom House Index of civil liberties and political rights, with a scale reliability coefficient .95; there is an inverse relationship: the lower the score, the higher the level of civil liberties and political rights

³ The table summarizes the data by the group variable *country*. The table also indicates the degree to which the regressions explain the variance in the data, using three categories: *within* each country over the time period 1990-2000, *between* countries over that time period, and *overall* variance of the countries taken together over that time period. The discussion of the regressions will focus on the overall variance. The other two types of variance are included for completeness.

⁴ * = $p \leq .05$; ** = $p \leq .001$

