

Who is afraid of Gender Ideology? The conservative discourses in the Brazilian contemporary society

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyze the use of the category gender ideology by religious leaders, precisely a man by the name of Father Paulo Ricardo. He is a catholic priest, who has a strong online platform, over 150 thousands of followers on twitter And Has been a vocal allied of the christian conservative political movement in Brazilian contemporary society. The present paper is divided in three major section: First section is to create a recollection of the term gender ideology.

Therefore it will be presented a small-scale, genealogy of this term, focusing more at the south america/ Brazilian reality.

At the second section discussion will be based on the debate over secular X laic, and how Brazil's political spectrum behaves in that panorama. Also how political demands of LGBTQ+ and Women's issues are neglected as consequence of this discussions.

And the third and final section is the discussion an analysis of the footage of the priest, one from 2013, before the voting of the National Education Plan, where he alerts the christian family against the gender ideology movement and in 2016 when is invited by the Chamber of Deputies to talk about the meaning of the word gender.

Gender Ideology: A brief Recollection

Gender Ideology is a term most used to describe the discussions around women's reproductive rights, sex education and the recognition of the LGBTQ+ identities and rights.

The ideas that trace the notion *gender ideology* can be found at Catholic Church. (Miskolci e Campana) More specifically with the words of then Cardinal Joseph Aloisius Ratzinger, in 1997, said that:

... So the biological phenomenon of sexuality is distinguished from historical forms which are called gender, but the intended revolution against the historical forms of sexuality culminates in a revolution against biological presuppositions. (Ratzinger, 1997; 142)



In this brief section of the Pope Emeritus Bento XVI, it is clear the message against the feminist movement and progress of women's rights in the modern societies.

This speech specifically was targeted as a response against the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995. In this particular conference it was replaced the term Woman, for the concept of Gender.

The notion of *Gender Ideology* is evoked once again at the V General Conference of the Latin American and Caribbean Episcopate (Celam), where it is said:

Among the assumptions that weaken and disparage family life is the gender ideology, according to which each one can choose their sexual orientation, without taking into consideration the differences given by human nature. (Celam, 2007; 30).

Gender Ideology: A brief Recollection

Both passages represent the clearly the mission of the catholic church against the gender ideology.

In latin america, this battle has notable relevance; debates about the decriminalization of abortion, recognition of same sex marriage, inclusion of sex education in schools.

At the same time the role of church against the *gender ideology movement*, became political action, therefore the creations of the legislative lobby, jurisdiction actions and media advertising.



Here we can analyse the actors that are against *gender ideology*, how those actors come together and articulate. Based on the works of Sonia E. Alvarez (2014), she calls as the discursive fields of action, where political-cultural concerns are shared, even tho the actors admit different diagnosis.

Therefore instead of feature the group of people that are against *gender ideology* a social movement the is located at the interior of civil society. We can distinguish these, using the term of sociologist Howard Becker, from Outsiders(2008), individuals *as moral entrepreneurs* that act within a field of action.

In this current paper we analyse Father Paulo Ricardo as an example of the moral entrepreneurs, he engages in the battle against gender ideology in the basis of ethical/moral principles.

Laic X Secular: The Brazilian case

By the end of the XIX, Brazil is going through the process of separation of Church and State, with the most important milestone being the emergency of the Brazilian Republican system.

The Catholic Church practiced a strong position against that separation, defending the superiority of catholicism on the development of Brazilian's nationality. (Giumbelle, 2008)

In this context, it can be assert that laicism is associated with religion pluralism, understanding that religious freedom for everyone and state impartiality of any religious group.

Secularization, refers to a period in which modernity is constituted. In a Weberian meaning the secularization paradigm presume that the State is responsible for the public arena issues, distancing themselves of moral issues. While Religion would be in charge of issues of the private atmosphere (Monteiro, 2009, 08)

Supporting the Weberian notions, Pierucci (1997) comprehend religious freedom that is provided by the separation of church and state would imply in a religious pluralism, and this pluralism would be at same time a factor of growing secularization.

The movements of secularization and laicism in Brazilian society, end up in complementing roles of the State and Church.

National Educational Plan: The religious influence

The National Education Plan (PNE) define goals, strategies and guidelines in the Brazilian educational system for the next ten years(2014-2024).

The PNE, is structured in four different blocks:

1. Guarantee the right of basic education, with quality and easy access to all.
2. Specific goals about increasing diversity and inequality reduction.
3. To value Educational Professions
4. Goals for the higher education (Universities)

Due to national expression from the Catholic and Evangelical Church, the word *gender* was removed of PNE article 2, item III, and in the strategy 3.12 of goal 3, was modified for the: *overcoming of education inequalities, with enfasis in the promotion of citizenship and eradication and all the forms of discrimination.*

We highlight here the resentment for the category *gender*, and that it is clear that when overcoming inequalities in the educational system, means to eventually overcome sexism, and LGBTQ+ phobia. However by removing the word *gender*, the discussion is dislocated to a wide arrange of inequalities, as such racism, income inequality and others.

Therefore, the ultimate goal for the *moral entrepreneurs* is to change the redirect of women's rights and LGBTQ +rights from the public sphere and bring back to the private (religious) sphere.

Gender Ideology: The discourse of fear

At the first video titled : Gender Ideology can be implemented at schools. Father Paulo Ricardo is centered at the picture , as he was talking at church , with a flower at the inner right corner and a open bible at left corner .

He starts articulating that gender ideology, is a ideology, that mandate that your children en are mandate by law, to emancipate from the biological sex that they were born with.

With the first premises , he set the tone: Ideology as awful category , sex is binary and natural , and gender is creation and choice and that is why is wrong.

At following, after describing all the threats of the gender ideology can cause to your child. He makes his final announcement: And this could all happened if the National Educational Plan passes through the congress.

That argument opens the discussion of personal responsibility; It is the responsibility of parents to make sure this plan do not pass. And consequently the priest enters in the debate of democracy. Most specifically that a democratic state would no allowed the opinions of the *gender ideology movement* to become law.

One topic that has been continuously repeated , in both videos shown in this paper, is *family*. *Family* is used in some occasions as the most important organ of any society, and in other s described as the element that the gender ideology wants to destroy.

Gender Ideology: The discourse of fear

In the second video, the Father Paulo was invited by the commission for the defense of women rights to give a lecture in the cameras of the deputies .

In this set up the Father behaves differently : he has multiple books on his hand , and he continuously portrait the intellectual image. He starts his speech with the Women Conference of Beijing 1995. His entire speech his discuss where the gender ideology movement base their theory from. with that he goes through : The origin of family and private property , of Engels until Judith Butler poststructuralism .

And at the core of his speech, same at the first video, is family. The importance of family, and how the gender ideology movement goal is to destroy all families.

Family for the priest is the one formed by: a Men, Women and their biological child. *Family* can be described, in this scenario, the moral set of a society.

Because if you are married, you not having premarital sex, if a man and women are married that are no other prohibit sexualities and the children are the product of this moral arrangement. With that you can see the dominance of the moral principles of christianity in the private relations.

Therefore, we are back at the debates of private and public, and where the moral entrepreneurs stand.

THANK YOU