

Part 2: Theoretical Background and Further Information

The text operates with two logical figures:

1. "We are not born as girls ...", according to a perception at an early stage of the women's liberation movement, which led to the distinction between gender and sex (gender = social species, sex = biological species) in the Anglo-American feminist movement. Feminists in other linguistic groups followed suit, and this idea was transposed to the view of masculinity.
2. In the Modern Age in the history of Europe, the image (self-image, image of others, mirror image, spitting image, model image) plays a role in creating a new reality. The individuality demanded by people in the Modern Age proves to be a type of spitting image. The modern person hankers after an individuality that is conveyed to him by ideal images. Ever since the technical age has made it possible to send ideal images and model images around the world, men and women have subjugated themselves to artificial norm identities... *The "projective" imagination has prevailed, not least because it has an inherent need to conquer – the need to subject the nature of the models or to make reality conform to ideals.*

This letter – formally addressed to a "little hero" – conveys the intention not to allow masculinity to appear as a biological fact or emotional state but as a cultural product. This is scientifically founded by a wide-ranging cultural comparison, inter alia, which shows "that there is apparently no culture anywhere in the world that assumes that men are inherently strong, capable and potent". They are initially moulded everywhere through trials, suffering and social constraints". Gender images – as they are called – are invariably cultural creations, it is not clear from the outset what actually constitutes a man and a woman.

The letter to the "little hero" provides insights into experiments with historical and cultural creations and will – perhaps, hopefully – encourage boys to consider the idea of conducting their own cultural experiments.

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