**Is Trans Natural?**

[Throughout Western(?) history, the human beings have tended to categorize the subjects according to physical appearance, power relationships or genetic inheritance. People were subject to categorized by the economic, social, political and cultural categories. Within patriarchical and capitalist societies gender categories have been male-dominated and divided into two; male and female who have power relationships between each other with the help of present social norms and roles which have been readily served the purpose of this heteronormative system (Alaimo, 2009; Tuana, 2008). In such a system, males and females should have reproduced their offsprings to contribute as workers and servers of the workers through the capitalist and eventually patriarchal system because the ideal heteronormative family is miniature model of heteronormative patriarchal system (Sturgeon, 2010).

patriarchy historically has been legitimized through biological determinism, which supposedly explains gender differences, gender temperaments and tendencies through a pre-given biology, is the fundamental key to racialize the past and current power relationships. Each institution has been shaped by such a legitimization so that individuals have been exposed to patriarchy from the very early on in the family, school, workplaces, politics, media, and advertisements which have been telling about how females are naturally sensitive, caregiver and dependent whereas males are naturally brutal, competitive and independent. In other words; females are feminine and males are masculine. Otherwise, they must have been somehow abnormal, delayed or evil (Sturgeon, 2010).]

Feminists with a constructivist orientation or perspective argue that gender is socially constructed [explain: shaped by social practices and institutions…] thereby rejecting biological determinism and nature (Alaimo, 2009; Grosz, 2005). According to them, the biology and nature are the ideas of the patriarchy which has been trying to subordinate women and neglect the other genders by recognizing only 2 genders. Since the whole institutional system treats women as being supposed to be fully feminine and men as being supposed to be fully masculine, males and females tend to learn how to become and behave according to their “sex” though those assigned roles and norms. As a result, most of the feminists argue that the human beings are separated from the nature and are culturally constructed (Grosz, 2005).

Feminists who have been resisting? Rejecting? the categories of the patriarchy could not avoid categorization by separating the humans as cultural products from the nature. Such a categorization of nature and culture reinforces a hierarchy between culture and nature like the patriarchy makes with the subject and the object; the male and the female; sex and gender, the active and the passive; the dominant and the subordinated. Whatever dichotomy readily prepares the serious political acts of differentiation (Alaimo, 2009). To avoid such a dichotomy, Nany Tuana argues for an interactionist ontology and suggest that there is a viscous porosity between nature and culture; between genetic factors and environmental factors so that the human beings are a complex interaction of nature-culture (Tuana, 2008). As a result; there is a huge diversity within beings which, in return, might fight against patriarchy and racism. Otherwise, those distinctions could only reinforce the patriarchal and racist ideologies (Sturgeon, 2010).

Moreover, human beings have been observing the animals as natural beings in order to find some similarities through sexuality and so on. For example, it has been found that ‘homosexuality’ and trans-sexuality are pretty common among non-human beings. Therefore, the non-human queer animals who are considered as natural have sometimes be taken to legitimize the naturalness of gayness and trans (Hird, 2006; Sturgeon, 2010). However, when we consider something as natural by separating from the culture, this risks categorization which are fixed and unchangeable. It is thereby contributing to, rather than challenging, the idea of patriarchy which says women are sensitive and men are aggressive so that gays are gays and they cannot change through the environmental factors or indeed ‘sexual selection’ and choice. If so, they must be abnormal because what is natural is moral, normal and divine. Neglecting the culture within nature/the environment is neglecting the diversity because the diversity is made of the complex interaction between nature and culture. It is how everyone is imposed into only one category, which the patriarchy tries to do (Sturgeon, 2010).

On the other hand, oppositely thinking trans is unnatural but cultural would also lead us into a dichotomy, indicating that trans is not authentic but artificial/human-made (Sturgeon, 2010). According to this argument, there is a distinction between “natural” woman and “artificial” trans-woman. Natural woman can menstruize and give birth whereas the trans woman cannot so that trans-woman cannot be natural because she has lack of experiences of natural woman (Hird, 2006). Looking at the other side of the debate of nature vs. nurture, nurture also brings about serious dichotomy, in which the patriarchy could judge people with “proper” experiences which “normal” men and women should go through. Separating the culture from the nature also dictates what is natural so what is normal and moral; and what is unnatural so what is abnormal and immoral (Hird, 2006; Sturgeon, 2010).

As a result, feminists should avoid every type of categorization since it only contributes to the patriarchal norms (Alaimo, 2009; Grosz, 2005; Tuana, 2008). By learning how nature and culture cooperate in a complex way and create a very huge diversity. For instance, feminists should study Darwin’s evolution theory further without rejecting and admitting as if Darwin only talks about nature and subject women into subordination. However, Darwin actually shows how culture, history are already implied in nature as an active force! and environment are influential on natural beings. Without rejecting nature and studying further would destroy patriarchal categorizations more effectively (Grosz, 2005).

You have done a lot of readings that you refer to here -which is nice. It is less clear what arguments you wish to build with this material. Explain clearly (by way of example from Grosz, Tuana or Alaimo) why the distinction of nature and culture is not tenable – and how it supports patriachical ends. You have this somewhere in there, but it’s not completely clearly argued.

**References**

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