

## A STUDY OF RUSSIAN BIOPOLITICAL TECHNIQUES IN WOMEN'S BEAUTY AND HEALTH CARE

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Here, we explore how biopolitical techniques regulating women's bodies address the health, longevity and propagation problems to approach the demographic crisis that Russia is facing. The research is the establishment of how and why women willingly care about their health and beauty, so that the state will enjoy healthy women as human capital, the labor force and the producer of the future labor force and Russian race. We study how the control of issues of Russian women's diet, drinking, and beauty care can be influential factors as biopolitical techniques. The survey is based on the Foucauldian concept of governmentality that demands two complementary dimensions of biopolitics and neoliberal rationality. We investigate a triangle of neoliberal market, biopolitical rationality and women as active agents. We examine how neoliberal market produces knowledge via advertisement discourse about the ideal female subject; we demonstrate that neoliberal market marketizes health and beauty, leading women towards the state-desired way. Women as entrepreneurs invest their time and money in their human capital to enjoy social visibility and promotion. This is not objectification of bodies, rather a new form of subjectification. Habituating women toward healthy diet and moderate drinking, the state enjoys a healthy labor force. On the other hand, naturalization of sex difference by highlighting the essentially fit and attractive female body materializes the female body promising heterosexuality and obviously propagation. Moreover, conducting women to care about the beauty assures the maintenance of the myth of Russian woman's stunning beauty. Beautified improved Russian woman's body can mirror the superiority of race. We conclude that the reiteration of heteronormativity in all three sides of the mentioned triangle manifests that Russia uses traditional heteronormativity as a technique for managing the critical demographic situation. A feminist perspective on Russian biopolitics establishes the way the female body is regulated to divide the border between the viable subjects, the healthy, thin, fit and attractive female body and the opposing object bodies threatening Russian demography and race. The analysis confirms that the conduct of women toward self-monitoring to gain the approved subjectivity promises healthy women as human capital. Besides, association of

peculiar features to the female body constructs a truth about the normal female body, driving women to quest the constructed truth, which is naturalized as an essential feature. Attribution of properties to the female body and idealization of its man-pleasing peculiarities highlight the sex difference and contribute to the circulation of heterosexuality, which is a way to manage demographic problems.

**Keywords:** biopolitics, neoliberal market, governmentality, entrepreneur, subjectivity, health and beauty care, diet, female body, heteronormativity.

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## ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ РОССИЙСКОЙ БИОПОЛИТИКИ В СФЕРЕ ЖЕНСКОЙ КРАСОТЫ И ЗАБОТЫ О ЗДОРОВЬЕ

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Анализируется использование методов биополитики в сфере регулирования женского тела для решения проблем здоровья, долголетия и продолжения рода в целях преодоления демографического кризиса, с которым столкнулась Россия. Исследование направлено на установление причин и способов заботы женщин о здоровье и красоте для увеличения своего человеческого капитала в условиях, когда государство рассматривает здоровую женщину и как рабочую силу, и как производителя будущей рабочей силы и русской нации. Изучается, как контроль вопросов питания и ухода за телом российских женщин может выступать весомым фактором биополитических методов.

Исследование основано на концепции государственного управления Фуко, которая требует двух взаимодополняющих измерений – биополитики и нелиберальной рациональности. Мы исследуем треугольник: нелиберальный рынок – биополитическая рациональность – женщины как активные агенты.

Рассматривается, как нелиберальный рынок через рекламный дискурс об идеальной женщине демонстрирует преимущества здоровья и красоты и продвигает соответствующие продукты, ведя женщин по пути, в котором

заинтересовано государство. Женщины-предприниматели вкладывают время и деньги в свой человеческий капитал, чтобы быть заметными в обществе и достигать успехов в деятельности. Это не объективация тел, а, скорее, новая форма субъективации. С одной стороны, пропагандируя здоровое питание и умеренное употребление алкоголя, государство получает здоровую рабочую силу. С другой стороны, натурализация половых различий путем акцентирования внимания на привлекательном женском теле материализует женское тело, обещающее гетеросексуальность и продолжение рода. Более того, привлечение женщин к заботе о своей внешности обеспечивает поддержание мифа о потрясающей красоте русских женщин, «усовершенствованное» тело которых может отражать и расовое превосходство. Делается вывод, что присутствие гетеронормативности во всех трех сторонах упомянутого треугольника свидетельствует о том, что Россия обращается к традиционной гетеронормативности как к способу управления критической демографической ситуацией.

Феминистский взгляд на российскую биополитику определяет способ регулирования женского тела, противопоставляющий жизнеспособных субъектов, обладающих здоровым, стройным, подтянутым и привлекательным телом, и обладателей «жалких» тел, угрожающих российской демографии и нации. Доказано, что самоконтроль женщин с целью обретения одобренной государством субъектности способствует формированию здоровой женщины как человеческого капитала. Кроме того, ассоциация специфических черт с женским телом конструирует представления о нормальном женском теле, побуждая женщин добиваться некоторого идеала, натурализованного как существенная черта. Приписывание определенных свойств женскому телу и идеализация его особенностей, привлекательных для мужчин, подчеркивает половые различия и способствует распространению гетеросексуальности, что является способом решения демографических проблем.

**Ключевые слова:** биополитика, неолиберальный рынок, государственность, предприниматель, субъектность, забота о здоровье и красоте, диета, женское тело, гетеронормативность.

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## Introduction

The research addresses Russian women's health and beauty care as driven by Russian biopolitics. Russian women's deep appreciation of fit, groomed, and beautified bodies has been eye-catching for us, as foreigners. Here, we survey the conduct of women's beauty and health care. The study is based on our understanding of Foucauldian biopolitics.

Foucauldian biopolitics is a political rationality that targets the lives of human species to maximize life processes. Biopolitics as a technique of biopower functions through “the regulatory control and series of interventions deployed in order to supervise the mechanics of life: propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life expectancy, and longevity” [Foucault 1978, 139].

Biopolitics is situated in the general frame of neoliberalism. Biopolitical rationality and neoliberal rationality are two complimentary dimensions of governmentality. Governmentality is governing and encouraging people’s behavior through governed people’s own willing participation rather than through force or discipline. Individuals are encouraged to self-governing towards the state-desired conducts.

Neoliberalism promotes individualism, competition, entrepreneurship, belief in human beings as capital, as well as the centrality of market with limited state’s interference. Biopolitical rationality, on the other hand, endorses self-care, responsibility, and risk taking. Neoliberal freedom of circulations requires a security that plans a milieu where circulations can occur. It can be controlled by biopolitical regularization of population.

The research demonstrates how neoliberal market, providing diversity of choices, fosters individuality and competition among women who, like entrepreneurs, invest in their human capitals. On the other hand, it explores how the regulatory power of biopolitics regulates this freedom of movement through defining the borders of normal viable subjects who must live versus threatening abject bodies. Therefore, the responsibilized population willingly auto-govern themselves.

Russian biopolitics has been the object of some studies. However, they are generally concerned with state-driven policies on the regulation of a human body. Our survey, on the contrary, mainly brings to light the role of market as the site of the verdiction of the truth. Furthermore, the question of Russian women as the subject matter has innovatively added a tone of a gendered perspective to the study. Likewise, the study of responsible entrepreneur subjects in a neoliberal society gives more novelty to the present study.

Though there are contradictory accounts on considering Russia as a neoliberal society, mainly because of its oil-centered economy, it is also agreed that Russia now joined the global neoliberal market economy, “preserving many of the institutional features that are the product of its unique geography and historical heritage” [Nesvetailova 2005, 238–254]. The research proves the prominence of Russian market on biopolitical regularization of women’s body.

## Health care of Russian women

Power over life, according to Foucault, started during the 17th century as “anatomy-politics of the human body” [Foucault 1978, 139], which is the disciplinary power. It produces “docile bodies”, who internalize the norms of the institutions. However, “what might be called a society’s ‘threshold of modernity’ has been reached when the life of the species is wagered on its own political strategies” [Foucault 1978, 143]. While disciplinary power focuses on individual bodies, regulatory power, biopolitics, targets the population, the “species of bodies”. It aims to increase the life “quality”, and “racial hygiene”, assuring healthy population, longevity, and propagation of race. This entry of life to politics is a new form of racism distinguishing “what must live and what must die” [Foucault 2004, 254]. For Foucault, state racism is “racism that society will direct against itself, against its own elements and its own products. This is the internal racism of permanent purification, and it will become one of the basic dimensions of social normalization” [Foucault 2004, 62]. The integral part of governing a population is inclusion of certain bodies that matter and exclusion of the others. Through regulation of bodies as, “imbued with the mechanics of life”, the state can control “propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life expectancy and longevity” [Foucault 1778, 139]. The dominant discourse produced by relations of power constitutes the knowledge about the normal and healthy body. To enjoy a normal subjectivity, individuals regulate and use their bodies according to the standards. Foucault writes, “[P]ower produces, it produces reality ... the individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production” [Foucault 1991, 194]. The produced bodies are the human capital of the state, the bodies that matter and the bodies counted as the race of the state.

Materialized bodies are also once politicized power relations “invest it [the body], mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs” [Foucault 1995, 25]. This goal is not achieved through “violence”, rather through directing the population to “conduct their conduct”. This technique of governing is governmentality. The word “governmentality”, coined by Foucault, is the combination of governance and rationality, meaning that people to be governed must be defined and categorized. Biopolitics, through “dividing practices”, which are the scientific way of categorizing the population, classifies the individuals so that they can be governed. Dividing practice as the first mode of objectification of the subject, unconsciously naturalizing the standards of normal body, labels people as normal or abject subjects.

Biopolitical ends have been supported by neoliberal rationality to “improve the productivity of labor, the health of the population, and so on” [Jakob & Sven-Olov 2013, 63]. In a neoliberal society, restriction of state intervention allows the free and natural circulation of people and commodities. In Foucault’s words, freedom is “the possibility of movement, change of place, and process of circulation of both people and things” [Foucault 2007, 48–49]. Therefore, political economy enjoys the centrality directing the way the population is “conducting their conduct”.

Here, we study how and why Russian market naturalizes a standard norm of health and beauty attributing them to the normal female body as accepted subjectivity vs the abject body. We will study how the control of population’s (here women’s) diet, drinking, and beauty care, are addressing demographic problems.

Russians’ diet, along with other aspects of their lives refashioned after the collapse of the USSR when the Russian market opened up to foreign manufacturers offering previously unavailable products, store-bought and fast foods. However, today, the situation is changing: the global trend of switching to a healthy lifestyle is increasing its influence on consumer behavior. 67 % of Russians actively monitor their diet in order to prevent various diseases [Loktev 2017]. Russian marketplaces have recorded an explosive growth in healthy food demand, which in 2020 tripled compared to 2019 [Vlasova 2020].

Considering the high rate of unhealthy food commercials [Kontsevaya et al. 2020, 1868–1876], there sounds no direct association between advertisements and the prevailing trend of healthy diet. However, the marketing discourse of commercials depicts a homogenous ideal of a thin fit body as a feminine ideal. It produces the knowledge about a healthy and sexy female body to construct women’s body image leading them toward self-monitoring.

On the other hand, the mushrooming growth of the variety of healthy organic food’s availability, sugar free snacks, super foods, plant based foods, dairy substitutes and gluten free products in Russian market influences the consumer needs. Unlimited choices mediated by free market provide the consumer the route to their desired healthy fit body. Commercialized health care instills in people’s mind the desire to have an access to health care so the consumers compete to get the materials that provide them the access to health and accordingly the accepted body. About 70 % of Russians declare their readiness to pay more for healthy products [Loktev 2017].

Investment in a healthy diet promises a healthy body, which is the normal body through which people gain accepted subjectivity. Dean maintains, “Consumption provides the terrain within which my identity, my lifestyle can be constructed, purchased and made over” [Dean 2009, 67]. The consumers, here women, through their choice of a healthy diet are identified as self-caring, rational, active, responsible entrepreneurs against the passive not-self-caring ones. The discourses of neoliberal governmentality “figure and produce citizens as individual entrepreneurs and consumers whose moral autonomy is measured by their capacity for ‘self-care’ – their ability to provide for their own needs and service their own ambitions” [Brown 2006, 690–714]. Women control their diet and prevent overeating not simply as docile bodies, rather as free agents who assume responsibilities and enjoy the exercise of freedom.

As free agents who choose from the variety of lifestyle alternatives, women become auto-regularized subjects knowing that a sick or a healthy body is the consequence of their personal choice. Enterprising subjects are compelled to take responsibility for managing the risk of their choices, therefore their healthy lifestyle choice benefits the state to enjoy healthy human capital, in this case thin and fit Russian women.

Responsibilization is encouraging individuals to self-management. The state establishes boundaries for such self-managements so that it “underscores the duty of the prudent and rational citizen to avoid becoming a burden on others” [Brown & Baker 2013, 19]. While in the pastoral model of governing, the shepherd is responsible for each and all flock [Foucault 2007, 171], neoliberal governmentality “transfers responsibility to individuals” [Lemke 2004, 13–26]. The state, however, is not deresponsibilized when individuals are in charge of their health. The state must “propagate risk knowledge with the aim of increasing individual capacity for what the state deems as responsible free choice” [Brown & Baker 2013, 20], such as the obligation of legible food labeling. In 2018, a voluntary color labeling of food products, called “Traffic Light”, began to operate in Russia. Depending on the sugar, salt, fat and caloric content of the food, a red, yellow, or green precautionary label is applied to the package. It informs the consumer what they are eating [Kunle 2018]. Development of a healthy food concept [Gavrilova, Bessonova, Smirnova 2015, 405–406] is another example of the steps taken by the state to direct Russians toward a healthy diet. In Russia, the state pays considerable attention to the formation of a healthy lifestyle, increasing the responsibility of citizens for their health. In accordance with the Presidential Decree On National Goals and Strategic Objectives

for the Development of the Russian Federation for the Period up to 2024, in May 2018, they established the program of formation of a system of motivating citizens to a healthy lifestyle, including healthy eating and rejection of unhealthy habits [Grigorieva & Chubarova 2020, 112–124].

Conducting women to control their obesity can be seen as a technique of biopolitics to prevent most common diseases related to obesity, such as high risk of infertility, high cholesterol, diabetes, etc. Knowledge produced by dominant discourses such as advertisements about healthy body, along with availability of unlimited healthy lifestyle choices in free market direct women to conduct their conduct in a state-desired way so that the state can benefit from a healthy race and a labor force who rarely need to use state health insurance.

Drinking is another issue to be considered in the study of health care. Drinking norms in Russia are gendered, reflecting the image of traditional gender stereotypes. Hard liquor consumption, which is historically rooted in Soviet culture of working men's socialization with colleagues, constitutes a male identity as the breadwinner [Minagawa 2011, 1–27]. Nevertheless, women, identified with their caring and nurturing roles, are disdained as immoral, loose and sexually approachable if drunk [Bobrova et al., 2010, 573–580]. Immoderate drinking that restrains them from family responsibilities is a deviation of gender norms, while to have the subjectivity of an accepted woman they can enjoy a moderate amount of wine or beer. Russian women drink non-hard liquor in lesser amounts than men do [Cockerham 2012, 943–957].

There are some cases that Russian alcohol market in alignment with traditional gender norms produces gendered liquors, which can be regarded as reiteration of heteronormativity. Vodka free and low-calorie Smirnoff drink for women in girlish packaging is a feminized beverage. VladBeer, a beer proper for female characteristic, Dolce Iris Rosso, a women's beer, are other examples of non-hard liquors especially for women. On the contrary, Damskaya Vodka especially for women in elegant bottles has aroused anger among medical and religious authorities, who believe that hard liquor for women not only threatens the health of their own bodies, but also threatens the entire future of the population of the country<sup>1</sup>. While the production of vodka for women indicates the gradual subversion of vodka's masculinization, the gendered drinking patterns still survive.

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<sup>1</sup> See: Priest Alexy Moroz: "This is an advertisement of poison." *Russkaya Narodnaya Liniya*, Information and Analytical Service. 18 August 2008. [https://ruskline.ru/news\\_rl/2008/03/18/ierej\\_aleksij\\_moroz\\_to\\_reklama\\_yada/](https://ruskline.ru/news_rl/2008/03/18/ierej_aleksij_moroz_to_reklama_yada/) (In Russian).

The increasing premature mortality, mainly among men, associated with alcohol consumption has been a threatening demographic crisis in Russia [Kuznetsova 2020, 75–95]. The growth of the alcohol market from 1991 to 2005 was unprecedented increasing from 7 liters to 12.3 per capita annually, when measures were taken to leash it. [Danilova et al. 2020, 790–796]. In March 2005, a law was passed on limitations of the retail sale and consumption of beer and beverages [Nemtsov 2012, 366].

There sounds a kind of a paradox between the state's ultimate objective of pursuing population's health and individuals' free access to alcohol as a risk factor of some diseases and even mortality. Considering neoliberal rationality, we can claim that, in case of alcohol, or any other unhealthy products, it is neither the state nor the market that is responsible for the effects; rather, the individual, as the rational agent choosing rationally, is in charge of it. The state must establish policies to increase people's responsibility to conduct them toward auto-regulation. Today, throughout the world, including in Russia, excessive, immoderate drinking is opposed to the accepted norm of moderate, responsible drinking. An individual being a product of a discourse that deems responsible drinking to gain viability chooses moderation. Unlike the free access, the individual has learnt that since she is freely choosing, she is in charge of the outcomes; therefore, the auto-monitoring subject is conducted toward a rational choice, which is the norm of responsible drinking. Responsible subjects benefit the state to control the demographic crisis associated with excessive alcohol consumption.

It is biopolitics techniques that conduct people toward moderate and responsible drinking, not as obliged but willing subjects, who, unlike free access, conduct their pleasures toward the state-proven way.

### **Beauty care of Russian women**

Here, we survey how regularization of Russian women's bodies based on beauty standards can be regarded as a technique of biopolitics.

Feminine beauty has been an essential feature of the Russian woman's identity. Unlike the Soviet-enforced model of a woman as a defeminized carer and matriarch" [Cvajner 2019, 230], feminine beauty was still important to Soviet women, for whom performing beauty care would identify them as the accepted female gender [Porteous 2018, 413–428]. However, due to a limited access to beauty products and the centrality of family care and occupation, self-care was overlooked.

After the collapse of the USSR, the Russian beauty myth flourished with the overflow of beauty care products in the market. The torrent of beauty products in Russia was nearly coincident with global market's shift to a sexual depiction of female body, expressing pleasure, empowerment and self-care, rather than passivity or oppression [Gill 2009, 93–110].

To reinforce heteronormative stereotypes, Russian advertisements depict women essentially appealing, along with other innate features ascribed to women such as relying on men, "deficient in knowledge and fearful. They stress that beauty is an attribute that is essential for women" [Konstantinovskaia 2020, 55–56]. Advertisement models demonstrate perfect man-pleasing female bodies who have made up a possible imperfection with a special product. In Russian advertisements "women look like top models: their faces are stunningly beautiful and bodies are perfect and thin; their postures and movements are often sexually provocative. They are portrayed as sexually desirable". [Proshina & Ustinova 2019, 206]. An idealized female body is depicted as charming, luxurious, flawless, well groomed, brilliant, excellent, free and cheerful. In most of the advertisements, women gaining perfection win acceptability from men because the ideal woman is the conqueror of men's hearts [Keyzik 2015, 169–171].

Beauty care, mainly associated with female body, stresses gender division and heteronormativity. It is assessed that, Russian women more than men invest in their beauty regarding it as a product of exchange to increase their supply power to win a relationship and future family [Dana & Regina 2020, 494–502]. Attribution of especial features to women as their essential nature sustains heteronormativity. Heteronormative regularization of bodies and thereby heterosexuality can be regarded as a technique of Russian biopolitics to deal with its demographic crisis.

The constructed truth about female beauty naturalizes attractiveness as the essential norm of a feminine body, while the deviant body has to be corrected to gain acceptable subjectivity. Beauty care, to put it in Derrida's words, is the signifier of femininity, or, in Butler's words, it can be regarded as a gender performance. Women as products of a discourse that values the female erotic body reiterate the norms of the discourse reassuring the sustainability of the discourse that promulgates heteronormativity. Long acknowledges, "Neoliberal processes have been wrought on the body, and have formed an effective oppression against 'deviant' bodies that do not, or cannot, maintain the idealized, heterosexual and able-bodied, neoliberal figure" [Long 2018, 78–93]. Neoliberal

market valorizes individuality, empowerment, social and economic success, which all can be achieved by women's self-care and regularization of body. An ideal neoliberal enterprising subject is not only "an employee or student, but also simultaneously a product to be sold, a walking advertisement, a manager of [their] résumé, a biographer of [their] rationales, and an entrepreneur of [their] possibilities [...] provisionally buying the person [they] must soon become" [Mirowski 2013, 108].

Russian women, imbued with an aspiration to standard beauty, encountering the diversity of beauty products in the free market, participate in the consumer culture. Today, cosmetic use [Sinyavskaya 2019–2020, 10–12], and tendency to aesthetic surgery [Kochubey 2019, 78–80] are growing among Russian women. According to an ISIPS international survey, Russian women occupy the global 4th rank of breast augmentation, liposuction, abdominoplasty, and the global 5th rank of rhinoplasty and eyelid surgery<sup>2</sup>.

As an enterprising subject, a woman consumes beauty products, investing her time and money on her human capital to gain the body image that satisfies her. Foucault writes, "The man of consumption, insofar as he consumes, is a producer... He produces his own satisfaction. We should think of consumption as an enterprise activity by which the individual, precisely on the basis of the capital he has at his disposal, will produce something that will be his own satisfaction" [Foucault, Davidson, & Burchell 2008, 226]. Women, through investing in their human capital, are gaining the accepted female subjectivity as well as social and economic success. According to recent researches, for Russian women, an ideal physical beauty is a pathway toward social achievements. Feminine beauty and an ideal appearance are valued in professional arenas as a capital. Therefore, women invest in their physical appearance as a human resource to achieve their social and economic ambitions. In Russian advertisements, a groomed, ideal body is a socially active woman, not a passive victim of family care [Ustinova 2019, 404–416]. The individualistic self-caring ideals of a female entrepreneur who concerns about self-care is empowered by her body regularization, compensating the passive nurturing self they used to suffer from. Hofmann elaborates how women using their bodies invest and enhance their erotic capital as corporeal entrepreneurs to overcome their socio-economic marginalization [Hofmann 2010, 233–256].

<sup>2</sup> See: International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery. ISAPS Global Statistics. <https://www.isaps.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Global-Survey-2019.pdf>

Women as free agents choosing in the free market the way that they can invest in their human capital feel responsibility over their own project of body regularization. Davidenko upholds that Russian women make free choices to subject themselves to body regularizations. If they cannot match current ideals of beauty, they suffer from hate toward their bodies [Davidenko 2019, 609–628].

The body which has reached its high perfection via various commodity solutions is no more a passive objectified body, rather this controlled body represents an autonomous empowered viable subjectivity. “A sleek, controlled figure is today essential for portraying success ... Today, the body is portrayed in advertising and in many other parts of the media as the primary source of women’s capital” [Gill 2008, 35–60]. Women have invoked their physical beauty to give voice to their neglected social existence. No more as objects serving the desires of others, they can enjoy the individualistic desire of self-care which also promises them the social visibility that males have been enjoying throughout the centuries. Morgan writes, “cosmetic surgeries give women a sense of self-identity as they chose, and senses of self-esteem and self-fulfillment. It gives them social and economic promotion” [Morgan 1991, 25–53].

At the surface level, women, appealing to free choice among the verity, are enjoying their autonomy in deciding their way of self-presentation, and enjoying their identity as accepted normal subjects. However, they are taking the sugarcoated regulatory values of neoliberalism and performing the norms of a heteronormative discourse. The seemingly emancipatory role of feminine beauty presentation operates not as egalitarian female/male subjectification; rather this is a new form of pressure over women, the pressure of beauty and being under surveillance. Wolf asserts that women, unlike being emancipated from domesticity, are entangled in the new ideology of feminine beauty, which is the “modern version” of social control. The represented “images of female beauty [are] a political weapon against women’s advancement”. She affirms that the infused “notion of beauty” poisons the freedom of socially prosperous woman, leaving her in a “dark vein of self-hatred, physical obsessions, terror of aging”. She defines this situation a new form of male dominance [Wolf 1991, 10].

According to a Russian research, today, Russian women, already subject to their traditional ideals of femininity, are further influenced by both market and media propaganda. It is asserted that marriage occupies a priority for Russian women and a reason for their beauty care [Ruzova & Kalinina 2019, 108–117]. The prolonged ideal of marriage

proves effective biopolitical techniques in sustaining sex differences, constructing the truth of women's essential beauty and propelling them toward investing in their beauty care.

Marketization of beauty creates a sense of competition among individuals who desire to get access to beauty commodity in order to achieve self-satisfaction and social promotion. Discussing the unspoken rules of femininity, Davidenko acknowledges that Female beauty as a socially valued capital is converted to other types of resources such as "employment, business success or useful connections" [Davidenko 2014].

To be an approved woman, one needs to buy beauty. The more they pay, the more they feel satisfaction. Thus, beauty designating a social class inspires individuals to get more of that commodified beauty as they aspire to get other commodities to enjoy a higher social level and a better life condition. Manicured nails point to the social class signifying that self-care and self-beautification are vital for social and economic success.

The stereotype of a completely special Russian appearance, according to anthropological parameters, turns out to be a myth that is explicated in the language and culture of Russians. Most Russians believe that Russians with lighter eyes, fair skin and hair are distinct from Western Europeans [Shlyakhova 2015]. This beauty myth burdening Russian woman with more responsibility of beautification can enhance the visual superiority of Russian race.

Women's self-beautification is the biopolitical objective, which views beauty as an index of racial improvement. Biopolitics addressing women's body produces certain bodies as qualified. Conducting women to self-beautification contributes to the maintenance of the ideal of beauty of Russian population as a privilege of Russian race. The mentioned increased use of cosmetics and aesthetic surgeries verifies women's beauty concerns to correct any imperfection deviating from the valued standard of Russianness.

Women's quest for beauty is driven by various discourses, including marketing, to prove sex difference and the homogenous beauty of the Russian woman.

## **Conclusion**

The research surveyed Russian women's health and beauty care as conducted by Russian biopolitics. It established how and why women's beauty and health care is conducted by dominant discourses.

A general outlook of the research gives a triangle of biopolitical rationality, neoliberal market, and women. Neoliberal market providing diversity of choices promulgates freedom of choice. At the same time, the marketization of health and beauty creates individualism and competence among women who desire to buy the commodified health and beauty. Furthermore, the advertising discourse of the market constitutes the knowledge about the normal viable subject. The idealized female body is depicted as fit, thin, healthy, attractive, socially successful, and a conqueror of men's heart.

Women as enterprising subjects consume health and beauty products, investing in their human capital to gain the body image that satisfies them. Body as the primary resource of capital for women promises them social visibility, individuality and acceptable subjectivity. Self-monitored subjects are conducted to be healthy and attractive or else they are abjected.

The biopolitical rationality of the state addresses health, longevity, and propagation of the population. It values female body as both the labor force and the producer of future Russian race. Conducting women toward a healthy diet and moderate drinking, the state enjoys a healthy labor force. On the other hand, naturalization of sex difference by highlighting the essentially fit and attractive female body promises heterosexuality and obviously propagation. Moreover, conducting women toward beauty care assures the maintenance of the myth of Russian women's stunning beauty. The beautified Russian woman's body can mirror the superiority of race.

Health and beauty cares defined as essential features of femininity highlight sex differences sustaining the traditional gender borders, heteronormativity, and accordingly heterosexuality. The reiteration of heteronormativity in all three sides of the mentioned triangle manifests that Russia invokes to sustain traditional heteronormativity as a technique for managing the critical demographic situation.

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