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The Global Threat of Gendercide

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Historian Niall Ferguson reminds us that Ernest Hemingway once penned a collection of short stories entitled *Men Without Women*. The stories are haunting, demonstrating the brutality that comes to men without the presence of women — and especially without the companionship of wives.

He recalls the Hemingway collection in order to underline what is at stake in the growing global threat of missing girls and women. The global gender gap in favor of males is a reversion of the natural pattern. How did it happen? By the widespread practice of aborting and killing baby girls — what is rightly called “gendercide.”



As Ferguson explains, “The mystery is partly explicable in terms of economics. In many Asian societies, girls are less well looked after than boys because they are economically undervalued.”

Years ago, economist Amartya Sen put the number of missing girls and women at 100 million worldwide. As Ferguson argues, that number is surely far larger now.

Consider the scale of the problem:

In China today, according to American Enterprise Institute demographer Nicholas Eberstadt, there are about 123 male children for every 100 females up to the age of 4, a far higher imbalance than 50 years ago, when the figure was 106. In Jiangxi, Guangdong, Hainan, and Anhui provinces, baby boys outnumber baby girls by 30 percent or more. This means that by the time today’s Chinese newborns reach adulthood, there will be a chronic shortage of potential spouses. According to the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, one in five young men will be brideless. Within the age group 20 to 39, there will be 22 million more men than women. Imagine 10 cities the size of Houston populated exclusively by young males.

Ten cities the size of Houston? This staggers the imagination.

Ferguson warns that this gender imbalance has led in the past to outbreaks of expansionism and imperialism. Others have more directly warned of militarism and violence from China’s young men who have no prospects of marriage and a normal family life. These young men are described as China’s “broken branches.” There are millions of these young men in India, as well.

We must look beyond these warnings and see the even larger horror — the tragedy of young girls, aborted and murdered just because they are girls. This, among other vital reasons, is why even the earliest Christians understood abortion to be such a horrific evil. Given the reality of human sinfulness, we now compound abortion with infanticide and gendercide. Is this of interest only to historians and economists?

Niall Ferguson, “[Men Without Women: The Ominous Rise of Asia’s Bachelor Generation](#),” *Newsweek*, March 14,

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