

The Social Status and Image of the Romanian Woman Presented in the Nationalist Discourses of the Dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu

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Abstract. Women had an important role in any society. During Ceaușescu's leadership the social status and identity of women were rebuilt by the political discourse of the nationalist leaders of Romania when traditionalist to serve political interests of the moment, such as strengthening political legitimization of power and create a new workforce.

This paper aims to outline the image of women in the communist period when her role as mother and housewife carrying traditions that underwent a change, she became a builder of communist society.

Key words: empowerment, status, labor, political discourse, identity

1. Introduction

Great scholars of communism have different opinions on the status of women in communist society. Equal class was defined by Marx, but the one who has sought to emphasize gender equality was Engels:

Emancipation of women becomes possible only when it will take part in the social scale production when domestic duties will occupy only a small part of her time ... unnatural character of man's domination over women in the modern family and the need to establish real social equality between the sexes, these problems will be presented as urgent only when men and women are truly equal before the law. It will become evident that the first promise is the reintroduction of women emancipation in the state industry. [1]

The materialistic point of view of Engels' explanation of the dissolution dependence serves as woman to man. If the woman is solely responsible for their own lifestyle, it ceases to be property of her husband, a transformation that, according to Engels, social relations between the sexes will change radically. Engels gives too much importance to the public role of women at the expense of its role in the private sphere, which led him to neglect the importance of historical identity of the majority of women, related to home and family identity and male identity, which in light of a tie to be a chieftain, should also be subject to change. Noteworthy is the fact that the status of women in patriarchal society is conditioned by the division of roles in family and today is the career woman and housewife, wife, mother, etc.

For Communist leaders Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej and Nicolae Ceaușescu, the most important concern was not a gender, but political legitimization, the consolidation of power and the creation of a large workforce. Such aspects of socialist theory, referring to women, they could be useful, but only if careful implementation of these aspects and compliance with certain traditional (national) rules.

Ceaușescu's Romania, like in the Soviet Union or its satellite countries, "Party and State have encouraged women to participate in the public sphere, to break the barriers imposed by the old economic relations, to leave on account of public organizations in the private sphere activities that: Grooming children

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or laundry ... however there was no difference between the sexes never discussed. "[2] As soon as they came to power, the Communists have made Romanian woman a favorite target of their campaign to modernize the country. Wearing a long history behind discriminatory legal level and beyond, women are seen as a social group to be emancipated and protected. The history of Romanian feminism, active both domestically and especially internationally in the interwar period is an ignored and forgotten time. Feminist associations disappear, thus losing all that had created before, being replaced by the Women's National Council.

To achieve endless five-year plans, Ceausescu continued to encourage the full involvement of women in employment, calling them "socialists workers equal" - design based on a androcentered notion. Meanwhile, Ceausescu believed strongly that the future success of the socialist state as a base have a healthy population and numerous. However the socialist society of women supported by this policy, and here we talk about single-parent families where the woman left alone to raise their children be able to qualify and work to support his family. It is very important to show that their remuneration was equal to men's, more women were working, they were praised for their results supported to raise children, encouraged to self surpass. We cannot agree with Mihaela Miroiu, and her work *The Feminism as a Policy of Modernization*. Gender equality is the new watchword of the regime. It materializes the legal level granted women voting rights, the new family and labor codes. Constitution of 1948 acknowledges the full equality of males and females, women obtaining the right to elect and be elected to all state and party structures, the right to work, holidays, pensions etc. Unfortunately, all these rights quickly becomes devoid of substance because of the duplicitous nature regime [3]. Emancipation legislative record is devoid of meaning by functioning institutions and mentality due to staff party. We need to take into account the possibility of improvement in the women's status. It is true that the communist propaganda bound women to family, duty, and especially to raising children, but the women's role enriched. They were given the possibility to work, to study, to improve their status through achievements which even if they were not equal to men's made their existence meaningful.

Ceausescu began to glorify women in terms of its role of "mother of the nation" - a concept of gender identity. Unlike most companies, whether totalitarian or democratic, the state ideology encourage the productive capacities of women's reproductive, Ceausescu in Romania, she was required to perform both functions, such as reproductive and productive. This dual perspective on women reflect - and at the same time perpetuate - Ceausescu's strategy to seemingly legitimate program "socialist" by achieving a balance between beliefs about women and the nation, creating a different identity through the reconstruction female roles it had in society.

The political speech Ceausescu tried to reconcile and give support to achieve double burden placed on the shoulders of women, that of worker and mother. Combining humanistic socialism and progressive ideas with those of Romanian nationalism and folk tradition, Ceausescu communism presented as a modern Soviet import, but as a feature of Romanian spirituality - the result of centuries of suffering, endurance and perseverance. [4]

2. Official image of women in the communist society

Smiling woman holding a flower and a bird and flanked by Romanian flag and globe serves as a symbol of world peace, of femininity and the socialist state and nation simultaneously. As an allegorical figure, it does not show any resemblance to the common woman of Romania at the time. To capture a true picture of reality, the picture would have to present a woman who is forced gynecological exams to pass through the factory, standing in line at soy sausage, old bread, suffering from cold in winter and cold in the apartment without light facing the nightmare of illegal abortions. [5] Just as Ceausescu in his speech of March 1983 women could not "find the right words to express our true feelings for women" [6] as well as Ceausescu's cultural producers could not find suitable images to express the true condition of the woman. The 80s reflects a new vision for Romania. Beginning with 1973, Ceausescu tried to define the role and the status of women in relation with his policy. At the plenary session of the Romanian Communist Party's Central Committee, he declared that "the highest honor for women is to give birth, to give life and raise children. The can be no dear thing for a woman than being a mother" [7]. Ceausescu praises woman for her double role as mother and worker, but these requirements would only burden the woman. No matter how

difficult her position in the socialist society was, the Romanian woman of this period can be an example even in our democratic society. In his nationalist discourse Ceausescu created a double image: one of a productive woman and the other of the reproductive woman, but these two visions never merged view. Although the state expected all women to be superwomen, the socialist iconography could not reveal this reality if the leader wanted to be convincing [8]. Ceausescu's traditionalist discourse regarding women had a positive side. Even if women were the slaves of the traditions and also slaves bound to their home these statements broke the chains of traditions and women who used to be housekeepers, wives, mothers, and chose professions fit for women ventured in the men's world. The socialist society tried to encourage women because their force, determination and talents were important for the construction of communism in Romania.

However, in socialist society there was a positive discrimination of women. It is true that the Central Committee, the country's supreme legislative body, there were very few women, but there are rules to promote women. They were promoted to positions of responsibility. We can say that women were encouraged to highlight the work and were not only promoted on the basis of qualifications. Today all over the world women are promoted on basis of a file, now in Romania has changed its name and is called CV.

We can talk about academic education, where all candidates were accepted after strict assessments, but where they had the largest share of women. Those who really did not understand the situation talked about the masculinization of women that worked as welders, crane operators, lathe operators, giant equipment manager, etc. Today we talk about women model, or female politician. We could say that women politician in Romania today are black sheep of society, all the press spoke about their actions, real or not, have been judged, criticized, often becoming the subject of ridicule in the press. All media is falsely advertising today some women who are not distinguished by anything,[9] while in the communist women in the press for special facts, facts which today are not taken into account because of deteriorating moral values of democratic society in which we live.

3. The woman leader

With the exception of Elena Ceausescu, the popular press has strengthened women's anonymity and identify it with either its productive contribution, either with the reproductive to the nation. Although March 8 is International Women's Day, she could not bring her recognition as an individual. This is certainly due in part to the fact that the Ceausescu regime, International Women's Day was actually Elena's International Day. Although Elena's deification in *Scântea* (the most important propagandistic newspaper of the regime) had absurd proportions, at the same time the illogical manner revealed the socialist propaganda machine work. If Ceausescu's henchmen were tried at least to nominate some of the socialist heroines of everyday life in Romania, perhaps women would have been more convinced of the "noble roles" they had. But considering the extreme lack of material that had to bear both men and women, terror and the cult of personality Security were the only things that could have ensured a position of power Ceausescu's.

Thus, we surprised that Elena was so desperate measures to whole personality cult in the 80s so she and her husband reached the maximum unpopularity [10] In addition to public person turned out to Elena be an invention, equal apparent - many would say superior - enjoyed the relationship with her husband was a rare topic in Romanian homes. In fact, in many respects, except Elena who represented the ideal, the only woman who really have political influence. But this was a pure invention designed to distract attention from the misery, poverty and powerlessness that characterized the lives of most women. [11].

The presentation of women in public are completely omitted additional burdens thrown on its shoulders, and state control over their own bodies. A more realistic description of the daily frustrations of socialist superwoman words found in Barbara Einhorn although it refers to the realities of the GDR:

"For working mothers, harassed, struggling to fulfill the tasks at work, take children to school or kindergarten and to make purchases on the way home, to cook, to clean, to wash, to help children with homework and take them to bed, to make notes for session topics for the day or during the qualification to which they were entered, super-woman was not only an insult but a joke." [12]

Unlike the women described by Barbara Einhorn, Romanian women, married or not, young or adults were supported in their attempt to improve themselves, and also in their struggle for their families. What it is

omitted by Einhorn is that warmth of the groups we live in, the support, the love, the understanding, the fact that there is someone to help those in need, real "miracles" that still exist today in our society.

The decline in birth rate during Ceausescu, despite harsh punishment for abortion, is one of the indicators relevant to women's resistance to the invasive policies of the regime. At the same time, is the recognition of the suffering endured by women and the risks they took them in their attempt to gain control over their own body dose and the overall health of their families.

4. Conclusions

Far from being a key element of empowerment that Engels dreamed in Ceausescu's Romania, employment of women was still a way to highlight gender inequalities, but still a way to reaffirm the beauty of the Romanian soul. No disappearance came to patriarchy. Domestic activities remained mostly in the service of women. With regard to the private sphere and gender relations, or even great leader and companion too know how to have offered no suggestion for how patriarchal values could be transformed. Unfortunately, the legacy of patriarchal relations was not turned on by hand, but rather, "was exacerbated by the structure of paternalistic socialist state." [13]

Thus, none of these masks, as were penetrating, failed to hide the realities of life woman gynecological control mandatory biennial, fear of being fined, closed or fear of psychological shock following a miscarriage, loss full reproductive rights once the fetus became "socialist property of the whole society" [13]. Neither the first heroine mothers or maternity leave of three months or 8.8% of salary bonus could not compensate for the daily suffering of women. [14] Behind the visual representations of equality hiding the truth about so-called socialist progress - physical and psychological terror oppression born of Ceausescu's reproductive policies. Be it a mosaic march with her life partner, a beautiful sculpture symbolizing independence heroine worker or peasant woman from March 8 idyllic on his field, she never identified as an individual not only as an ideal, or simply myth, comrade. Women in Ceausescu's Romania anonymity aesthetic consequences dual and even contradictory: it is idealized symbol of the nation, yet is powerless victim of socialist policies. Thus, the presentation of women in terms of Ceausescu as a simple anonymous, although his life partner equal status of citizens by socialists, in fact hide the true inequality and powerlessness in the political but also economic, social and reproductive. Seen in this light, the anonymity of women in different art forms mirrors the real anonymity of women in Romanian society in general, making it one of the only areas where the difference between propaganda and reality ideology is negligible. Romanian woman became what Lenin was afraid when he conceptualized the "new woman" in socialism: a reply rather than a true visual idealized anonymous individual with real and equal political influence.

The fact that the communist regimes have not seen women's empowerment from the point of view of group identity, but have seen the emancipation of women in the context of general emancipation of the proletariat, is obvious. The woman like the man was a strong tool in the hands of state or of the party-state. In this type of society it did not matter individual consciousness, awareness or consciousness of man or woman, the only thing that mattered was class consciousness, so that conditions for the establishment and maintenance of power to be met. However, socialist regimes have at least one merit: the formal recognition of gender equality, which cannot be said of previous regimes.

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