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Political Sciences

**The influence of editorial policies of women's magazines on the development of
the feminist political culture in Romania**

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Bucharest, SNSPA,
2017

The purpose of this research is to determine the relationship between the editorial policies practiced by women's magazines in our country and the feminist political culture. Considering the network of women's magazines in a country as a symbolic structure of the typology of female representation and self-representation in that country, the way this structure is built directs the socialization of the readers, thus gaining an extremely significant role in the formation of opinions, ideas and beliefs at the same time, an important perspective in analyzing, evaluating society and making decisions about how women are positioned within it.

I started my research from the premise that a democratic political culture entails the development of an autonomous woman model, civically involved, with interest in politics. That is why I investigated the evolution of the relationship between the Romanian feminism and women's magazines, analyzing the publications in this media segment from the first magazines to the present, tracing the repercussions of the present media policies on the maintenance of gender conservatism and / or the empowerment of women in the sense of civic and political involvement. The assumption is that the general political deficit in our country (see *Democracy Index*, 2016) affects the development and assumption of culture, ideology and the feminist movement of the Romanian women.

In the first part of the thesis I've shown, at a theoretical level, how the stages of the development of international feminism correlated with the forms that feminism has embraced in our country, depending on the political age and the status of civil rights of women existing at that time in the Romanian society, following whether or not there is synchronicity between the inland space and the economically and democratically developed countries, and how this was reflected in the women's magazines that was published that time.

In the second part of the thesis, I applied the method of critical discourse analysis on the articles in the women's magazines selected as relevant to the present research, drawing separate conclusions for each historical stage and finally comparing the stages of the Romanian women's magazines, and the way their editorial policies reported to feminism. Thus, the thesis has six chapters, the first three being assigned to the theoretical framework of the thesis, and the last three to the actual research carried out by the critical discourse analysis of selected materials and the interpretation of the qualitative interviews.

The paper also includes three annexes with materials that can be consulted separately.

Annex 1 contains the images of the covers of two editions per year of the *Femeia* magazine collection in the Communist period (March and December), which gives a spectacular overview of the way the magazine changed its content and editorial policy under the influence of the transformations imposed by the three stages of the communist era (Stalinist stage; opening to the West stage; intensive promotion of the Ceaușescu dictatorship stage), and, as an example, some of the cover images of the other magazines analyzed: *Săteanca*, *Timpul femeilor... în țara bărbaților*, *Doina*. Annex 2 contains some of the cover images of *Săteanca*

Annex 3 contains 13 integral interviews with journalists or publishers who participated in the elaboration of the analyzed publications, materials from which I extracted original and relevant information for the present research, reconstructing in a brand new way the past journalistic epochs, correlating some first-hand information about the editorial atmosphere and the journalists' mentality with the ideas or attitudes that come out from the published articles.

The thesis is structured like this:

Chapter I - The methodological framework and the theoretical perspective

Generally speaking, feminist studies are civically and politically engaged, and they do not claim neutrality and objectivity, but rather claim the knowledge of the purpose of women's empowerment, gender balance and equity, increasing the degree of autonomy and affirmation of women in society and in the public sphere. They are prospective studies (Harding, 1886, Ramazanoglu, Caroline, 1992, Grünberg, 2002).

As from the second wave of feminism we are dealing with an ideological diversification within it, and because my work is in the field of the political science, I assume the preference for liberal feminism, for several reasons. First of all, my interest in the issue of feminist political studies starts from my experience as editor of women's magazine, actually from the dissatisfaction that the general approach in women's magazines in the Romanian media landscape does not contribute to the civic and political settlement of women in society, in accordance with the need to participate as full citizens in a regime of liberal democracy. In many cases, on the contrary, these magazines anesthetize, if not undermine, the citizen's component of readers. Secondly, readers belong mostly to the middle class and their interests may coincide more with the liberal direction of feminism. Thirdly, I share the approach of Mihaela Miroiu (2004, 2007, 2015), according to which feminism is a way (cultural, ideological, political) to the autonomy of women. Autonomy is a value that predominantly belongs to ethical liberalism (and therefore to liberal feminism), even if socialist or radical strategies are sometimes necessary for its realization.

The hypothesis from which I started was that the editorial policies of women's publications in our country can influence the development of a feminist political culture among the audience in two ways. One, by supporting and promoting ideas, messages and feminist values meant to generate a change of attitude towards the patriarchal society or even as form of activism at the level of social life. The other, generating sexist, anti-feminist messages, stereotypes or gender-related prejudices, manifested at the ideational level or at the linguistic level. In the spirit of feminist methodologies that contradicted sometimes the traditional research methods, focusing on scientific neutrality, I used qualitative methods in research: critical discourse analysis, as a complex form of the interpretative content analysis, suited to a feminist research, alongside the active, unstructured interview. I believe that specific, detailed and placed in a particular context information may be more explainable and more useful for valid conclusions on the topic.

This analysis applied to some texts extracted from women's magazines was done from the perspective of three completely different stages of women's press evolution:

1. the ante-communist stage, when Romanian feminism evolved synchronously with the feminism of the developed industrial countries; and the claims related to the

obtaining of rights of the first wave feminism, were also widely expressed in the manifestations of the Romanian society

2. the communist stage in which the manifestations of different ideologies other than the totalitarian ones were not allowed, but in which there was a narrow breach of opening to the West between 1966 and 1973/1974, which allowed the reflection of Western ideas in society, including feminist, from the second wave's agenda

3. the post-communist stage, when the society opened to the Occident where the third wave of feminism was already active or, already, the so called postfeminism. This openness manifested by an inflation of Romanian publications and a complete reconfiguration of the media market

For the first stage, I used the analysis of documents and the internal text analysis of relevant materials selected by the researcher Ștefania Mihăilescu and included in her three reference works (Mihăilescu, 2001, 2002, 2006), mainly stopping on those articles that appeared in the women's magazines of the time.

Concerning the communist stage, I have carried out the content analysis of the materials that I considered relevant from *Femeia* magazine, whose almost entirely collection I consulted in the Romanian Academy Library from Bucharest.

In the years after the Revolution, *Femeia* continued to be the only significant magazine for women in the media landscape, remaining on the market with approximately the same editorial staff and the same leadership from the communist stage, but announcing a radical change of ideology. From this postdecembrist stage, namely between 1990 and 1994, I studied and analyzed the relevant texts from *Femeia*, and I stopped over several editions of *Doina* magazine, a continuation of the communist publication *Săteanca*. Also, since many specialized works note it as a special publication, namely as a magazine for the general public but with a content that is subsumed to the feminist ideology, I also analyzed the content of the nine editions that are kept in the Central University Library archive of the publication *Timpul femeilor... în țara bărbaților*, a magazine which was published between July 1992 and February 1994.

I also applied the critical discourse analysis method on the texts of the editions I considered relevant from the collection of the first glossy magazine with an original Romanian concept, *Unica* magazine, from which I analyzed the first three years of its appearance on the Romanian market, 1997-1999, extremely important editions

because of the fact that it was the first Romanian magazine for women in the glossy category and the intense promotion in terms of the novelty brought to the local publicistic landscape generated an extremely high circulation (100,000 copies in December 1997, 150,000 copies in July 1998), and had a really high audience.

Unica Magazine continued to remain an important title on the feminine magazine's market in our country and I analyzed the pro and antifeminist materials on its pages and for the last four years, 2013-2016, during which I also analyzed the editions relevant for this topic of *Tango-Marea Dragoste*, *Avantaj* and *Psychologies*, attempting to provide an overview on women's publications from our country, regarding the feminism. Even if *Avantaj* is an international title, a license from the British *Essentials* magazine, the way it chose to address the local issues and get involved in valuable projects for promoting, recognizing and rewarding women's achievements in society made it a title that could not have been excluded from the overview of the more or less feminist landscape of Romanian women's magazines - as it tries to position itself *Psychologies* magazine in the last years.

All of my research has been conducted from the perspective of political culture, as a general term, and of feminist political culture in particular. In the most important work on political culture, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (1963), Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba conducted an extensive research involving 1,000 people in the United States, Great Britain, Germany, Italy and Mexico, and following these research, Almond and Verba identified three types of political culture:

- (1) Participatory – the citizens understand and take part in politics, making voluntary associations
- (2) Submissive- the citizens respect the laws to a significant extent, but participate very little, and
- (3) Parochial / Retrograde - the citizens have neither political knowledge nor interest in politics.

Considering political culture as the proximate genus of the definition, the specific difference that allows the differentiation of feminist political culture arises

from the inclusion of the gender component in relation to the political system. A feminist political culture can therefore be defined as the totality of attitudes, beliefs and feelings that challenge misogyny (prejudice), sexism (gender discrimination), and the patriarchal regime (the gender power regime in which women have a lower role than men or have no role in terms of political power). The purpose of feminist political culture is to influence women and men to have a political behavior that claims and puts into practice the equal treatment of women and men in relation to the rules and institutions, to the public and private practices of a democratic system which offers equal chances to access public resources and political power, both men and women.

Ignorance of ideological alternatives, lack of consciousness of political power, cantonation in subjected or even retrograde attitudes, tolerance or perpetuation of gender stereotypes, attitudes and sexist language are all manifestations of a low feminist political culture, with long-term effects on the development of balanced democracies. All this is not a utopia. Any analysis on the Democracy Index reveals a very significant correlation between the champions of democracy consolidation (Scandinavian countries, Iceland, Australia, New Zealand) and gender parity in politics, respectively state feminism.

Under these circumstances, I can say that incoherent media policies and journalism practiced without a feminist political culture, with civic superficiality, ignorance or conservative intentions, especially in magazines aimed at the female target, perpetuate the climate of political affirmation as an unfavorable premise of democracy, helps maintaining a civilian and socially passive female model, less able to recognize and pursue its own political interests.

As far as the limitations and the shortcomings of the research are concerned, I must point out that due to the enormous amount of information and the limited duration of the research, I selected from the post-communist period only certain years of the issues included in the analytical approach, those I considered representative for the present research, excluding other issues, though I assume the idea that a complete research of each issue of each publication for women considered representative of the relationship with feminism and feminist political culture could have produced more shaded conclusions.

Other research limitations may be correlated with the relatively small number of interviews with journalists, namely 13 interviews and the fact that only some of these interviews were made face to face, and others based on a set of written questions depending on acceptance or availability of interlocutors. I also mention the fact that although I have contacted several personalities who could have provided extremely relevant information about the context of the press release for women during the communist years or the first years of transition, they have firmly refused to engage in such research and, generally, they refused the discussions on the subject. However, this number should be considered in context, in the methodological framework in which I carried out the research, which aimed to obtain novel information that would clarify and deepen a topic of analysis addressed at the discursive level, not the referential one. Even though a large number of interviews would have allowed the expansion of the analysis by comparison and the establishment of similarities and contradictions, the fact that all the information obtained is novel and covers extended epochs allows not only the setting of extremely valuable elements for the discursive approach of the investigated context but also for further analysis.

Rigorous content analysis can bring rigor and clarity to the interpretation of documents, allowing for highlighting trends in editorial policy, but given its limitations, of which, at the level of wide-ranging research, the most difficult is the difficulty of establishing a category grid, and another the validity or the fidelity of the process (Iluț, 1997), I chose to avoid the analysis based on the inventory of some themes, phrases, words or attitudes and to focus on the social implications of the pro and antifeminist attitudes of authors and publications and on the gender perspectives of the analyzed discourse.

Chapter II - The First Wave of Feminism. The contribution of women's magazines to civil and political rights

In the nineteenth century, in a world in economic change, remaining, still, under the burdensome and humiliating legislation of half the population, women's emancipation movements were born and naturally increased, with a clear stake on the meaning of all, and a precise objective, which could be targeted, pursued, analyzed:

the obtaining and the legal consecration of these rights. The feminism of equality has been manifested through reference works of feminist history through statements, marches, positions that sometimes defied death. Starting from Christine de Pisan and the *Book of Ladies' Fortress*, appeared in 1405, reaching the mighty impact of Mary Astell's books, writers and orators, the author of *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies, for the Advancement of Their True and Greatest Interest* (1694) and *A Serious Proposal, Part II* (1697), who had four reprints in just seven years, passing through the years of the French Revolution, where writer and activist Olympe de Gouges wrote in 1791 the Declaration of Women's Rights and Citizenship (*Déclaration des droits de la femme et citoyenne*) as a response to the Declaration of the Rights of the Man and the Citizen (*Déclaration des droits de l'Homme et du citoyen*), a courage that he paid for, literally, with his life, reaching his first work of early feminist philosophy, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, published in 1792, in which author Mary Wollstonecraft clearly states that women they are not inferior to men, but that they may seem like being, because of the lack of education, and then a milestone in the history of feminism, the book under the guise of a man, a well-known philosopher, political economist, social and political theory and civic activist: John Stuart Mill, who publishes *Subjection of Women* in 1869, in which feminism has become a book of words and has cleared up its ideas by making them accessible.

One could not miss the militancy of women's magazines that, although originally they were born from masculine initiatives, because the press business was still a man's job at the beginning, came to be not only written but created and led by women. Thus, the feminism of the first wave was supported by the modern, recent forms of communication, and the press, which expanded all over the world of the 19th century, has helped to support feminist demands and values. The printed lectures and specialized works dedicated to feminism have been more and more duplicated by appearances of publications that could not bypass the hottest subjects of the times, many of them dedicated to the general public and reaching extremely large prints and colossal audiences (especially in the United States).

During this period, in the Romanian territories, the family, legal and political situation of women was the most obvious premise for alignment with this first wave of the movement. The women of the Romanian territories were obliged by law to obey their men. The old legal laws remained in force, including the corporal punishment

applied to the wives, which they could beat and seize with the only and ridiculous amendment "not too much, but just enough". Their dowry went to the spouse, the married women could not have their own wealth, could not own property, could not establish another home except with the husband's consent, could not sign contracts and could not take the role of guardian for their own legitimate children. On the other hand, in the case of children outside the marriage, all the obligations came to them, while the law prevented paternity research and required maternity research. If the women married a foreign citizen, they lost their nationality, while men could keep it in any context.

At the citizen's level, Romanian women simply did not exist. They did not have the right to vote, they could not choose and could not be elected, they could not have leadership positions in ministries, they could not practice as lawyers by the end of the 19th century, nor could they access university institutions, and illiteracy was an extremely widespread wound, within the general demographic framework, but of course a higher percentage among women.

The humiliating condition offered by the Romanians' tradition and society has led to an intense activism manifested on all levels - personal, organizational, journalistic, through generalist or specialised magazines meant to reflect and share the ideas and projects of women's associations. It is certainly the most flourishing epoch of Romanian feminism, aligned with Western feminism, not only by the synchronicity of claiming rights, naturally born in a country in full modernization, but also by the openness to the West and the free movement of elites from one country to another . Some of the Romanian feminists had studied in Western schools, and then, as activists, they participated in congresses of international feminist organizations, and local associations co-operated with those in the Occidental countries, receiving guidance and assistance from them.

The analysis of Romanian publications from the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century demonstrates a clear alignment with the steps taken by the Western feminism in the Western countries, not only with synchronicities, but also with actions in advance on Romanian territory, as compared to the Western one, the history of feminine emancipation around the world, such as reading the Islaz Proclamation, June 9/20 1848, which required equal education for both sexes more

than a month before the Seneca Falls Convention (19-20 of July 1948), considered as an official certificate of the birth of the modern American feminine movement, or by the intervention of the revolutionary Cezar Bolliac, who demanded in the Parliament of Romania, in 1866, the universal vote, regardless of class, wealth or sex - one year before the great feminist John Stuart Mill to make the same claim in the English Parliament.

Apart from these steps that deserve to be noted by any great international history of feminism, the editorial appearances and actions of women until the entrance to the communist era demonstrate a strong Romanian feminist movement represented by remarkable personalities who felt the need for expression in the press as a mass instructor, both acting as theoreticians and as activists of the feminist movement, being extremely present during the 1848 Revolution or as a supporter of those who left the front in the wars.

The press has addressed women from varied positions in relation to the prevalence of family and society roles, some of whom have affirmed their civic requirements as family supporters as being primordial for any woman (*Curier de ambe sexe, Amicul familiei, Mama și copilul, Rândunica*), others for women as citizens, who feel the need to help other women to rebuild their lives both in society and in relation to the matrimonial obligations (*Femeia română, Dochia, Revista noastră, Viitorul românelor*) and besides these, publications that stand up for women, (*Buletinul Ligii Femeilor* - as an organ of the *Liga Femeilor Române de la Iași*, *Unirea Femeilor Române* - as a publication of the *Unirea Educatoarelor Române Association*, *Drepturile femeii* - as an organ of the *Drepturile femeii Association*, *Acțiunea Feministă* – the magazine of *Asociația pentru Emanciparea Civică și Politică a Femeilor* etc.)

The press for women is also offered to its public as an ideatic place to escape, but also as a possibility of economic support, as it was the case with international press publishing women's magazines (ex. The English Trust Victoria Press). Some Romanian publications, especially those from the beginning of the 20th century, have positioned themselves as centers of economic support for women - giving to their talented readers not only a place of expression but also a place to work.

Even though the first decades of the twentieth century bring remarkable feminists, already having a rich political culture, a systematization of claims, needs and requirements, articles and lectures in which they explain with patience and wisdom, what is feminism and what virtues has, desiring to be understood by the general public, the feminine press begins to record the first reactions of resistance from other women who consider that rallying with feminism would bring with it the abdication from the values of femininity, beauty and love, giving birth to some prejudices that will perpetuate over the ages to the present day. These denials appear sporadic for the time being, but they can not obscure the desire for women's emancipation of the Romanians.

Chapter III The Second Feminist Wave. The Contribution of Women's Magazines to the Political Movement of Liberation from the Patriarchal Order

Once the civilian and political goals for which the world's women had militated for nearly a century, feminism seemed to have lost its reasoning to continue in the mid-twentieth century. The UN had imposed on all member countries a law that would ensure equality of rights between men and women, but achieved only at the legislative level, equality between women and men continued to be a real problem in the context of everyday life in which women have remained marginalized and discriminated against. That is why feminism has continued its course, in a second wave, where the emphasis has not fallen on equal rights, but on differences and on liberation. The idea of differences in the feminism of the second wave is viewed from two perspectives, the first being that women will distance themselves from the old object perspective and will look through the light of their female experiences as subjects of their own existence, but also from the perspective of the diversification of feminism itself and the development of its theoretical and manifestive forms in multiple directions, in various groups.

The agenda for the second wave is expanding and includes increasingly subtle issues, that address all plans of existence, from economic and social to personal. The feminist wave of the second wave discusses issues such as equal pay for equal work,

free access to any kind of education or profession previously considered masculine, but also sexual autonomy, sexual violence and sexual harassment in a professional or private environment, and the ineffable issue, positioned not in a wrongly constructed legislation, but in misshapen mentalities, the way women feel, or are made to feel, in the second rank of humanity's ranks, affected by what Betty Friedan calls the "unnamed problem", that discreet settlement in the custom of woman's subordination. The two theoretical reference works of the period are *Al doilea sex*, the work of the French Simone de Beauvoir, appeared in 1949, and *The Feminine Mystique*, of the American Betty Friedan (1963), both trying to clarify the same issues and to explain why women are viewed and treated as second-class citizens, and whether society asks them to become men in order to treat them as equals to men. Apart from the analysis of the main ideas of the two reference papers, which are of particular relevance to the present paper and the analysis that I have proposed (to establish the link between women's magazines and the way their readers are built as political or social personalities) is the fact that the female mystic draws attention for the first time in a systematic way on the way in which women's publications outline the features of some generations. The second chapter of the volume, „The Happy Housewife Heroine”, refers extensively to this subject by analyzing the summary of the July 1960 edition, in which all the topics discussed outline the image of a woman who only lives inside her house and her garden, looking after her husband and her children, taking care of her silhouette and clothing to be attractive to her husband's eyes, careful to teach boys to become authentic men and girls to grow up to be desirable beings, a woman who knows how to organize a successful barbecue in the family.

In response to the magazines dedicated to "the happy housewives heroines", as Betty Friedan calls them, separately from the great development of generalist magazines for women, the feminist publications continue to exist and appear on the American market, many as press organisms of organizations or associations of feminist activists or theorists - who have remained extremely involved in the movement of emancipation women in a highly economically developed country with a population of about 200,000,000 inhabitants of different ethnicities and races in 1970.

For certain, the most famous publication in this niche, that reached a significant audience, is *Ms.*, a feminist journal of liberal orientation founded by the activists of the second wave of the movement, Gloria Steinem and Dorothy Pittman Hughes. Both were feminist activists, members of *The National Women's Political Caucus* (1971) and *Women's Action Alliance* (1971-1997), and journalists, and their plurivalent experience helped them find a formula combining the expression of ideological values with success commercial and profitable business - something that they have not succeeded at all times or with great ease, but the deviations have made them, when needed, in the commercial area.

Ms. was the first American magazine to portray feminism to everyone's point of view, making it accessible to the general public and giving voice and power to feminist voices, the first magazine to have the courage to talk about abolishing abortive laws, that looked at US presidential candidates from the perspective of bending over the interests of women, who took the attitude against domestic violence, sexual harassment issues, which made a national survey on rape and triggered an alarm about the influence advertising on media content and quality journalism.

The period in which the feminism of differences and liberation manifested itself intensely in the West, redefining the way of seeing and understanding women all over the world, repositioning themselves from the place of the object, to the place of the subject, in which the issues of reproduction control and freedom of sexuality, access to professions considered as already conquered territories of masculinity or professional equity between genres coincide, at historical level, with the period of communist dictatorship established over Romania. In this case, the second wave of feminism could not penetrate and could not develop in our country simultaneously with the Western movement. The Marxism-Leninism on the basis of which the principle of gender equality was applied in the Communist state, as well as dictatorial demographic policies, excluded the idea of developing an ideology of feminine autonomy; women in communism were, in fact, condemned to equal labor duties, which seriously disadvantage them of affirmation under the conditions of the pronatalist policy.

Although on a temporal level, Romanian communism manifested itself in the same period of development of feminism of the second wave in the whole world,

since the differences in the attitude allowed to this movement are radical in Romania, I preferred to analyze the communist era and the women's communist magazines in a separate chapter.

CHAPTER IV Developments of editorial policies in women's magazines during the Communist period in Romania

If the agenda of the first Western feminist wave overlapped almost perfectly as time and preoccupations with the first wave of feminism in the Romanian countries, the period of the second international wave corresponds, temporally, to the communist era of the Popular and then Socialist Romanian Republic. The successive dictatorships, Stalin's (1948-1965 - under the leadership of Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej), and then the Ceaușescu's (1966-1989), leave no room for the penetration of other ideologies other than those imposed by force. So, feminism, considered both by Lenin and by Stalin, a bourgeois, reactionary ideology (Miroiu, 2004, pp. 1993-1994) fails to break through editorial policies of the press. However, during the period of transition between dictatorships, including the beginning of Ceaușescu's dictatorship (between 1966 and 1972, with no precise delimitation of editorial policies that have gradually changed, adapting to the times) are a few years in which the feminine press manifests more openness and sometimes with an accidental and not scheduled appearance, there are subjects related to topics present in feminist agendas, more of the first wave, such as equality of rights, equal pay for equal work and even, rarely, something that might be correlated with the second wave of feminism, such as equity in domestic affairs or somehow, just suggested, the idea of possible sexual harassment at work. (Buzatu, 1977).

"Communist feminism is a contradiction in terms," says Mihaela Miroiu and arguments this statement in the paper "Communism was a State Patriarchy not State Feminism" included in the *Aspasia* magazine. The quoted analysis states that in the Communist era, the patriarch is not a man or the head of the family, as it happens in traditionalist or religious communities, but the state itself. Paternalistically, the state allows women only an emancipation in the workplace, giving them the right to work

side by side with men and occupy leading positions, but does not propose or encourage them to emancipate from the pre-established family roles - they are still presented as mothers, wives, educators, caretakers of the homes - or autonomy and self-affirmation.

Femeia and *Săteanca* Magazines have been, throughout their appearance, the main tools to support the policies of the Unique Party and the promotion of women, according to the Communist directives. Both magazines were launched with the party's feminine organization, the National Women's Council, and under the direct supervision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, they acted in the service of party ideals from their first appearances in 1948 to the last - the *Săteanca* in 1974, and *Femeia* in December 1989.

The oscillations of editorial approaches, more obedient or more independent in relation to party politics, can be easily correlated with the three periods of the era: the years of Stalinism, when Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej was in charge, being the first dictator of the country (1948-1965). Not being so affected by the cult of personality, Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej was not very visible in the press, like Nicolae Ceaușescu would be.

After Gheorghe Gheorghiu Dej died, in 1965, in spite of the establishment of both the 779 decree to deter divorce and, in particular, the 770 anti-abortion decree, which would generate many tragedies among women, 1966 opened some breaches to the West. The following five, six, seven years were the only ones in which the Romanian press for women has an openness to international issues, to modernity, to some avant-garde ideas. After that, there is the last period of communism, in which reality is presented as absolutely perfect, and the life of citizens led to great fulfillment by the state policy.

In all these stages of Communism, women held civil rights and free access to power at the legal level, but in Communism, the civic participation was only a formal, worthless exercise

Women finally had the right to vote, but this right became irrelevant: elections were not free and the opposition has been annihilated.

They had the right to vote and to be elected in all state organs, but this happens when the patriarchal tradition forces women to take full care of their household chores, child care and education.

The right to work equally with man was a right that masks, in fact, the need for a more and more industrialized society of new labor. Not a favor, but a social necessity.

The right to equal pay for men - to equal work - was a disadvantage to the fact that there were no measures to support women in pregnancy and caring for a newborn or sick child when their only chance was to work part-time or to give up additional tournaments, so win less.

The right to political participation has become, in practice, an obligation that is added to the other two obligations related to work and homework. The right to equality in caring for children with the other parent was recommended, but domestic duties and child care leave, including sickness, were granted only to the mother.

The family was, according to the Constitution, based on equality, friendship and mutual help, but the household chores belonged to the woman, and domestic helpers, nurseries, housewives cooperatives, the supply of household appliances were promoted only in relation to women.

The Decree prohibiting abortion and the persecution of women who violated this law came in the most inhumane of the communist "rights", that women would make children or make more than they wanted, up to the limit imposed by the party, first four children, then five.

All these rights were promoted and remembered periodically in the magazines of the communist era. But as we can not talk about a feminist movement in the years of communism, much less one can talk about coherent feminist editorial policies, although in *Femeia's* magazines of the time. After October 1, 1966, the date when abortion is forbidden by law, there is no reference to the legal impediment to maternity, but rather the manipulative approach and the extremely insistent "policy of duplicity" (Kligman, 2000) , embodied in articles highlighting all the benefits of the determination to have as many children as possible on the couple's well-being and

joy, each time specifying how great and useful there is the help provided by the mother-heroine state and how much the conditions for raising children and working for young mothers have improved.

Feminist ideas, however, appear in communism as manifestations of the personal beliefs of some journalists involved in the editorial process, or by reflecting readers' ideas, even if they are not programmatically addressed or subsumed by a coherent theory.

Chapter 5 - Editorial Policies of Women's Magazines After 1990. Between feminism, post-feminism and antifeminism

In the early years of the transition period, Romanian newspapers and magazines were self-proclaimed "free". After forty years in which the official information on feminism and, in general, any other doctrine other than the communist (otherwise than restricted and filtered by Marxist critics) was completely absent, it is assumed that after 1989 women manifested as great magazine readers - at the peak of reaching the maximum print and audience records of any magazine for women of all ages so far, they have formed a new vision of how to position themselves in society, in the world, in family reading the magazines dedicated to them, along with those for other categories of needs and interests.

The desire to align with Western style has often resulted in a takeover of some topics in the Western media without a pass through the local realities filter, where post-feminism was proclaimed precisely as a solution to annihilation or even minimize the achievements of earlier waves of feminism. Therefore, the impact of the attitude of contesting feminism, coming against the backdrop of the fact that in our country even the contested and negated western realities were not manifested - since the feminism of differences could not manifest in the years of communism - had terrible consequences.

For a while, the only women's magazine that worked on the market, striving for a democratic editorial approach, was *Femeia* that kepted the same editorial staff

prior to 1989, with a leading man, Vasile Tincu, and a team of journalists who included 8 men (and 9 together with the editor-in-chief), along with 11 women.

The magazine's circulation has grown ten times over the years of communism, reaching 500,000 copies - as the editor-in-chief said in his editorial. There are no broadcasting figures provided outside the publication, since the Romanian Bureau of Circulation Audit (BRAT) was established in 1997, the year when the official circulation and audience measurements began, but it can be assumed that, at a circulation of 500,000 copies (never seen in the history of the Romanian women's press), the audience reached at least 2,000,000 people, with a huge impact on the public.

In the most of the editorial approaches from *Femeia* reverted the prefeminist confusion between the terms of equality and identity. Rarely debated feminist themes - from the second wave agenda, especially about wage and labor promotion - are annihilated by the almost obsessive return to ideas of refusing the concept of equality, ironizing feminist attitudes. A life without a partner, even if he cheats you or he beats you, is presented in the pages of the magazine as a scattered life. Only together with a man you have a life ... The relationship promoted and recommended for the couple is not the partnership but a profoundly patriarchal one in which the woman is urged to obedience, pretense and abdication from her own rights. Not even love, the traditional bond of any relationship, is considered an essential element of the *sine qua non* of the relationship, because the form of relationship proposed in the journals does not embody any of the possible forms of love, *eros*, *agape* or *filia*, but it is a strange form of dependency. You do not exist if you are not legally married - concubinage is unwanted. And within the couple, the man is treated as a pole of all interests and a savior in the face of the frustration of a life lived in celibacy, even if the keeping of marriage in any way requires the woman to give up her own aspirations, accept the burden of the double working day, give up the plenary manifestation of his sexual or reproductive rights. The initiatives to promote women in general, but especially to promote them through affirmative or gender-based policies, are *a priori* refused and treated either as reminiscences of the disowned Communist system or as an evidence of women's weakness. Even interviewed women argue against affirmative policies, although, while recognizing their unfavorable social circumstances, they are still anti-feminist.

Even serious societal themes, such rape or couples violence, are not viewed from a feminist perspective and do not necessarily attract a position on the part of the victims. The anti-human manner in which cases of rape are reported - with understanding for aggressors and disapproval of victims who are automatically attributed a part of their guilt through their behavior or clothing, lack of firm condemnation of violence against women, with the justification that violent women either have violated their conjugal obligations of loyalty or home care, either "they deserved" the hit received by aggressive behavior, the lack of empathy, understanding and humanity toward prostitutes and marginalized women treated with contempt or hatred – are elements that transform the press for women from the early years of Romanian capitalism into a profoundly patriarchal element that undermines the confidence of the woman itself and strengthens the masculine image.

The intervention of religious hypocrisy after 1990 complicates even more the understanding of the natural course of women's emancipation, the Orthodox religion being, by excellence, a patriarchal religion that preaches the woman's submission to the man. Also, an essential element of journalism practiced at that time in the press for Romanian women is the lack of political culture of journalists, the lack of journalistic training from the point of view of promoting and respecting gender equality between men and women. Editors are not trained and do not follow a coherent editorial policy, they do not respect the brand vision because there is no such vision. As they will say in the interviews I have included in Appendix 3, the journalists did not know anything about feminism, about equal opportunities, about correct writing from a gender perspective, honestly saying they either did not know anything, or they were laughing about such issues. In addition, with direct reference to *Femeia*, three of the editors of the former publication state that the atmosphere in the editorial office was completely hostile to the idea of feminism or fair treatment of women, the editorial policy being based on the discontent bursts of those who practiced the profession in conditions based on imprecision, inequality, favoring nepotism and sexual favors.

Doina Magazine, the continuation of the withdrawn *Săteanca* from the communist market in 1974, also appeared between 1991 and 1997. It was, however, carried out by the same editorial team as *Femeia*, and approached, with small

variations, the same kind of articles, but unlike this, avoiding obviously reaching deep issues and going especially on the idea of practical advice useful to a country women.

Another publication, in my opinion, mistakenly considered in most of the synthesis works as the first editorial issue with a mass goal, but with a feminist origin, *Timpul Femeilor ... în țara bărbaților* (Women's Time ... in the country of men), probably because of its editorial staff led by director Ecaterina Oproiu and chief editor Sanda Faur, journalists known for their feminist views does not succeed in imposing on the market and it only lasted for a year and a half. Appears in July 1992 and disappears at the beginning of 1994, without successful editorial performance.

The analyzed magazines promote a violent return to traditional values in the immediate period of dictatorship (1990-1994) and build a counter-culture of women's rights and, by deriding the process of emancipation and democratization or by countering it with arguments customary-religious, resurrect a patriarchal regime at the place of the state, existing during the communist period. In these years, the magazines were not feminist and they were, most often, preventively anti-feminist.

CHAPTER VI - Current developments of women's magazines in Romania. Case studies

The following years of evolution of the press for women in the last decade of the twentieth century have brought on the stalls and readers' houses also other press vehicles carrying the mentalities mentioned in the previous chapter.

Although it occupies a significant place in the history of the press for women in our country, being the first title of a national publication of the glossy category created on the Romanian realm, and not a license import already verified in another country, *Unica* magazine fails to mark any genuine achievement on the road to emancipation or, as announced in the editorial of the first edition, to the evolution of women. In the pages of *Unica*, women are still treated as a right-holder of the double

labor day and validated by the intensity and seriousness with which they accept to undertake their professional careers and domestic work simultaneously. Couple relationships continue to be viewed from a traditional perspective where the woman is subjected and eager to fulfill the will and pleasure of her husband. As in the *Femeia* couple relationships are neither partnership nor love-based. The interlocutors are predominantly anti-feminists, or even officially misogynists, and this kind of statements don't spark in the journalists reactions of any desire to elucidate the reasons behind this choice - thus legitimizing, by their silence, the discriminatory attitudes from a gender perspective.

Although it was presumed that the magazine built on the basis of specialist references from the West - *Unica* magazine appeared in the Ringier Swiss Editorial Group and was launched under the supervision of professionals specially enlisted to support the publication of the magazine - would have a more modern and open attitude towards the values of an emancipated society; in fact, from the interviews with the founding journalists *Unica*, it was revealed that the publishing specialists of the Swiss trust that launched the Romanian magazine Ringier focused mainly on the commercial part of the product not to its ideological content and its form of expression, these aspects being left to the editors.

From the interviews with journalists from *Unica* it is obvious that none of them had any experience in the field of women's publications, Project Manager Claudiu Șerban coming from the sports and tabloid press, the first two editorial directors Nora Ioniță and Diana Mețiu from the general daily press both from *Ziua* newspaper) and most of the editors directly from the faculty's colleges, where they had not learned anything about how to draft and approach editorial issues from the point of view of combating discrimination or gender stereotypes, having no scientific information about feminism, in a superficial manner, prejudices against this ideology.

Although they were talking about feminism, they considered it an important topic, however, *Unica* editors did not know anything about the subject, falling into the comfortable bias that feminism is bad and, as Mihaela Miroiu says, "must be cut short". (Miroiu, 1998)

"Clearly, at college (Higher School of Journalism) there was no subject of feminism. From the teachers' ironies I understood that feminism is just as bad as

misogynism, but it is less tolerated, "said Roxana Iliescu, one of the most active participants in those years and a founding member of *Unica*, in the interview which he specifically gave me for this analysis.

Another explanation for the incoherent editorial composition, in which anti-feminist ideas and sexist or misogynistic approaches frequently come, is that the magazine was designed and directed by journalists and journalists who at the time had misogynistic and anti-feminist views.

Claudiu Șerban, the developer of the *Unica* concept and the project manager of the first editions, speaks in his interview, which he gave me especially to better understand the *Unica* stage, about his involvement in the editorial policy and the work of the editorial staff as well as about the advantages and disadvantages of his masculine presence in a women's magazine, and today he is still in a superior masculine position and showing a subtle sexism.

"I had more disadvantages than advantages in this position as a co-leader of a women's magazine. As an example, something I never understood was the pages with makeup and hairstyles. Even today I do not have the patience to study such pages. Then being a man in this world is not at all comfortable because you can not participate in any of the relaxed discussions - "like the girls" - that colleagues can have with clients, partners or celebrities. I also met men who were so friendly about it, but most of them are in a certain minority"said Claudiu Șerban in December 2016.

The first editor-in-chief of the magazine, Nora Ioniță, declares in 2017, twenty years after the launch of *Unica*: "I do not care about feminism and I do not consider it a problem. A few years ago MediaFem made a project and asked me for an interview and I told them that I did not feel discriminated in any way, I do not think we have to be equal, I would like the man to change the wheel to the car and I wipe it out of sweat. I never felt discriminated, never, maybe only positively, being a girl and being a pretty girl, they were giving the first glass of water to me. " (Annex 3)

In a magazine that was conceived and led from anti-feminist positions, only absolutely unspeakable contexts, such as the encounter with personalities close to academic feminism, which had begun to affirm itself more and more in our country,

provided temporary openings towards approaches that take into account the principles of gender equality or the values of feminism.

The last four years of the emergence of the Romanian magazines *Unica*, *Avantaje*, *Tango* and *Psychologies*, between 2013-2016, on which I continued the case studies and the application of the critical discourse analysis on the texts led to the conclusion that the publications continue to be realized from the perspective of a chaotic editorial policy, not referring to any ethical code of gender treatment or combating of discrimination against women. Women's magazines that, due to their glossy formula (printed on very expensive paper), are conditioned by attracting advertising revenue and make compromises complimenting manufacturers of cosmetics or beauty services, setting up a kind of mandatory beauty dictatorship. The refusal, disinterest or disdain for affirmative policies (maintained in political life throughout the post-totalitarian period) makes women still politically underprivileged. The glossy magazine's glossary rules lay the interest in politics in the last place, and the consequences are seen in civic disinterest, political inculturation, lack of electoral and citizen participation. ("Better cinema than television, better television than music, better music than sports and anything better than politics." This is the dictum of the one who signed his first people magazine, *People*, Richard Stonely " Cristina Stănciulescu, Annex 3)

All the publications I have referred to in this chapter often oscillate between the woman's utopian image of the wonderwoman typology who has succeeded in all areas of her existence and the traditionally seen woman, who has been asked in interviews about how the profession and career blend. The way an editorial summary is made in the recent years is very close to the editorial content of the early years of the glossy press, demonstrating that the press for women has not evolved significantly but resumes many of the topics proposed 10, 15 years ago, without a significant evolution in their approach, and journalists are increasingly disinterested in the values and responsibilities of their profession, migrating from one publication to another in a way of journalistic tourism that can only be ominous for the stability of media products.

CONCLUSIONS

In a society in which the public life, politicians' speeches, advertising and the generalist press are invaded by messages and symbols profoundly affected by gender stereotypes, it could have been assumed that the press for women might develop, in a modern way or even subversively to the domineering system, as a distinct realm freed from the rigid schemes of positioning femininity in subordination to masculinity, and in which there is interest in promoting emancipatory discourses, enhancing the confidence, courage, involvement of women in society, and to diminish the separation between masculine and feminine through the eternal gender gap that has been installed for so many generations. In the light of this positioning, the main hypothesis from which I began this research was that editorial policies of women's publications in our country can influence the development of the feminist political culture among the audience, supporting and promoting ideas, messages and values to generate a change of attitude towards patriarchy or even a form of feminist activism in the social life.

The way in which this hypothesis has been confirmed or has been denied differs radically from one stage to another in the history of our country, whose drastic regime changes have greatly influenced citizens' relationship with feminism and gender activism.

If, in *Mișcări feministe și ecologiste în România- Feminist and ecological movements in Romania* (1990-2014), the authors launched the question "How did feminists become... feminists?", regarding the phenomenon in our hardly-freed-of-communism country, the question that is naturally born after a review of the main magazines for women addressed to the general public is "How did antifeminists become... antifeminists?"

An essential element that needs to be taken into account in any analysis of the press for women is the lack of knowledge, information, educational training, which the extremely editorial incoherence proves in every edition. Editors are not trained and do not follow a particular editorial policy, they do not respect the brand's vision - which is usually not clearly formulated in the first place -, they are only interested in making themselves strive and stand out, they do not know and do not respect the principles of gender equality and, for this reason, along with all the others listed above, the ideas sustained even in the same magazine issue contradict each other,

creating a picture of chaos and proving the irresponsibility of the authors of these publications to their readers. In fact, all interviewed journalists, representing women's publications during the Romanian transition period, admit that they did not know anything about feminism or, on the contrary, that they had *heard* outrageous elements and refused to identify in any way with feminist terminology, disobeying by it and, implicitly, transmitting to the reader the message of denial.

Whether or not they are trained for this, whether they know it or not, the editorialists' voices are changing them into opinion shapers, regardless if they are or are not ready to transmit to the public viable, valuable messages of ethics, democracy or civic sense. As it emerges from the interviews provided by the journalists, the promotion of the journalist to the chief editor position has taken place, however, almost always on the basis of strictly subjective choices and the testing of skills unrelated to democratic values. Chief editors have often been chosen to occupy these positions by a contest of circumstances that has nothing to do with their ability to reflect society from a perspective stripped of prejudice and gender stereotypes, but perhaps at the most, through talent-related tests that challenge their literary talent. This has also brought the press to women in the same general situation in the press, where publishers of editorial leadership in high impact media vehicles, though not ready for democratic discourse, exert their influence at a high level and launch messages that can become either clarifying or generating confusion for the general public, with no censorship or sanctions related to the minimal deontology of journalism practiced in a democratic society, nor arbitrariness bodies such as the National Audiovisual Council (which limits its activity to level of audiovisual programs), which oversee the content of media vehicles in this media segment.

Interviews with journalists of these publications show that, especially in the early years of transition, the editorial atmosphere was not at all conducive to the free development of ideas, always with nepotism and favoritism over a press done with sense of responsibility and genuine civic sense and, as the glossy era of women's magazines approaches, the commercial dictatorship was set up in the editorial offices where the content was supposed to sustain or generate revenue from advertisers. The press for women must have as large a sale as possible to the public and to advertisers, and for this purpose the beauty dictatorship influences the content of the entire

publication and chooses the cover image as a form of support for the beauty products, have the largest marketing budgets.

Another proof that women's magazines were not created with the goal of helping their readers evolve is that the discourse of the most of those involved in the editorial process does not at all reflect special attention to the needs of the female target but, above all, to the acceptance and obedience by the interests of the press business. Besides, the backstage of the reviewed magazines is full of intrigue, injustice, illegality, violence, corruption. Therefore, the working conditions were not exactly conducive to the spreading of messages for the public on the theme of emancipation.

Avantaj was also a space of promoting gender stereotypes and patriarchal attitudes in the earliest years, as demonstrated by the well-known research based on critical speech analysis, „Language, Gender and Power” (Dragomir, 2002), becoming, over the years, with the personal evolution of the Editor-in-Chief Daniela Palade Teodorescu, more involved in the social problems of women, these themes still never occupying more than 20% of the content of the edition, oriented mainly to the advice and products for personal care and beauty, home care or gastronomy - a good context for advertising.

Unica Magazine, the first glossy magazine with a Romanian concept, was created by a team that ensured a very unfavorable context to feminism, one of the designers of this concept, the project manager of the publication, until nowadays affirming himself as a character that does not embrace feminist ideas, just as the first editors-in-chief of the publication did not embrace the feminist ideas, stating openly against them in the pages of the publication and declaring, in the largest part, against this ideology, to the present day, 20 years after creating the magazine. The rationale for which they declare they were predominantly commercial. Also, the work atmosphere was marked by uncertainties and hostility, both of which were unmasked in the first years of *Unica* magazine, the first editor-in-chief bringing a lawsuit against the company, a process that she won.

Even the Romanian women's magazines, which have evolved at present and analyzed in the most recent years, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, have not yet found a coherent line with feminism, avoiding the subject for the most part of time and with

somewhat of an indifferent attitude, where the issues that address gender social imbalances are taken rather by derision through the conundrum of the invited contributors.

The *Unica* Magazine seems to be rallying at an editorial level (perhaps involuntarily, inspired by Western publications) to the third wave feminism, and post-feminism, focusing almost exclusively on skills, initially on sexual emancipation, and by avoiding programmatically any theme of injustice or victimization, this while traditional approaches from the patriarchal perspective continue to emerge while *Avantaj*, *Tango - Marea Dragoste* and *Psychologies* assume, not necessarily explicitly and quite rarely, feminist themes of the second wave, remaining outstanding in our society.

An element of authenticity in all ages and all women's magazines analyzed is the headlines that host letters from readers. The point of view of those who read the magazine and want to contribute to its value, indicating problems of interest, always brings a fresh air, neither to the commercial considerations nor to the editorial trends of the moment, the letters from the readers being real windows open to the real world women of that age.

Looking ahead, from the first publications for women in which large social changes are targeted and announced to today's analyzes, there is also a shift from enthusiasm and optimism to helplessness, pessimism, and mistrust that things are evolving in the right direction or, anyway, that it would evolve at a rhythm that would count. At international level, there is a continuous step backwards in relation to the earlier conquests of feminism, and in the Romanian realm, current research does not signal any significant evolution in terms of gender equality. *Cartea neagră a egalității de șanse în România*, (*The Black Book of Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in Romania*), signed by Laura Grünberg (coordinator), Ioana Borza and Theodora Eliza Văcărescu, published in 2006, could actually add new chapters month by month, as black as the book, just by making a press review for the women's magazines. The analysis of women's magazines of the post-totalitarian era from the perspective of the Almond and Verba definition shows a predominance of the parochial / retrograde political culture in which the citizens have neither political knowledge nor political interest, combined with the subject, in which citizens respect the laws to a significant

extent, but participates very little, a participatory political culture style in which citizens understand and take part in politics by making voluntary associations, being totally absent in women's magazines during the first ten years of transition and then very poorly represented in the editorial policy of women's magazines in recent years.

In 1990, Gloria Steinem wondered in an article in *Ms Magazine*: "*What if the archaeologists of the future were to dig up women's magazines and use them to judge American women, what would they think of us - and what can we do about it?*" The question could be reformulated for the women in Romania and the magazines they read.

Beyond the current situation of the press, through this research, which is just the beginning of a work of understanding the context in which the press for women is positioned in society, I believe that the vicious circle of promoting the stereotypes and patriarchal models of thinking in the press for women must be broken, through coherent media policies, through the compulsory diversification of the curriculum of the journalism schools, through obligatory training courses for the editorial staff, through the establishment of viable, functional institutions to oversee the correctness of written press in relation to reflecting the values of democracy. Socializing women in the patterns of such models of thinking has extremely serious consequences over time, making them identify with the norms of stereotyped thinking and double the undermining of the values of an autonomous life right inside of femininity. By correlating the traditional messages of Romanian education with the highly conservative of the Orthodox Church, with the lack of support of affirmative policies and sexist messages of the generalist press, women themselves will tend to tend to the model of resigned and resigned woman proposed by journals dedicated to them or conforming to the imposed patterns and accepting the tyranny of beauty and eternal youth, all of which increase the perverse effects of accepting stereotypes through self-fulfillment of prophecies and the complete annulment of any chance of succeeding normative approaches to equality.

A first step towards finding optimism can be the honest observation that, at the end of the day, no matter how slowly we move towards emancipation by reading women's magazines, the essential value of the existence of these magazines, their diversity, and the fact that through their simple existence on the market and offer to

promote topics of interest to the readers, even if they are not balanced in the editorial scheme, cannot be neglected, because women's magazines can form, over time, a counter-culture based on the female experience that grows, evolving through evolution and contributing to the formation of courageous mentalities capable of rediscovering liberal feminist values and open opportunities for embracing such an ideology. And maybe, over time, there will be feminist Romanian publications of great interest that will redefine the values of femininity, and women, in partnership with men and in full equality with them, can share these values to the whole world.

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