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## ***FEMALE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES' PROFILE – ROMANIA 2014***

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*Abstract: The present context of the presidential elections gives an insight into candidates' offers, characteristics, ideology and into the campaign's strategy. This campaign represents a first in what concerns women's running for a presidential office in Romania. We focus our attention on the candidates' leadership style, aiming to analyse the profile of each of the female candidates for the Romanian presidency, according to their campaign discourse and media presence. We try to offer a comparative perspective on Monica Macovei and Elena Udrea political image and electoral programme promoted during the pre-campaign and at the launch of the electoral program.*

**Keywords: presidential elections, female candidates discourse, political profile, Romania 2014.**

### **Introduction**

According to UN Women Deputy Executive Director John Hendra, "Every election is a critical opportunity to make progress towards the increased participation of women as voters and as candidates<sup>1</sup>". Romania's Presidential Elections are a good example and lesson that support this statement. In 2014 Presidential Elections of the 14 registered candidates, two candidates are women, respectively: Monica Macovei, independent candidate and Elena Udrea, from the Popular Movement Party, a first for women candidates running for the presidency.

In the following article we will draw the portrait of the two female candidates for the Romanian Presidency. We will center our focus on the main research question: what is the political image promoted by the two candidates through the media presence and online presence? Moreover, is there any difference in election promises and political program promoted by the two? Are the issues promoted by the two candidates considered to be soft or hard politics? We try to emphasize whether there are significant differences between the political images promoted by the two candidates and if we can identify associated roles of women in politics and their behavioral style.

The analysis is centered on the pre-election and election, starting from September 2014 until November 2014, and it follows the candidate's online speech and media appearances, their promotion of proposed policies and public discourses.

The relevance of the study resides in the fact that the electoral context is a completely new one for Romania. The analysis takes place in real time, during the pre-electoral period of the presidential elections. A post-factum analysis could therefore enhance the data and offer valuable new insights on the electoral process.

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<sup>1</sup> Statement by UN Women Deputy Executive Director Policy and Programme John Hendra, New York, 11 March 2014, available at <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/3/women-in-politics-map-2014>, accessed on 19.10.2014

## Literature review

On a worldwide scale, women tend to engage less in political activities than men, regardless of the type of the activity, whether we talk about discussing political events, civic participation or running for public office. Theorists argue that women's political empowerment leads to a growth in all women's interest in politics, as gender interests are more likely to be represented. Increases in the descriptive representation of women at the elite level increase the probability of women's interest in politics and civic engagement (Wägnerud, 2009).

According to the UN Women in Politics Map 2014, while there is a positive progress on women's political participation across the world, the glass ceilings remain firmly in place for women at the highest levels. There is identified a positive trend worldwide, women holding the role of MP's, especially in the Americas and Africa, while there is a slight decline or stagnation of figures on women Heads of State/Heads of Government. In terms of representation<sup>2</sup>, Romania holds only 6 ministerial positions (from 27 ministries) occupied by women, with a percentage of 22.2%, positioning us on the 39<sup>th</sup> place, after countries like Albany, Moldavian Republic, Brazil and so on. Regarding women in parliaments, we find 55 deputies' positions out of a total of 407 and 13 senators positions out of a total of 176, numbers that places us among the countries where female representation is still a considerable problem and require improvement and to be brought into public discussion.

Along with the concept of *participation*, another key-concept is that of *representation*. Ever since the first woman to run for presidency, Victoria Woodhull, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century United States, history has shown some significant progress regarding the passive right to vote, culminating with more than a few remarkable female leaders, during the last decades: Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner – the first woman to follow her husband to presidency –, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf – the first woman of color to become president – or Benazir Bhutto, the first female Prime Minister of a Muslim country (Paul Vass, 2011). Recent numbers show that the growing number of women in executive posts is not illusion or artifact of media coverage (Jalalzai & Krook, 2010), but rather a reality given by the contemporary worldwide empowerment trend and which gives the measure of the country's democracy level. Relevant to this idea is the statement given by the President of Liberia, according to whom a concerted effort is needed to target all stages of women's political participation, to ensure that as members of parliaments, they have the means and needed resources to impact positively and constructively on the advancement of their nation (Ballington & Karam (ed.), 2005).

One of the paradoxes regarding women's empowerment is that studies show a strong correlation between the presence of a female head of state and government and lower levels of parity of women to men in life expectancy, education, and income (Jalalzai & Krook, 2010), which means that females are more likely to attain public office in contexts in which women's status is behind or underneath the men's – in what concerns education and economic factors. However, the women who accede to these positions are usually highly educated and considerably more privileged than women in the general population, which poses constraints for women's political participation. Thus, female leaders are more likely and more empowered in contexts in which women generally lack power (Jalalzai & Krook, 2010).

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<sup>2</sup> The Women in Politics Map 2014, available at [http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/wmmmap14\\_en.pdf](http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/wmmmap14_en.pdf)

As for the space and time context which we are analyzing throughout this paper, there are some cultural explanations that account for the situation of women's representation, mainly: the cultural legacy of state socialism, mirrored in the negative image of former female politicians, the prevalence of traditional gender stereotypes, which put women exclusively in the private sphere, and the absence of a feminist discourse and the lack of women's mobilization in civil society around feminist aims (Galligan & Clavero, 2008). Moreover, studies show that other key aspects influencing women's level of representation are electoral systems, ideology and nomination/selection procedures, as well as the less explored aspect of the role of women's activism in political parties (Galligan & Clavero, 2008).

The 2014 Romanian presidential election marked the first time not one, but two women candidates ran for the presidential seat, namely Monica Macovei, as an independent, and Elena Udrea, candidate on the new PMP ticket. Therefore, the 2014 presidential elections feature two candidates seeking to break barriers of a gender signifying cultural and social progress for Romania, but also continuing a history of male-only presidencies.

The situation in Romania is similar to the one in the US, as politics is seen as a masculinized domain. That is, according to Braden (1996), masculine behaviors, characteristics, issue emphases, and professional experiences are highly valued and considered the norm in politics. Women have made strides in this arena, but the presidency remains a masculine bulwark.

Even in Romania, women running for such a historically masculine office are considered norm-breaking, and culturally and statistically deviant, given the lack of precedence.

It is not the situation in Latin America, where a nascent body of research has been advanced to understand the conditions under which women become actively engaged in politics as legislators. Among this research, Saint-Germain and Metoyer (2008) analyzed interview data to explain the rise in women's political involvement as legislators in the past 20 years and have identified three predictors: the presence of a crisis, a substantial pool of women who have political experience, and the level of consciousness about issues of gender in a particular culture.

Similar research topics can be found at the level of the European Union. Here, Anne Phillips (1998) famously identified four arguments to support women's political representation:

- 1) women politicians act as role models for aspiring women candidates
- 2) numerically equal representation of women and men in parliaments is a sign of justice
- 3) only women are positioned to represent women's interests
- 4) women's political representation revitalizes democracy and Suzanne Dovi (2007) advances two other arguments:
- 5) according to the trust argument, women's political representation is necessary for women to put their confidence in political institutions
- 6) and the legitimacy argument contends that the presence of women representatives increases the legitimacy of democratic institutions.

As we can see, nowadays, feminine leadership became a topic of debate and interest for many researchers. On the other hand, this could be also caused by the underrepresentation

of women in leading positions. Anderson & Klofstad (2012) argue that men are overrepresented in leadership roles and are perceived to be more assertive, controlling, and confident than women (Not to mention the fact that in today's society the stereotype of women being caretakers of families and children, still exists. Research on gender roles shows that leadership is generally seen as a masculine role, thus women are only seen in leading positions for members of the school board or president of the parent teacher school organization (Anderson & Klofstad, 2012). However, there have been favorable changes in attitudes about female leaders and their effectiveness in leading positions.

More often, women in leading positions are associated (according to Eagly, 2013) with qualities such as social values of benevolence (referring to the preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact) and universalism (seen as understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature). Women usually endorse social values that promote others' welfare. In U.S. attitudinal surveys, women endorse socially compassionate social policies and moral practices that uphold marriage, the family, and organized religion.

Speaking on data, the European Commission highlights the difference between portfolios allocated to men than to women in 2013: men are more likely to have responsibility for basic functions such as foreign and home affairs, defence and justice (42% of male ministers have portfolios of this type compared to 26% of female ministers). Women are more likely to be allocated socio-cultural portfolios including health, education, and social affairs (43% compared to 20% of men).

What is hopeful is that UN Women in Politics 2014 report highlights that there is a positive trend among politician women to hold some of the so-called "hard" ministerial portfolios such as Defense, Foreign Affairs, and the Environment as to the traditional "soft" portfolios.

While women approach social themes, men will prefer finance, infrastructure themes, etc, that are considered to be more appropriate for a male leader. Also, there is a continual struggle in trying to reduce the male dominance in politics. But, the signs of improvement are obvious "*the central concept of feminist politics has been replaced by "gender," constructing gender differences through discourse is part of the process of regulating male/female relationships, and the differences between men and women are socially constructed*" (Ionescu, 2012) Moreso, Eagly's social role theory suggests that strong cultural elements perpetuate the personality differences as both men and women adopt sex-linked traits, skills, and interests in order to fulfill the gender roles in which they are placed. The main qualities of a leader are usually identified female qualities such as empathy (being sensitive to the thoughts and feelings of others), vulnerability (owning up to one's limitations and asking for help), humility (seeking to serve others and to share credit), inclusiveness (soliciting and listening to many voices), generosity (being liberal with time, contacts, advice, and support), balance (giving life, as well as work, its due), patience (taking a long-term view, Buchanan, 2013). Huddy and Terkildsen suggest that voters view women as better able to handle „feminine” issues such as health care and education, while men are seen as more competent to handle „masculine” issues such as security, war and the economy.

Multiple studies conclude that women receive significantly less election issues-based coverage than do their male counterparts. Dan & Iorgoveanu (2013) show that there are variations in the quality and quantity of coverage in the Romanian newspapers, most of them to the detriment of the female politicians. Consistent with the study of Cowley & Childs (2003) and Wilson (2004), female candidates are portrayed in a way that undermines their authority.

Paxton & Hughes (2007) assert that the political sphere „remains an arena where women have far to go” and that „the lack of visible women suggests that veiled discrimination against women remains”.

## **Methodology**

The online medium offers a great variety of tools that allows political candidates to increase their visibility and to spread their political message in an efficient and low cost manner. Therefore, one part of the analysis is centered on the analysis of the social networks and official sites used by the two presidential candidates. We analyzed the candidate’s Facebook official profile and the candidate’s political program as identified within the official website.

We have used the content analysis for the pre-electoral period on a two week analysis of online posts, starting from 19 September 2014 until 3 October 2014, the first day of the electoral campaign. The content grid includes categories like type of message (informative or attack), number of likes, number of shares and comments, pictures that accompany the posts and observations.

Besides the content analysis, we conducted a political discourse and political program analysis. Regarding the discourse analysis, there were selected the discourses from the launch of the campaign of the two candidates. The speeches vary in length and are sprinkled with journalists' questions, but are among the few registered speeches of the candidates.

The analysis of the political programs was based on two candidate electoral programs found on their campaign website (respectively on <http://macoveipresedinte.ro/> and <http://www.romaniafrumoasa.ro/> sites).

## **Data and results**

### **Monica Macovei. Polical programe.**

The two candidates we are studying are Monica Macovei and Elena Udrea. Monica Macovei is a lawyer and former prosecutor, former Minister of Justice, twice elected as a member of the European Parliament, known abroad for her fight for the independence of justice in Romania. She candidates as an independent. Her manifesto is entitled *Political decalogue – 10 commandments for the politicians, a Hundred principles and projects for Romania, a Future for us*.

Her slogan *Macovei, better than them!* advances the idea of opposition us vs. them, placing herself as an opponent for the other team, mainly the left-wing candidate, but can also be seen as a separation from them – the male candidates, emphasizing the concept of gender differentiation.

The main topic of her program is the fight against corruption. She associates her image with the two powerful institutions she helped create: DNA (The National Anti-Corruption Directorate) and ANI (National Integrity Agency). She promotes the right wing idea of the minimal state – less ministries, minimal intervention of the state in economy. Among some of the changes that she promotes through her political program, several of them approach: the revision of the Constitution (mainly focussing on the attributions of the president, removing the parliamentary immunity, reducing the number of MPs to 300), debirocratization and depolitization of state institutions CNA, TVR, ANAF, and the most important, supporting the independence of justice. There are also topics related to education (fair chances for children no matter the residency), investments in education, health services, environment and agriculture.

Macovei also addresses the international relations of Romania, submitting to the idea of maintaining the relationships with NATO and USA as strategic partners. As she states: „We can have commercial relationships with the East, but our main focus should be on the political relationships with the West. We have to ensure the bridging between democracy and non-democracy in Europe and catalyze the investment in enhancing the democracy in our region.”

The electorate she targets is composed of right wing voters, mainly young adults 30-40 years old, with medium and high levels of education, medium and high income, nonconformists, supporters of state secularism.

Her campaign staff is entirely voluntary, emphasizing the involvement of her supporters during the campaign. On her website *macoveipresedinte.ro*, she devotes an entire section to her supporters, most of them members of the cultural and intellectual elite: academia, writers, singers, painters, sociologists and political analysts, both male and female. She also associates her image with the support of several of her colleagues from the European Parliament, like Anna Bildt or Ingeborg Grässle.

### **Monica Macovei's Facebook profile**

Monica Macovei's public page on Facebook has an approximate support of 80.000 likes. On the two weeks period of analysis (19 September – 3 October 2014), she had a total of 41 posts. Almost half of her posts regard changing her cover photo or updating profile photos. Regarding the visibility of posts, they range from an estimated number of 300 likes to 1000-2000 likes per post and a number of 50 to 400 shares per post.

Macovei's most visible article has a total of almost 4000 likes, 400 shares and 400 comments, and promotes her message from the official enrollment for the Presidential office: “If all those who believe in me, vote for me in the first round, I will win!”. Macovei's post details some of the arguments for her candidature, arguments that vary from “I'm running for the office because I want to be your employee, not a pie across the country”, or direct attacks against the political opponents like Victor Ponta and Klaus Iohannis: “It's good that PSD and PNL were stopped from the great socialist competition, otherwise they may have submitted more signatures than the number of voters”.

Macovei uses her Facebook page as a means of promoting her message, but also her identity, through pictures and logos. Almost half of her posts (16 from 41) during the pre-electoral campaign promote her logo. She changed her profile picture almost daily with the

image of her famous colourful logo. Moreover, followers were encouraged to borrow the alphabet letters written in the same way as her logo as a means of support.

In contrast with Udrea's Facebook presence, Macovei's speech is more coherent and comprehensive. She details the reasons why she deserves to be supported, relying on the comparison between her case and the biblical parable of David and Goliath: "Together we can beat them! Like David had beaten Goliath." Nevertheless, likewise Udrea, Macovei centers her online speech against the main rival, the Head of the Government, Victor Ponta: "I ask Ponta how much did it cost his communist candidature launching that took place on the National Arena. From whose money was all paid? From our money?"

Moreover, the candidate's positive aspects and motives to be voted are endorsed by various media outlets, international MEPs, and intellectuals, as in the case of endorsements from Le Monde, Frankfurt Allgemeine Zeitung or Gabriel Liiceanu.

### **Monica Macovei's launching discourse analysis**

In the following sequence, we will put under a lens the press release offered to the journalists by the independent candidate Monica Macovei, after officially enrolling in the presidential election campaign, by presenting the signatures of support at the Central Election Office. The video, that has 5:22 minutes is taken from Youtube<sup>3</sup> and starts with the candidate's thanks to the citizens for supporting her and for gathering over 300 thousand signatures.

However, she does not waste a phrase without invoking her most handy campaign topic, which is *corruption*, and continues on an ironic note, acting on the offensive towards her main electoral opponents: "it is good that the Social Democrat Party and the National Liberal Party stopped their socialist battle, otherwise they would have gathered more signatures than the number of constituents". Moreover, she presents the core of all her campaign speeches, the reasons for her candidacy: to be the Romanian citizens' *employee* – and not a *tyrant* –, to keep Romania's foreign policy towards the West and to ensure national security. What is more, the candidate carries on with a hint of populism, stating that her candidacy is based on the will of getting back „our stolen money”; by this phrase, she induces the idea of „us” versus „them”, a well-known populist discursive approach, by which she positions herself as part of the people, and not as a politician.

Furthermore, Macovei lists a set of proposed measures meant to reduce corruption acts among public officials, which is in key with her previous political achievements and gives her credibility in front of the people. The candidate has built herself an image of a righteous, law-abiding political figure, as well as a transparent, anti-corruption law maker and enforcer. This is, nevertheless, the elements that places the female candidate on a unique stand and creates a contrast with her opponents. She then assumes the role of a patriot, she emphasizes the constitutional right to vote and expresses her support for the electronic vote and the vote by mail, stating that „the Romanians living abroad are part of Romania”.

The candidate then introduces the idea of *change* and indirectly proposes herself as the solution for the country's problems, reiterating the unfitness of her main opponents for the

<sup>3</sup>Monica Macovei speech, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W8qxqBUvCos>, accessed on 19.10.2014

presidential office; Macovei brings symbolical presents for the opponents, meant to underline the prime minister's inefficiency in office – by mocking his popcorn indiscretion – and the other candidate's lack of communication skills and lack of political vision.

Towards the end of her speech, Macovei invokes the people by using the worn-off phrase „*together* we will succeed” and then she lashes out with an arrogant statement, saying that „you [n.ed. the people] are my hope and I am your hope”. Moreover, she stresses the importance of casting a vote and invites the people who believe in her to vote for her, confident in her victory. Right at the end of her speech, she includes another one of her campaign themes, which is *religion*, by making an analogy of her – and the people – winning the elections like David won over Goliath.

Unlike the low-pitched, linear, non-expressive discursive pattern the candidate has accustomed her public to, this declaration shows various tonalities, yet the candidate gets interrupted by ripples of applause and repeatedly loses focus. On a non-verbal level, Macovei skips her usual non-expressive, restrained pattern and smiles when hearing people around her approving of her ideas, suggesting satisfaction, and then instantly goes back to her offensive, righteous face expression, while trying to resume her ideas.

To sum up, the independent candidate stresses on her already proven qualities, as a law policy creator and enforcer, in order to differentiate herself from the other candidates, while aiming at her opponents' unfitness for the presidential office. An important aspect we aim to underline is the absence of women's issues and policies and the non-womanly approach of her discourse, thus she can be considered a typical example of Roger-Gérard Schwartzberg's (1995) *political non-woman*.

### **Elena Udrea. Polical programe.**

Elena Udrea, former Minister of Regional Development and Tourism, member of PNL and PDL, currently president of PMP, the youngest candidate for the presidential elections, viewed by the media as Traian Băsescu's protegee, who's vision she declares that intends to continue through her work. Her manifesto is entitled *Beautiful Romania, My promise for the Romanians*, focussing on the idea of *A women for president!* She declares herself to be a feminist, but the advertising she is using supports the stereotypical image of a women in politics, Even her campaign slogan has a clear sexist touch: *Good for Romania* (with a clear connotation).

She benefits from the support of exclusively male political elite representatives, like President Traian Basescu, considered to be her number one booster during the campaign, former Prime Minister Emil Boc, Cristian Diaconescu or Aurelian Pavelescu. Even though she is targeting mostly women (as it resides from her official website message for the women) and president Basescu's supporters, but advances speeches designed for left-wing electorate as well. Her political program is extremely vague, covering a wide variety of areas, but with few practical solutions for each of them, covering general themes like: the constitutional state and the independence of justice, external politics, security and defense.

Her vision for Presidency approaches subjects like: the revision of the Constitution, regional administration, depolitization and debirocratization, reform of the educational

system, health services, retiring funds, investments and sustainable economic development and growth, equal treatment for women and men.

Even though she is placing herself as a right wing candidate, challenging Klaus Johannis, the main counter-candidate of left wing representative, the actual Prime Minister Victor Ponta (according to main political polls), she advances mainly social issues.

### **Elena Udrea's Facebook profile**

Elena Udrea's public page on Facebook has an approximate support of 250.000 likes. On the one week period of analysis of two weeks (19 September – 3 October 2014), she had a total of 23 posts. Of the total posts some promote her arguments against the Government Head – Victor Ponta and promotes public actions that opponents have not undertaken. The majority of the headlines attack the opponent, Victor Ponta: *“When I saw Victor Ponta spent 2 million Euros to celebrate his birthday on the National Stadium with 70,000 people, while the children from classes I and II lacked textbooks, we decided to cancel the official launch of my application from the Royal Palace.”* The majority of the posts are informative ones, only few of them represent a direct attack to Victor Ponta.

In contrast to Macovei, Udrea enjoys a greater visibility and support rendered by the number of likes and shares of her posts. The maximum of observed likes (approx. 12000) was reached at the begging date of observation, when Udrea changes her profile photo. Following, the second visible post was entitled “Primers, backpacks, and school supplies for children” and attacked Ponta's grand celebration of his birthday on the National Stadium. In this case, Udrea describes herself as “the only candidate who loves her country and loves Romania”, the candidate who understands the problems and difficulties of everyday Romanian. Udrea's other posts vary in number of likes from rough 100 to 2000 and over 3000. Despite the lack of diverse information, Udrea's posts enjoy greater coverage with a large number of shares and comments (around 200-600 shares and 100-600 comments per post). What clearly distances Elena Udrea from Monica Macovei and other rivals is her strategy to post as many photos from public meetings. We can say that rather than an informative content, many posts offer content based on images that capture the political events. We can find pictures of the candidate when she visited schools and provided backpacks for students, photos from the march against the Government, march organized by Udrea, photos from public and promotional events like rural and agricultural festivals. We observe an accentuated trend of the candidate to identify herself with activities that belong to her former Ministry of Regional Development portfolio (posts from Sinaia's day celebration, the Hunting Festival from Bata, Negreni's fair day).

### **Elena Udrea's launching discourse analysis.**

Elena Udrea is a very controversial politician. She poses as a very modern woman, emphasizing her feminine qualities and roles. Her whole campaign goes around the idea of her past projects, her success as a minister and a young woman that understands the needs of the less powerful classes. Also, she wants to transmit the image of a fighter, that won't surrender, no matter what. Her fight is mostly for democracy and for a *“beautiful Romania”*, that she considers her main project and her main objective.

As in the case of Macovei, we have analyzed the speech of Elena Udrea that took place right after the candidate enrolled in the elections. The interview has 11:08 minutes and can be found only on Youtube<sup>4</sup> and not on the candidate's official site as expected.

During the interview, the candidate presents her campaign themes: investments, work places, tourism, democracy, the fight for women and youngsters, etc. On the other hand, she speaks for all the Romanian women who have been discriminated by their male co-workers: *"This is a step I take not only for myself, but for all the Romanian women that believe that one can have a career and a family at the same time."* Mostly, the themes the candidate approaches are social themes, as she sets herself as a feminine candidate who can understand the needs of the less powerful social classes: women, youngsters, elders.

Udrea presents herself as a *"clean"* candidate, unlike her opponents *"You know me already, with my good parts and my bad parts. There is almost nothing that you or the press doesn't know about me and my life"*, *"I have nothing to hide in my CV"*. Her attitude is very easy-going, as she tries to come clean in all the aspects related to her personal and professional life. Moreover, she is a candidate that supports democracy and she will continue the struggle for a democratic country. This is where she sets an anti-thesis with Victor Ponta, of whom she affirms he is a socialist candidate, who will continue the *"disaster"* of Adrian Năstase and Ion Iliescu. Also, she comes as a candidate that rejects communism and everything related to it.

Her campaign motto is *"Beautiful Romania"* which she explains as a country where the citizens will have the chance to live as other European citizens, a country that will improve. Furthermore, she will do everything that she can for this thing to happen and she will never give up, as she proved until now. Here, she sets herself as a salvation for the country and the citizens, a martyr that had a continuous struggle with the system. She presents herself as the fighter, the one who will set a stable democracy and who will make Romania a beautiful country.

Unlike the other feminine candidate, she supports religion as she uses some terms that connect with this field: *"God wanted me to reach the climax today"* or *"This project (Beautiful Romania) was my Creed for the past 10 years"*. So, we can see a candidate full of faith that identifies with a great majority of the Romanians. This is a thing that distinguishes the candidate from her opponents. She affirms herself as a feminine leader, the type that approaches social problems and fights along her male opponents and colleagues. *"It was meant to be. This is destiny."* Her struggle for Romania brought her here today and this is the fulfilling of her destiny..

Asserting the various roles a woman has to play in modern societies, Elena Udrea shows disponibility to occupy the presidential office, therefore contradicting her feminist views of a feminist politician that can engage in both private and public spheres.

In what the nonverbal communication concerns, the interview inspires confidence. The candidate's facial expression shows slight irony when she talks about her opponents, mostly about Victor Ponta, whom she calls to be the promoter of communism. She presents herself as a promoter of a stable democracy in Romania. She sets herself as a feminine

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<sup>4</sup> Elena Udrea speech, available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXt8brV2xBc>, accessed on 19.10.2014

candidate, who will abolish discrimination against women. In conclusion, we can observe a contradiction between her speech and the image she promotes.

### Conclusions

The profiles of the two candidates are extremely different. While Monica Macovei poses as a righteous, law-abiding political figure, as well as a transparent, anti-corruption law maker and enforcer, a typical political non-woman, Elena Udrea stresses her feminine side and emphasizes the importance of image promotion as shown by the online analysis. They both perpetuates the stereotypical images of the female politician, each of them in their own personal style.

Both of them promote their public image based on their previous achievement: Macovei by associating herself with DNA and ANI and the fight against corruption in Romania, and Udrea by her projects while being the Minister of Tourism and Regional Development.

Macovei approaches hard issues, while Udrea approaches mainly soft issues. Even though Udrea's political program touches the same subjects as Macovei's, the first one comes with no practical solutions for the problems and discusses them at a superficial level.

The supporters of the two candidates have different profiles. Udrea is supported exclusively by influential national politicians, like president Băsescu, while Macovei is endorsed by the national cultural and intellectual elite and by MEPs.

The importance of 2014's Romanian Presidential Elections resides in the fact that it was the first campaign in which women have dared to run with male contestants. The 2014 presidential elections can serve as a mean for aspiring women candidates to participate more in the electoral process and to pursue high offices. Macovei's and Udrea's public campaigns led to an increased visibility and a political experience that allows women to access existing power structures and know how to influence them. Also, it represented an important exercise for women to gain public sympathy, to acquire skills in fundraising, public speaking and campaigning, which are essential to run an effective campaign and win public support.

Future studies may approach the leadership styles of the candidates analysed in our study, given the fact that the electoral race is in full process. Moreover a comparison between the media coverage of the candidates campaign and the candidates promoted image could show possible inconsistencies. Also, it would be interesting to analyse the final debate discourses and their impact on the electoral outcome, might one of the two female candidates run in the second round of elections.

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