

### ***SENSIBILITY, WILL, COURAGE... FEMINISM!***

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*Abstract: Feminism, the movement which has helped women to claim the fight against gender inequality even since 1791, has tried to empower women in society by expanding their roles and rights. Their purpose was not to underestimate men, they only wanted the freedom of expression, because even if women and men are different characters, they belong to the universe, creating in this way the harmony and diversity so necessary for life.*

*The development of modern bourgeois society was the assertion way of female personality in political culture, economy, art and other fields. The undoubtedly expansion of the entitled feminine expression was felt in modern societies and names such as Maria Theresa, Indira Gandhi, Hillary Clinton or Angela Merkel are just a few obvious symbols of cleverness, courage, strength and will.*

*The purpose of the hereby paper is to bring to the foreground famous Romanian women (Elena Cuza, Anna de Noailles, etc.) who, by their remarkable activity or through their writings, have become known also abroad, especially in Europe.*

***Keywords: men's world, feminism, spiritual and material values, patience and tact, success***

The vastness of the universe is composed of opposites and yet so much harmony (light–dark, material–anti material) and everything belonging to is subject to the laws and opposites, all of them forming a unit, including such elements as harmony and diversity.

The universal laws that govern the macrocosmic creation relate to any level, comprising the microscopic one. The contrast between high and low or finite and infinite are carried out on the lines of determinations. And this aspect of determinations, regardless of its contradictory and antinomic components found under antagonistic seizure send up creating a unity and a harmony because this is the immutable law that governs the universe. To win a party antithetical to the other would mean malfunction and natural nuisance.

Embodying and extrapolating this genuine aspect which is considered to be the foundation stone of existentialism, we can state that apparently there is a dichotomy between men and women. In reality, the two sides, which are so different, create unity and thus social and familial harmony, aspect that drove human evolution up to this day. Apparently we are dealing with a paradox; however, analyzing the social and the cultural aspects, we diachronically and synchronically witness the unity, the harmony. But we cannot deny the aspects that constitute the so-called "deviations" from the world designed by men, placed on the other side of the apparent antinomy: the woman! Seen from a diachronically point of view, along encysted times, the woman suffered from a social, political, cultural and familial inequality. Obviously, the reactions appeared at once: a firm position from women, asking for their rights in a man's world. And one of the manifestation forms regarding the discontent of emancipated women from the social, political, cultural, economic and familial point of view has been feminism.

Obviously, a definition of feminism and its coordinates has been often asked for. It is well known the fact that feminism is a social movement which seeks to acquire equal rights for women and men. This movement can be considered a doctrine which propagates the empowerment of women and the expansion of its rights. Is feminism entitled to declare itself as a social movement in order to win equal rights as the ones men have? Do women have the necessary qualities to address the social, cultural, economic, political, economic, religious issues covering the state they live in, implicitly at the planetary level? Undoubtedly the

answer is positive. As human society has given mankind prominent men, women were also equally represented, especially in modern society, by worthy and respectful characters.

The development of modern bourgeois society was the assertion way of female personality in political culture, economy, art and other fields. The undoubtedly expansion of the entitled feminine expression was felt in modern societies, especially in Western but also in Eastern European regions. On a large scale we could mention Maria Theresa, Indira Gandhi, Bhutto, Hillary Clinton, Angela Merkel, Condoleezza Rice and the examples could continue as obvious symbols of cleverness, courage, strength and will.

We prefer, however, to argue the viability of feminism taking as argument just some of the great number of appearances at a national and global level. In this respect we refer to the modern Romania, to the illustrious female figures who, through their remarkable work or writings, made themselves known not only nationally but also internationally, especially in the Western part of Europe. Even from their lives, these illustrious women have enjoyed a well-deserved prestige, their activity being registered in dictionaries or encyclopaedias. We mention among the first female emancipation the artistic and cultural presence and activity of Lady Ralu. Although the work of these women in the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century was not as plenary as that of the contemporary women, their actions were welcomed though.

Remarkable was the presence of Elena Cuza, born Rosetti, the wife full of patience, tact and prestige of Alexandru Ioan Cuza, the Prince of the Romanian United Principalities. Although Elena Cuza remained somehow in the shade of the ruler, we can emphasize the soul nobility of this woman, her special tact, her wisdom and unwavering patriotism, her generosity – traits that were both a real support for A. I. Cuza and a shield against the wiles of the enemy. She came from an old family of land owners and dignitaries: Lascaris Rosetti or Gheorghe Rosetti, the latter being married to Maria Racoviță, an Aromanian woman.

Elena Cuza, by means of her literary and historical lectures attended and stimulated the literary salon of her aunt Agripina Sturdza. As the wife of Prince A. I. Cuza, Elena Cuza supported the modernizing reforms of the Romanian state, the secularization of the monasteries' wealth, the agrarian reform, the establishment of the first universities, high schools and normal schools and the establishment of "Lady Elena" as yumat Cotroceni. She also took care of improving conditions in hospitals, women's education, museums foundation and building public monuments. She was also concerned with the fate of Romanians (or Aromanians) situated in the Southern part of the Danube. Her case is an example of a woman who lived in the world of men but she was a model of selflessness and kindness, extremely dedicated to charity actions.

Female personalities asserted themselves in various fields of activities. Thus Elena Văcărescu descendant of the Văcărescus, very much in love with their nation and culture, could not forget Ienăchiță Văcărescu's literary testament in which he was stating that his followers "received" from him the Romanian language and they were supposed to improve it and to honour the homeland.

She became known in the literary world from those times (1885) with the volumes which appeared in Paris "Le Rhapsode de la Dambovitza" ("The Rhapsode of Dambovitza"), a Romanian collection of songs and ballads and the poetry book "Les Chants d'Aurore" ("The Songs of Aurore") awarded by the French Academy.

It is worth mentioning that the poem "Si tu le voulais" ("If you wanted it") musically played by Paola Tosti was known in all Western countries. Successful was also folk-artsy florilegium "The Rhapsode of Dâmbovița" which was released in French, German, English, Italian, Danish and Japanese. Her feminine spirituality has enabled a world-wide knowledge

of a part known as the spiritual heritage of her native lands. Her spirit has resulted in the literary and diplomatic domain, dedicating herself to humanistic values during the maelstrom of the two world wars – strengthening Romania's image in the world and militating in favour of peaceful understanding between peoples (during the Peace Conference in Paris she was entitled as the Romanian representative) at the Preparatory Conference for the League of Nations (1919), being the first woman who has ever received this title within the League of Nations). She excelled in the intellectual cooperation as a member of "the Committee of Letters and Arts" participating together with Paul Valery in the famous international meetings "Entretiens". As a diplomat and a tireless lecturer, she showed political tact, scholarship and dedication. In recognition of her work, the Romanian Academy chose her as an honorary member on June 11, 1925, the same day as her cousin, Anna de Noailles (Princess Anne Brâncoveanu). Her literary presence was proven also by the fact that she was chosen to be a member of the "Femina" Jury, being the only foreigner who, for a quarter of century, was part of this Jury which awarded this prestigious prize for the novel.

Another female presence is that of the poet Anna de Noailles (Ana Brâncoveanu) who brought vital frenzy to poetry, sensuality and the most successful expressions of feminine sensibility – aspects which were admired by prestigious writers such as Paul Valery, François Mauriac, Marcel Proust and even by the great sculptor Auguste Rodi. She is the first woman to receive the Legion of Honour with the rank of commander in France as well as the grand prize of the French Academy for literature; she has also been elected as an honorary member of the Romanian Academy in 1925.

Another female presence who prefigured the emergence of feminism was Martha Bibescu – a distinguished representative of the Romanian spirituality in Europe as well as a novelist, poet, journalist and memoirist. Martha Bibescu was a remarkable presence in the cultural, diplomatic and fashionable life of the era before World War I and the interwar period.

An exemplary high presence of spiritual nobility in the cultural, spiritual and social life and in love with art and culture was the generous lady Elena Dalles. She opened the school in Bucșani and did charitable, social and cultural work. Even the name of the well known *Dalles Galleries* derives from her since the year 1932.

Presenting some female personalities defines and emphasizes the idea that in a world of men, women have asserted themselves, even from the early times, as spiritual partners, worshipers, social entrepreneurs for the common wealth and humanitarians, succeeding in creating spiritual and material values.

If combative aspects of feminism manage to change mentalities, behavioural attitudes in the political, cultural, economic and familial domain in developed countries, we cannot say that there is the same story in some countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America, where the position of women in society should be reconsidered and changed. This change can occur through belief, through eradication of poverty and of social problems, through development, through another approach of man's mentality, who must consider the woman as his equal and as his social, political and economic partner.

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