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The present volume is a result of the activities carried on during a research grant by a group of young researchers from the Faculty of History and Philosophy, Cluj-Napoca and presents through a series of case studies the condition of the Romanian women in the 20th century. Through out its nine articles covering a diverse range of subjects and approaches, the book tries with success a reconsideration of the women's position in Romanian society using different sources of information, from the local newspapers, bulletins, central and local archives to interviews and oral history surveys. The majority of the chosen themes, as the authors recognize it, are new in historiography, some of the themes never been treated before.

The book is divided into objective articles mixing history events with social domains, charity with witnesses' stories about the oppression and injustice of the communist regime. There are presented some interesting theories about the role of the feminist movement in the acceptance and preservation of the regime and real-life dramas endured by the resistance members, women in particular.

The first article: "*Aspects regarding the role of women in the reformation and social modernization in inter-war Romania*" by Crina Diaconu, utters the importance of the activities and initiatives promoted by the feminine personalities and associations of the time. A specific domain in which these initiatives materialized is the social protection and assistance domain, which refers to the entire process of social education. The study presents the development of the social assistance centers, orphanages, civil hospitals as well as the measures taken in order to promote a better life standard, a better education and protection for the mother and child.

In the second article: "*Contributions of Romanian women in the social assistance activities during the first years of the Second World War*", the author, Ana-Maria Stan outlines the principal directions of action of Romanian women in social assistance. There are presented the initiatives of the women organizations in social assistance at an official level, with the help of the state, as well as the initiatives in a more private level coordinated by the high-society women. This research study brings into our attention "the activities of the women involved in the Red Cross and at a higher level, the organization and the actions of the most important organism implicated in social assistance in Romania between 1939-1944 – The Council of Patronage for Social Activities". The author describes the changes of women mentalities, an evolution from the weak sex to a strong species able to take over in a crisis the economic role of men.

The next article: "*Hungarian Women Associations from Transylvania in the first half of the 20th century*" written by Tamás Lonhárt, presents the organizational structure of the Hungarian women groups in inter-war Romania, their programs, activities, their specific evolution. The author makes a factual and succinct presentation of the general lines of evolution of the Hungarian feminist movement before 1918, of the defining realities, themes about the role and place of women in society. The last part of the study is dedicated to

charitable associations and to the associations formed under the patronage of Catholic, Unitarian, Reformed and Evangelic Churches like The Union of Unitarian Women, The Central Secretariat of Hungarian Minority Women.

Ghizela Cosma's "*Aspects regarding the Romanian feminist movement in inter-war period. The 30's*" proposes an assessment of the evolution of the feminist movement in the 30's. The article focuses on a series of subjects like the work of women during the feminist program of the 30's, the debate regarding prostitution, abortions, marriage, and the civil status of women-feminist approaches, the political rights for women-electoral rights. It also presents the different confrontations inside the movement and the need for a re-organization.

In the fifth article "*Aspects of women education in Romania during 1926-1948. Case study: The High school for girls «Principesa Ileana» in Cluj-Napoca*" the author, Ottmar Trasca, proposes a presentation of a relatively small segment of the educational system for women – the evolution of the High school for Girls "Principesa Ileana", an institution of secondary teaching. The author recognizes that this kind of research is missing from the Romanian historiography. Through this study, he tries to identify the preoccupation of the Romanian state for the modernization of women education, for an enlargement of the material base, the legislative and administrative efforts, the improvement of the teaching curricula. It is interesting to watch the different rapports between religion and nationality, the social background of the students, etc.

"*From diversity to integration. The problem of women and the instauration of communism in Central and Eastern Europe: Romania*" by Virgiliu Târau, brings into question the way communism as an ideology and politics has succeeded to subordinate the cause of the emancipation of women. The cause of women has been integrated in the East-Central communist revolution. In the author's opinion, women, especially in the moments of social mobilization, have played a very important part. Their image and their problems have been intensely speculated by the communist parties. In Romania, after the instauration was completed, the regime started to demolish the women associations and the social assistance organizations. The forced emancipation started a new age of humiliation and suppression for the woman in the private and public area, the woman becoming a constructor of the socialist society, not only a comrade, mother and worker.

The last three articles present the negative effects of the regime on the feminist movement by using different instruments of oppression like torture, psychological abuse, oppression, and humiliation. For example, Cosmin Budeanca in his article:

"*Aspects regarding the implication of women in the armed resistance in Romanian mountains against the communism. The case of Lucretia Jurj, (Susman Group)*" presents the detailed story of a woman who followed her husband in the fight against the regime. Her story, which proves the attachment, loyalty and bravery of a simple woman from the country, has the power to impress and that is not all.

The article of Jill Masino: "*Humanizing imprisonment: religion, community and gender in the narratives of women prisoners in communist Romania*" presents the refuge of women prisoners in religion, community, self-discovering. She uses the recollections of five women that help provide a "vivid picture of imprisonment as a dramatic, intense and emotionally-charged experience". As the author recognizes, these stories are about resistance – both individual and collective.

The last article: "*Between they and us: the political identity of women in the communist discourse*" by Calin Moraru-Vulcu, exposes the formation of women as political actors with the help of the communist discourse. "The conclusion is that the communist discourse put the women in the position of recognizing their difference and subordination, even if it used a rhetoric of equality".

All in all the volume represents a starting point for every interested person in the feminist movement, in the evolution of women from being considered an inferior category to one equal to men in every way and more. The case studies have proven the change of mentalities and the continuous struggle to make a difference that would, in the end, constitute a base for a modern, equal society

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