

# **Abortion and the making of the *socialist mother* during Communist Romania**

**Lorena Anton**

Department of Ethnology  
Faculty of Letters  
University of Bucharest

**“The foetus is the socialist property of the whole society. Giving birth is a patriotic duty. Those who refuse to have children are deserters, escaping the law of natural continuity.”** When Ceaușescu – the Head of the Romanian Communist Party and President of the Socialist Republic of Romania - proclaimed that, in a public discourse from the second part of the ‘80s, I was very little. Probably I was engaged in learning my role and my poem for the festivity of Mother-Day (as all the other Young Pioneers and Pupils were told that the International Woman’s Day, 8<sup>th</sup> of March, is). Three years later, what was later called as “the December’s revolution” came, and the foetus was no longer viewed as the property of the State.

In the history of Communist Romania, abortion was prohibited by law from 1966 until 1989. In the public sphere, reproduction was fundamentally associated with „the nation” and its needs. Thus, every communist subject had to become an important part of Ceaușescu’s projects, and, most of all, every Romanian woman had to fulfil her role by becoming a prolific *socialist mother*. Even if all the other communist states of the Eastern Europe prohibited abortion, in a way or another, during their socialist regimes, in Romania “the politics of duplicity” (for using Gail Klingman’s term<sup>1</sup>) concerning reproduction will remain a singular example by its force and its negativism.

---

<sup>1</sup> Kligman, Gail: *Politica duplicității, Controlul reproducerii în România lui Ceaușescu* (“The Politics of Duplicity: Controlling Reproduction in Ceaușescu's Romania”), Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000

In its first part, the main aim of this paper is to illustrate the ways by which, with the help of the public discourse, a new identity has been constructed during the '60, and reinforced periodically until the fall of the Communist Regime, its centre being dominated by the “*socialist mother*”<sup>2</sup> and her role in the construction of the *multilaterally developed socialist society*, all related to the official prohibition of abortion. First, the communist discourse about “the heroine mother” (*mama eroină*) developed, in time, as the only accepted narration, all other identities or counter-narratives being automatically excluded. Starting from the articles within *Scînteia*, the Party’s official journal, to films, radio shows or literature, the portrait of the *socialist mother* irrupted everywhere. Secondly, the making of the *socialist mother* excluded even the idea of the existence of abortions executed any other ways than the ones permitted by the Communist State.

Nevertheless, in spite of the Party’s rules, and especially because along with abortion, Ceaușescu generally prohibited the existence of contraception on the Romanian territory, the illegal interruption of unwanted pregnancies had to developed itself as a common practice during those years. The individual memory of those times, collected by the author during a three years research, in the form of oral-histories, constitutes, over the years, an alternative discourse, excluded during Communism, but possible after its fall as a form of counter-story at the public historical narration of *the socialist mother*. The second part of the paper will present a short analysis of these individual narratives, excluded during Communism, but included now in the memory of this regime, in terms of recurrent *motifs* and their relation with the official communist discourse concerning abortion in Ceaușescu’s Romania.

## **Abortion and Its Legislative Trends in Communist Romania**

The 6<sup>th</sup> of March 1945, the day when the first Communist Government, ruled by Petru Groza, come to power, is officially considered as the stating point of the Communist Regime in Romania. Starting from this point, the population policies have ranged according to the main ideology and goals of the Party, or of the person in power, until the fall of Communism, in December 1989. In the following paragraphs,

---

<sup>2</sup> This expression doesn’t appear as such in the official documents, being a creation of the author of this paper.

we will try to present, in brief, the main directions of the Romanian legislation related to abortion and its prohibition, as a necessary premise of my future approach.

In 1920, the Soviet Union was the first country to legalize in-hospital abortion upon the request of women in the first trimester of pregnancy. After the Second World War, all the so-called *satellite countries* from the Central and Eastern Europe had to follow the soviet trends. Romania had revised its Penal Code in 1948 (article no. 482), outlawing abortion, but in 1955 the text of a correlated Decree permitted abortion<sup>3</sup> – if the pregnancy represented a danger to the woman's health or if one of the parents suffered from a great hereditary disease.

Very soon, as “the light came from the East”, in 1957 the Government legalized abortion on request, one of the main underlined aim being the one to give women the right to decide upon their life and number of children (in accordance with the discursive socialist law of gender equity). The new Decree, no. 433/1957, was correlated with the modification operated in the Penal Code, which now incriminated only the abortion performed outside medical institutions or by unauthorized personal.

The new law was one of the most liberal in Europe of that time. Repeated interruption of pregnancy started to characterize the sexual life of most Romanian women<sup>4</sup>, phenomena correlated in special with the lack of almost any contraceptive education. The demographic studies which analyzed the official statistics of those years demonstrated that, in 1965, at the end of this “most liberal period” from Romanian history, there were four abortions for each delivery, the highest rate ever reported from any country up to that time. And so, when Ceaușescu became

---

<sup>3</sup> Decree no. 456/1955, published in “The Official Gazette of the Grand National Assembly of the Romanian People's Republic” - *Buletinul Oficial al Marii Adunări Naționale a Republicii Populare România* - no. 3/November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1955, which was the official legal publication of the Romanian State, under different titles starting with its first apparition in 1832 (nowadays “The Official Gazette of Romania” - *Monitorul Oficial al României*).

<sup>4</sup> As David and Wright successfully presented, induced abortion became a repeated practice all over the new socialist Romania: “Abortion centres were organized in large and medium size hospitals, and outpatient facilities were attached to industrial plants having a sizable female work force. Women could request terminations of unwanted pregnancies within the first three months of gestation without needing prior approval of an abortion commission. Unlike the regulations in other socialist countries in Central and Eastern Europe, no extensive bureaucratic formalities of any kind were necessary. While name, age, number of previous births and abortions, and occupation were recorded in a register, they were not checked for veracity. Secrecy of abortion was assured. After it had been medically determined that the unwanted pregnancy was of less than 12 week's duration, the abortion was usually performed immediately or within a week. Many abortions were accomplished on an outpatient basis with the woman remaining in the recovery room for about two hours. The fee was usually less than US \$3.00, of which the physician received about half. Doctors worked in shifts and were permitted to perform up to ten abortions per day. Pregnancies of more than three months' duration could be terminated only in hospitals and only after medical approval had been received. (“Abortion Legislation: The Romanian Experience”, p. 205-206)

determined to raise the “Romanian nation”, on its wonderful road to communism, since abortion was then the main instrument of fertility control, it became “the centerpiece of the new pro-natalist policy” (Berelson, 1979: 209).

The new regime considered the declining fertility rates as inimical to its developing plan. As Keil and Andreescu (1999) underlined, “Like the eighteenth-century Physiocrats, all of the Marxist states saw national strength as being directly tied up to population size and the characteristics of the population”<sup>5</sup>.

One year after his election as Party leader, in his opening speech at the general assembly of National Women’s Council in 1966, Ceaușescu warned the audience of the threat posed by the fact that Romania’s birth rate had been declining steadily since 1955<sup>6</sup>. In November that year, abortion is strictly prohibited by law, without any previous media –campaign, that is, without any warning. In short, the famous *Decree no.770/1966* – “For the reglementation of the interruption of pregnancy’ course” (*Pentru reglementarea întreruperii cursului sarcinii* – in Romanian) limited abortion on request to: (1) women over 45 years of age; (2) women already supporting four or more children; or (3) women whose life, in a judgement of a special commission, was endangered by the pregnancy, or who were faced with the risk of congenital deformity, or whose pregnancy resulted from rape, incest, or who were physically, psychologically, or emotionally incapacitated. This law was modified once in 1972 (before the International Conference on Demography, held in 1974 in Bucharest) – by the correspondent *Decree no. 53/1972* (the main difference being that the required age for the permission of an abortion on request was not 45, but 40, as all the international studies on demographic trends recommended), and once in 1985, when the required age-threshold is again the one of 45 (*Decree no.441/1985*).

Related to all the official modifications of the legislation concerning abortion and its interruption, and the propaganda affiliated, the years in which Ceaușescu’s

---

<sup>5</sup> Keil & Alexandrescu, “Fertility Policy in Ceaușescu’s Romania”, *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 24, No.4, October 1999, p. 479

<sup>6</sup> In his speech, Ceausescu strongly underlined that: “mention must be made of the fact that our country’s legislation shows certain shortcomings which favour the low number of births; the law courts manifest lack of exigency in undoing the marriages and certain legal provisions are lax in face of this attitude as regards family and the education of children. Here I must mention that this negative state of affairs is being disapproved and justifiably criticised by working people. On the basis of the indication of the party leadership, measures are being examined to improve the present legislation in view of defending the integrity of families, of increasing the responsibility for the family, the raising for children and for favouring the increasing of the birth rate.” (From Nicolae Ceaușescu, *Romania on the Way of Completing Socialist Construction*. Reports, Speeches, Articles, vol. 1, Meridiane Publishing House, Bucharest, 1969, p. 478

draconic laws dominated Romanian life and sexuality could be classified in three different periods:

- I. The beginnings of the pronatalist policies, 1966-1972, characterized by the presence of a very numerous persuasive acts (the Party offered many advantages to the women who choose to bear more children), and by the non-dramatic nature of the punishments, effectuated more or less in the general frames of “giving example”.
- II. The ‘70s – a period more dramatic than the previous years, defined by draconic punishment (against the women, as well as against the doctors and all the other persons involved in an illegal abortion) and sustained work of the Medical Police – *Procuratura*. The Party’s official discourse, along with the State’s Propaganda, had back there two important directions: to present and construct the public identity of any Romanian woman first as *a worker*, and secondly as *a mother*. Starting with this period, woman’s health (in relation with her reproductive life, interruptions of pregnancies and miscarriages) was let aside, becoming practically a fake motivation by which Ceaușescu and his regime legitimated the entire reproduction policies.
- III. The last period, *The Golden Era* of the ‘80s - this was the most dramatic period in the entire history of the interdiction of abortion in Communist Romania. Nevertheless, the attitude towards official reproductive policies was a relatively stable one: this is the reality, those are the laws, and we must find our way to overrun them, a *modus vivendi*.

The Party introduced as well many related “pronatalist policies”, along with the reversed abortion policy of the mid-’60s, Divorce was very difficult to obtain, especially for couples with children under 16 years of age. Family allowances were liberalized and increased (in the last periods, special allowances were made for mothers with more than four children), and the income tax was reduced for families with three or more children. At the same time, a „childless tax” (approximately 2% of their income) was introduced and levied on men and women over 26 years of age, whether single or married, but without children. Although the sale of contraceptive was not prohibited by law as well, their official importation has ceased since the ’60s.

Starting with the first anti-abortion decree, the very idea of „sexual education” didn’t even occur in the public sphere.

Although at first the abrupt change in Romanian legislation had a dramatic effect (see, for examples, appendix no.1, with statistics regarding birth rates and maternal mortality rates from that period), the impact on its demographic expected results steadily decreased in a few years – women, forced to seek for themselves alternative methods of not-having the so desired „socialist babies”, remembered old fashioned methods of contraception or they created new strategies of making possible the interruption of any unwanted pregnancy.

All in one, lack of access to modern contraceptives and legal abortion resulted in personal tragedy for almost every possible „*socialist mother*”, i.e. every woman between 18 and 45 years of age, who was viewed as taking part from „the fertile lot” (as the Party named all theoretically fertile women). During all the 23 years of forbidding abortion, nearly 10,000 died from the complications of illegal abortion<sup>7</sup>. The official statistics on post-abortion morbidity nevertheless do not exist, namely because the recommended and in time the only permitted policy was to classify any maternal death related to interruption of pregnancy complications as anything else but this.

## **Propaganda and the creation of the *socialist mother***

The program of the Romanian Communist Party stipulated that in order to build the Romanian “multideveloped socialist society”, increased attention should be devoted to the family’s strengthening because the family is “the cell of the society”. In accordance, “(the) birth rate should be increased, an adequate age structure of the population and people’s youth should be maintained, and children should be educated

---

<sup>7</sup> “Before 1966 law went into effect, the maternal mortality in Romania was similar to those of other Eastern European countries. During 1960-1965, there was an average of 76 maternal deaths per year that resulted from septic abortion. The number of such deaths rose from 64 in 1966 to 192 in 1968, the year after the new abortion restrictions were implemented. By 1981, the number of maternal deaths attributed to abortion increased to 456, reaching a peak of 545 in 1989 (Romania/MOH 1993). In the last year of Ceaușescu regime, the maternal deaths were ten times higher than the highest figure previously recorded in Europe (WHO 1994). During the 20 years from 1969 to 1989, there were an average of 341 maternal deaths per year from clandestine procedures.” - Baban and David, “The Impact of Body-Politic on Women’s Body”, p. 2 ( <http://www.mona-hungary.org>, section “Gender-related academic studies, papers ”)

and taken care of because the young generation represents the future of the Romanian socialist nation”<sup>8</sup>.

In Romanian Communism, the abortion debate should not be perceived as a simple phenomenon of reproductive policies, as it appears, for example, in Occident. In Ceaușescu’s Romania, abortion was one of the “devices” by which the *New Man* had to be “constructed”: the socialist transformation of reproduction could thus be seen in the same terms as the socialist transformation of agriculture (i.e., the collectivization) or as the phenomenon of political police, the famous *Securitate*. On her way to completing socialist construction, Romania had to follow all desiderates dictated by its Party. “The Party’s role of leading force of the nation to an ever higher level” became one of the leitmotifs of all leaders’ public discourses starting from Ceaușescu’s coming to power. Since 1966, the Party had been integrating ever more organically into the country’s whole social life, strengthening still more its links with the broad mass of the people:

*The party’s existence is blending ever more closely, ever more organically with the life of all the citizens of the Homeland. It is from the Party than emanate the advanced ideas, the plans envisaging steady improvement in the living standards of the people, the enrichment of their material and spiritual life. The citizens apply tot the Party both in joy and trouble, it is with the Party that they consult on undertaking anything decisive in their own lives. Everything that is creative and valuable, advanced and daring in society, relies on the Party, and draws strength and energy from its force. Through its members – workers, peasants, intellectuals of all categories, economic executives – the Party has its say in absolutely all spheres of the material and spiritual life of society, in the most competent an authorised manner acts directly in each sector of activity*<sup>9</sup>.

In time, numerous institutions and state organizations were implicated in the realisation of the demographic directives: the Ministry of Health, the Red Cross, the National Women’s Council, the Union of Communist Youth, the General Trade of Romanian Trade Unions, the Interior Ministry, the Attorney General Office, the School of Medicine, the Institute for Maternal and Child Welfare, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Tourism, the Council for Socialist Culture and Education, the Ministry of Education and Teaching, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Food

---

<sup>8</sup> From “The Program of the Communist Party to Create the Multilateral Socialist Society and to Bring Romania on her Road to Communism” (in Romanian - *Programul Partidului Comunist de Făurire a Societății Socialiste Multilateral Dezvoltate și Înaintare a României spre Comunism*), Bucharest, 1975, apud. Keil & Alexandrescu, op.cit., p.482

<sup>9</sup> Ceaușescu, *Romania on the Way of Completing Socialist Construction*. Reports, Speeches, Articles, vol. 1, Meridiane Publishing House, Bucharest, 1969, p. 272-27

Industry, the (regional, municipal, city and community) Popular Councils<sup>10</sup>, and the journals *The Health Worker* (*Muncitorul sanitar*) and, of course, *Scînteia*. To efficiently coordinate the activities of all those involved in implementing Ceaușescu's policies related to natality, in 1971 was created a "supra" organization (directly subordinate to the Grand National Assembly) – the National Demographic Commission (*Comisia Națională de Demografie*), which functioned for twelve years, after which it was supplanted by the Higher Council of Health (*Consiliul Sanitar Superior*).

In spite all those "battles" and directives, *the people* and especially *the large masses of women* have opposed to the imposed pronatalist policies, during the entire period of abortion interdiction. To fulfil its demographic plans, the Party had to develop a sustained national campaign of coercion and legitimisation, implemented day by day by the State propaganda.

In Communist Romania and, in general, in all the socialist states, propaganda – that means conscious manipulation of the public opinion by selected and manipulating information – was viewed as the largest and most effective device of spreading the communist ideology. Simultaneously serving as a regime legitimation and mass education, the propaganda apparatus resembled the military in its organization (Kligman, 1998: 108-112), its efforts being organized in large campaigns. It constituted one of the most dynamic and conservative of Party's structure, and one of its most conservative, all the time on the offensive in order to create the necessary legitimation: "Propaganda was highly fetishized and formulaic in Ceaușescu's Romania, and was reproduced homologously throughout the system and all institutional levels. Conceived as a general panacea, its compositional elements varied to fit the specifics of the matter under scrutiny. Propaganda was constructed from a ritualized set of discursive practices; redundancy was a structural feature of its methods. Ritual repetition was important as a consciousness-altering technique. By incessantly and repeatedly bombarding the state's public sphere with ideological

---

<sup>10</sup> In Romanian: Ministerul Sănătății, Crucea Roșie, Consiliul Național al Femeilor, Uniunea Tineretului Comunist, Uniunea Generală a Sindicatelor din România, Ministerul de Interne, Procuratura Generală, Facultatea de Medicină, Institutul pentru Ocrotirea Mamei și a Copilului, Ministerul Muncii, Ministerul Turismului, Consiliul Culturii și Educației Socialiste, Ministerul Educației și Învățământului, Ministerul Justiției, Ministerul Industriei Alimentare, Ministerul Industriei Chimice, consiliile populare (județene, municipale, orașenești și comunale).



rhetoric and images, propaganda became a naturalized part of the everyday environment in which people lived.”<sup>11</sup>

As we already stated, in order to legitimise and then fulfil the new demographic plans, by means of propaganda a “new identity” has been constructed during the ’60, and reinforced periodically until the fall of the Communist Regime, its centre being dominated by the “*socialist mother*”. We shall further try to present, in short, the main general leitmotifs of the communist discourse related to the role of the first *socialist woman* (“comrade”), and then *socialist mother* in the construction of the *multilaterally developed socialist society*, all related to the official prohibition of abortion. In doing this, we started from a chronological exploration of pronatalist and pro-family campaigns from 1966 to 1989, in order to dislocate the common *topoi* – fabricated to construct an obedient people and, most of all, obedient *socialist mothers*. The analysed texts could be delimited in two main domains:

1. Official documents: from Ceusescu’s reports, speeches and articles, reports of the Party’s sessions, legislatives acts concerning the state’s demographic policies, to related articles published in the Party’s newspapers and official journals (i.e. *Scînteia* & all)
2. Common studies for the popularising of the Party’s policy, as medical brochures, little family encyclopaedias, journals and almanacs for women (written in a semi specialised language, but nevertheless very persuasive).

After a close reading of the above mentioned materials, one could observe three **main discursive *topoi***, in relation with the constructed image of the *socialist mother*:

- a. the presentation of the raising of the natality as a highly patriotic and moral responsibility
- b. the praising of the maternity and the family
- c. the highly stigmatization of abortion

#### **A. Raising the natality - a highly patriotic and moral responsibility**

Women’s reproductive functions had to be put, without reserve, in the service of

---

<sup>11</sup> *ibidem*, p.118

The Romanian Communist State, as it was officially established that “expanding socialist reproduction cannot be conceived without enlarging the reproduction of the population and of the work force”<sup>12</sup>. In his first public reference to the abortion problem, at the meeting of the National Women’s Council in June 1966, Ceaușescu underlined that, in accordance with the Five Years Plan voted at the Ninth Congress of the Romanian Communist Party,

*“It is necessary to firmly combat the outdated attitude, the manifestation of taking family life easy, a fact that directly leads to the growing number of divorces, the breaking up of families, the neglecting of the education of children and their training for life... Here I must mention that this negative state of affairs is being disapproved and justifiably criticized by working people. On the basis of the indicators of the Party leadership, measures are being examined to improve the present legislation in view of defending the integrity of families, of increasing the responsibility for the families, the raising of children and for favouring the increase in the birth rate”*<sup>13</sup>.

As long as “our children were our country’s children”, every woman had the patriotic duty to include herself in the process of the advancement of the Romanian nation to the road of socialism, by becoming a prolific *socialist mother*. In the ‘70s, the “profession” of motherhood was integrated in the larger general public discourse of the “woman creator”. Even so, women were not absolved of their patriotic obligation to reproduce human life, to give birth to future communist subjects. In the last period of the regime, the *Golden Era* of the ‘80s, that responsibility became an open praise for the socialist motherhood: “The procreation of the children in families must be seen as much from a biological point of view, for the reproduction of the species, as from a social point of view, for the reproduction of the work force”<sup>14</sup>. Women’s reproductive functions were unambiguously instrumentalized in the service of the State, and the efficiency of their reproductive behaviour became the criterion by which every woman, a “must be” *socialist mother*, was recognized socially.

---

<sup>12</sup> Mircea Bulgaru (Adjunct Director of the Central Bureau of Statistics), quoted in *Scînteia*, November 26, 1966

<sup>13</sup> Ceaușescu, *Romania on the Way of Completing Socialist Construction*. Reports, Speeches, Articles, vol. 1, Meridiane Publishing House, Bucharest, 1969, p. 478

<sup>14</sup> From A. Constantinescu, V. Negritoiu, E. Stativa, *Pledoarie pentru maternitate*, 1987, apud Kligman, *The Politics of Duplicity...*, p.133

## B. The praising of the maternity and the family

During the entire period of abortion interdiction, maternity was exalted in the media as “the fulfilment of women’s destiny”, “the wonder of nature”, “the wellspring of life”<sup>15</sup>. The press was filled with accounts about perfect mothers, who had devoted themselves to the bearing and raising of their children, for the nation’s “vigour” sake, and, in their old age, were finally enjoying the rewards of the spotless socialist-mother type life. This model was a leitmotif present even in the primary-school’s manuals, where all the young generations (among which future possible *socialist mothers*) can read (and discuss it, in order to learn the proper lessons) stories like “The Tale of Vrâncioaia”. Definitely a prototype story, the tale presents exemplary mother Vrâncioaia who, giving birth and raising 7 (seven) brave children, thus contributes to the victory of Steven the Great (one of the Romanian princes of the XVth century, a warrior model in the Romanian historiography) against the Turkish invaders.

The written media<sup>16</sup> was invaded, starting from the second part of the ‘70s, with “true-stories” about model families and their babies, about happy mothers who could finally – in relation with the new natalist policies of the Party – fulfil their dreams of raising strong and beautiful children. TV shows were dedicated to this, and the “particular subject” started to flourish in literature and arts<sup>17</sup>.

Regarding the family, the official leitmotif was that “wholesome character and social responsibility are shaped in the atmosphere of families united by love, respect,

---

<sup>15</sup> The articles from those years, and especially from the last period, when pronatalist policies and their propaganda were at their best, had titles and subtitles as: „Children – the joy of Trifa family/Copiii – bucuria familie Trifa” (*Health / Sănătatea*, no. 3/1984); „The Children’s Health – the Richness of the Future / Sănătatea copiilor – bogăția viitorului” (*Health / Sănătatea*, no. 4/1984); „The Joy of Life (i.e., the children – author’s note)/Bucuria vieții” (*Health / Sănătatea*, no. 4/1984); „The Great Concern with which the Country leads an Eye to its Children / Imensa grijă cu care țara își veghează copiii” (*Woman / Femeia*, no. 3/1985); „The Children – the love and concern of the entire country / Copiii – dragostea și grija întregii țări” (*Woman / Femeia*, no. 6/1985); „The Romanian family – the reason for reaching through the centuries: everlasting teachings of the Romanian history / Familia românească – temeiul dăinuirii și statorniciei prin vremi: perene învățăminte ale istoriei românești” (*Scînteia*, September 18, 1986), etc.

<sup>16</sup> The Party’s official journals and magazines were used as the main propaganda’s weapon. In fact, article 1 of the press law stated that: “In the Socialist Republic of Romania the press fulfils a high socio-political mission... The press’s destiny is to militate permanently for the translation of the Romanian Communist party’s policies into life”. (*apud* Kligman, *The Politics of Duplicity*..., p. 119)

<sup>17</sup> For example, in the well known *Femeia Almanac* (an yearly magazine for women specially), in the section “Art and Literature”, one could read, gradually: in 1968 – an article about three major museums of the world (Roma, Vatican Museum; Tokio, National Museum; Leningrad, Ermitaj Museum); a study about a feminine character from the romanian fairy-tales, Ileana Cosânzeana, and a story about a woman, signed by a well-known Romanian woman writer, Henriette Yvone Stahl; in 1972 – there wasn’t a special section dedicated to arts, but lots of materials about family and children care; in 1985 – materials about the National Festival „Cântarea României”, with special references to poems and songs dedicated to family, and a long article about three of last year’s films, all dedicated to the joys of motherhood.

understanding, and reciprocity; in the ambiance of a home with brothers and sisters” (from *Femeia* magazine, no.10, 1966). As an abstraction, the family was considered the necessary unit for socialist reproduction. All the family’s values were highly praised in the public discourse, in accordance with the metaphorical view of the state and the Party as “the people’s family”. By becoming a *socialist mother*, every woman was thus fulfilling her integration in the both her families. Another pride and joy was considered unthinkable:

*“It is inconceivable to imagine a family without children. The greatest honour and most important social role for woman is to give birth, to give life, and to raise children. There cannot be anything more precious for a woman than to be a mother, except to ensure the realisation of nature’s laws in her own life, to procreate, to ensure the continuous development of the people, of our nation. There cannot exist for a family and for a woman a greater pride and joy than that of having and raising children”<sup>18</sup>.*

### **C. The highly stigmatization of abortion**

In relation with this recurrent discursive element, the metaphorical inclusion in the ideal type of the *socialist mother* functioned backwardly. Everyone who wanted to induce herself an abortion or who suffered from one was officially stigmatised and thus symbolically excluded from “*socialist mothers’* society”. The interruption of unwanted pregnancies was seen as threatening the Homeland’s health both individually (as abortions jeopardised every woman’s physical and psychological health) and generally (as abortion determined a low birth-rate, thus endeavouring the health and “vigour” of the socialist nation).

At the beginning of the pronatalist campaign, the highly-stigmatization-of-abortion *topos* appeared almost everywhere. The Party’s official dailies were “impregnated” with long studies incriminating abortion, signed by respected specialists:

*“I wish to state outright that any termination of pregnancy... is a brutal act that endangers woman’s health. Unfortunately, at present, certain young women think that the termination of a pregnancy, when done under the best hygienic circumstances and by a specialist, does not present a future risk for their general health or for the possibility of having a child. This is erroneous. Interventions of this kind, performed even by the most skilled hands, can have negative effects on the organism...I also want to remind you that genital ailments have ill effects on woman’s psyches. The first trauma leads to demoralisation is involuntary sterility. In any woman’s life there comes a time when she wants to have a*

---

<sup>18</sup> Ceaușescu, 1988, *apud* Kligman

*child, and if she is no longer able? The second is the heightened sensitivity of the entire organism. A similar result may derive from the repeated use of anaesthetics.*"<sup>19</sup>

In the '80s, the propaganda directed an intense campaign for incriminating abortion, officially classified as "a social plague, a social calamity". Along with abortion, contraception was as well stigmatised, generally because of their evil "secondary effects". "Couples were to be instructed on the biological merits of procreation for reproduction for species, as well on the social ones for the reproduction of the work force. Educators and activists received all manner of booklets on the relationship between health and demography, marital harmony, care of infants and children, and the consequences of abortion... Discussion groups were organized at which individualized advice was also obtainable. Formal group instruction was offered at schools for mothers, for fathers, and for grandparents. Documentary films were shown for ideological-educational purposes."<sup>20</sup>

In opposition with the exacerbate stigmatisation of abortion, those who respected and fulfilled the inclusion in the "*socialist mother*" model were highly praised. Their children were seen as the "country's wealth" and the "nation's future". Apart from numerous financial and other advantages, women who bore many children were officially honoured (starting from the late '50s, as like other competitions in the sphere of the socialist production) as "heroes of the socialist labour", receiving decorations as follows:

- women who delivered and reared ten children were awarded the title of "Heroine Mother"
- women who had delivered and reared nine children received the first class "Order of Maternal Glory"; those with eight children, the second class "Order of Maternal Glory"; those with seven, the third-class award in this category

---

<sup>19</sup> Dr. Gheorghe Theodoru, a specialist at the Polizu-clinic in Bucharest, in an article from *Femeia* magazine, October 1966, *apud* Kligman, *The Politics of Duplicity*..., p.126

<sup>20</sup> Kligman, *The Politics of Duplicity*..., p. 143. As related to cinematography, pronatality was a central topic, but any reference related to abortion was officially censured. There was although a film centred on this subject (following the official policies of "do-s and don't-s"), "Ilustrate cu flori de câmp" (Postcards with wild-flowers), after a true story, about a young girl who died after an illegal abortion. In the literary field, the subject was also prohibited – in the sense that it almost never overran the censorship's vigilance. Nevertheless, "innocent hints" were made, as in Marin Preda's novel "Cel mai iubit dintre pamanteni" (where one of the heroines "disappears" after an unwanted pregnancy, and the main character, her lover, is investigated by Procuratura).

- women who had delivered and reared six children were awarded the first-class “Maternity Medal”; those with five, the second class of this category.

## The Memory of Abortion and Its Oral History (ies)

*Grosso modo*, working with the memory of abortion during Communist Romania means working with the history of the recent past, and its relation with the studies of memory which have blossomed in the past decades in the humanities. Although our aim here is not to initiate a theoretical analysis concerning the study of memory, some trends must be overviewed in order to properly frame our future analysis. In the academic world, the works of Pierre Nora (1989) and Jan Assmann (1995) are known to be the initiators of the memory craze among historians<sup>21</sup>. Recent anthropological studies deal with a more phenomenological approach toward memory, focusing especially on history (and recent history) as it is lived and on the remembrances shared and transmitted by social groups<sup>22</sup>. Related to our subject, the theoretical discussion on which we must refer to generally focuses:

- On the one hand, on the relation between **history** as in History with H (i.e., official history with the Party as its “puppeteer”, vs. abortion in Communist Romania, which, as in Orwell’s *1984*, didn’t exist in the public discourse, and the entire past was modified in order to create the legitimization of the historical role of the *socialist woman* – the one to give birth to as many as possible future socialist subjects, who will lead the republic on its glorious road to communism) **and memory** (understood here as unofficial historical data concerning abortion during Communism, made up by

---

<sup>21</sup> One of the most comprehensive studies about “On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse” is the one presented by Kerwin Lee Klein in the special number of the interdisciplinary journal *Representations* from Winter 2000, dedicated to memory and recollection and metaphorically titled “Grounds for Remembering”. There, the author draws a concise, but in-depth analysis of the scholarly boom related to memory in the historical discourse, taking into account referential authors and studies such as: Frederick Bartlett’s *Remembering* (1932), Maurice Halbwachs’ *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (1925) and *La mémoire collective* (1950), Yosef Yerushalmi’s *Zakhor* (1982), Pierre Nora’s *Lieux de la mémoire* (with its famous introduction, “Between History and Memory”, published as well in the Special Issue of *Representations* no. 26 (Spring 1989) – *Memory and Counter-Memory* / 1984), Patrick Hutton’s *History as an Art of Memory* (1993), James Young’s *The texture of Memory* (1993), Matt Matsuda’s *The Memory of the Modern* (1996), Dominique Lacapra’s *History and Memory after Auschwitz* (1998), etc.

<sup>22</sup> For an in-depth analysis of the relation memory - anthropology, see the article of David Berliner, “The Abuses of memory: Reflection on the Memory Boom in Anthropology”, *Anthropological Quarterly*, 78.1 (2005), p.197-211

the narratives concerning those time as forms of an oral history of Communist Romania)

- On the other hand, the relation between **individual memory** and **collective memory**<sup>23</sup>, our presentation dealing with general narratives schemes. The recollection process is indeed individual, but a thematic discourse analysis demonstrates the existence of certain collective patterns, which will conduct to the possibility of disclosing certain general *topoi* of a “memory of abortion during Communist Romania”.

Along with abortion, Ceaușescu generally prohibited the existence of contraception on the Romanian territory, fact which determined, starting from the early '70s, the development of illegal interruptions of unwanted pregnancies as a common practice all over the country. Having as stating point an oral history project, *Bucharest of the '80s*<sup>24</sup>, initiated by The Romanian Peasant Museum in 2002, we conducted since then an individual research, in order to create (using non-structured interviews) a data base with narratives concerning the memory of abortion during Communist Romania and the effect of Ceaușescu's draconic reproductive policies in every day life. The following analysis is based on this research, still in progress, as well as on the related materials and studies on this particular issue. Our purpose here is to analyse – from a thematic point of view - those oral histories, as forms of the memory of abortion, in order to present the main related narrative nuclei. Excluded

---

<sup>23</sup> For a comprehensive “map of uses and abuses” of the term collective memory, see the article of Noa Gedi and Yigal Elam, “Collective Memory – What Is It?” (1996), in *History and Memory* 8(1), p. 30-50

<sup>24</sup> *The Romanian Peasant Museum* conducted this research in 2002, and I've participated back there as field researcher (working on “abortion”, “queue” and “ration”), on the initiative of its by then director Irina Nicolau. The result of the project – short oral histories describing the every day life and burdens of the Bucharest of the '80, “The Golden Age” – *Epoca de Aur* – as the Party's propaganda named it, were made public in *MARTOR, The Museum of the Romanian Peasant Anthropology Review*, no. 7/2002 (available also on line, at <http://martor.memoria.ro/>). In the introduction of the materials, the researcher Ioana Popescu underlines very well the objectives of that different, until then, research: “The materials that are gathered here have proved to be the result of very different outlooks on that moment in history: nightmarish memories stand side by side with nostalgic regrets, sparks of black humor and even some original recipes. It would have been a pity to spoil this fabulous diversity by selecting the texts according to some criterion or other. Therefore, we simply decided to arrange the key words in alphabetical order. The annex at the end of the volume includes the list of the authors/collectors (referred to by their initials) and the list of the informants (referred to by numbers). In this way, we hope to make the reading of such various texts easier, while those who are interested can easily identify the sources as well.

Will we ever be able to exorcise by testimony the direst decade of Ceaușescu's regime? Will we ever be able to leave behind the irreparable losses that followed?

I couldn't tell how it was that this scrap of paper got on my desk, this fragment of a list Irina had started: envelopes that don't stick ball-points that don't write, rubbers that leave marks, matches that won't burn...”

during Communism, information about abortion and its prohibition could thus be collected after regime's fall as a form of counter-story at the public historical narration of *the socialist mother*.

In everyday life during Communist Romania, every communist subject – and especially the well desired *socialist mothers* – had to develop numerous strategies and contra-strategies in order to oppose Ceaușescu's pronatalist policies. The exactness of their recollection is not the object, nor the interest of our research. What is are the main discursive recurrences, as excluded *topoi* during then, but included now as the main references characterising the memory of abortion during Communist Romania. Out of the main topics underlined by the women interviewed in our research, three of them were the most present: 1. **the strategies to overrun the draconic demographic policies**, 2. **the political intrusion in their intimate life**, 3. **the omnipresent “culture of fear”**. We shall further conduct a short presentation, with examples:

1. The strategies to overrun the draconic demographic policies.

In spite of Ceaușescu's demographic policies, the State's expected-to-become *socialist mothers* tried harder and harder not to remain pregnant and when unsuccessful, they tried even harder to terminate – in a way or another – the unwanted pregnancy<sup>25</sup>. As contraceptives were generally impossible to find, the women were forced to use different “traditional methods” (denominated like this, in all interviews, in order to underline their “origin”, and also to stress the Party's interdiction to a modern sexual life). Generally, the goal was to modify, in the vagina, the necessary temperature, or the necessary chemistry-balance for conception:

*“There were no contraceptives to buy, or you could find them very rarely. What could you use instead? The calendar mainly, or other methods.. I heard that someone used aspirins. If you a pharmacist you asked him to prepare contraceptives for you. Sometimes they were efficient, it depended whether the pharmacist had put in the right amount of quinine or whatever they used” (E.V., 47 years, housewife)*

*“But weren't there any contraceptive methods you could use?”*

---

<sup>25</sup> We are using the term “unwanted pregnancy” in its general meaning, including not only the “undesired”, but also – and, in that cases, especially – “unable to assume” (from a socio-economic point of view) future state of motherhood.



*What contraceptive methods? We had, back then, vinegar, salt, lemon, aspirins. We prepared stuff with those, with egg white, with salt... with aspirins or with vitamin C, we made little capsules, we made them at home... The condoms like now you could not find, not really... and it was rumoured that even if you find some, they are perforated from the very start... ” (A.I., 55 years, retired worker)*

Their stories about the memory of that time could be seen as horror stories by an outsider – although, no matter how hard to imagine, the day by day reality “was like this” (“*aşa era*” – the leitmotif which generally opens or ends every narration):

*You were forced to have 4 children, but maybe you didn't want to do that, as there was no future for the baby. And then you used every means available. Abortions were usually performed by the midwife, the person who assisted you in childbirth. They would push down your belly, get hold of your uterus through the inside and dislocate the baby from the placenta. If you still couldn't have an abortion, you had to go to the hospital. You could also use a probe, which you inserted into the uterus and then pump alcoholic extract mixed with saline solution, basically boiled water, as there wasn't much saline solution around. If there was too much bleeding and the baby was still there, you had to go to the hospital. Abortion was a taboo topic in the hospital; there were lots of women there, but the doctor wouldn't say a word about it; all women in Romanian had miscarriages. If there were complications, the case was investigated by a special investigation team which existed in every hospital. Doctors had to let them know, otherwise they would have been into trouble. Women used to get pregnant a lot, as there were no contraceptive, nothing... But you couldn't have a baby every time you got pregnant. If you got pregnant every three months, you had to take the chance and suffer all pain. (E.V., 47 years, housewife)*

## 2. The political intrusion in women's intimate life

The desire of the paternalist state to impose onto their subject its demographic policies had succeeded, as planned, only at the beginning of the pronatalist campaign (see, for example, the appendix with the birth rates from the '60s until December 1989, the fall of Communism in Romania). After that, the birth rate decreased as the *socialist mothers* found their strategies of survival. In order to influence their “defiance”, the Party started to conduct a different policy, of intruding in every aspect of their life in order to control and command. Every possible socialist mother was under attentive surveillance, and in the last decade the regime introduced even periodically gynaecological check-ups. Symbolically, the borders between public and private started to be systematically violated. The sexuality and the couple's intimate life become a public, socialist “good”:

*At that time I was working at the Institute of Metallurgic Designs. When Ceauşescu said the population should increase, very strict rules regarding abortion were introduced. Almost every month, the institute's doctor would conduct gynaecological check-ups. It was*

*obligatory. The good part was that you could run tests that you wouldn't normally do, not every month. The worst part was that if you were pregnant...*

*The medical room was equipped with a gynaecological table and everything else. We were tested every month like cattle. There were doctors who sympathized with some of the women who had 4 or 5 children and reported that they weren't pregnant even if they were. The women would later take care of her problem. (information cited in MARTOR, *The Museum of the Romanian Peasant Anthropology Review*, no. 7/2002)*

### 3. The omnipresent “culture of fear”

While the lack of intimacy is obvious in the oral histories collected during our research, the memory of the every day life during Communist Romania, in relation with the prohibition of abortion, seemed to be characterized by the dominating presence of the daily fear: the fear of not getting pregnant, the fear of not succeeding in having an illegal abortion, the fear of death and, of course, the fear of the Party's reprisals. The life of every (or every possible) *socialist mother* during Ceaușescu's Romania was dominated by a “basic culture of fear”, which alienated the woman from her very body, seen as a possible enemy. Sexuality was generally perceived as a burden, because of its reproductive aspect, the only perceived as necessary and thus admitted for the *socialist mothers*. Along with the fear of their inner sexuality, which could always „betray” them, the women interviewed also had recollections about the terror experimented in the hospitals, where they'd arrived after an unsuccessful abortion:

*“From the moment the abortion was triggered, you had to be at the hospital, bleeding, the respective person called the doctor on call, somebody whom you knew. The situation was very dangerous, so the doctor had to call a Securitate guy who was supposed to make a call to the prosecutor's office and report an abortion. If they gave their approval, doctors were allowed to use their surgical tools. Their tools were usually sealed and could only be used with approval from the top. Of course, they had their tools stashed away somewhere. The nurse on call would call the respective doctor, who performed the abortion, with or without an anaesthetic, as quickly as possible, so that he wasn't seen by a colleague. You could only spend a night there, or a few hours and then they practically dragged you home.”(information cited in MARTOR, *The Museum of the Romanian Peasant Anthropology Review*, no. 7/2002)*

Almost every time, their terror was double motivated: on the one hand, the fear for future reprisals, and, on the other hand, the terrible fear of not being forced, after a proper medical treatment, to keep the baby, who could be forever damaged, but “convicted” to a future socialist life.

Besides claiming lives, unsafe clandestine abortions – which involved many potentially very dangerous techniques, such as scraping the uterus with a rubber tube,

uterine lavage with a caustic fluid, introduction of foreign bodies into the uterus or external trauma - permanently maimed many more women. As David (1992) underlines, although precise figures do not exist, “unofficial estimates indicate that nearly 20 percent of Romanian 5.2 millions women of reproductive age may now be infertile, more than twice than a number expected for a population of that size”<sup>26</sup>.

Following the overthrow of Ceaușescu in December 1989, the new Government (“The Front of National Salvation”/ *Frontul Salvării Naționale*) reversed the restrictive legislation about abortion. A new law was passed, authorizing the importation, production and sale of modern contraceptives, and permitting abortion on request through the first trimester when performed qualified personnel. Step by step, family planning clinics were established throughout the country. From that entire period, important lessons should be learned. But even now, after all these years, the abortion during Communist Romania remains, nevertheless, a taboo topic, and the abortion rates are rather higher. Old mentalities die hard...

---

<sup>26</sup> *apud* Baban and David, “The Impact of Body-Politic on Women’s Body”, p. 2

## Bibliography:

1. *AIO*, no. I/1998, The Oral History Institute, *Babeş-Bolyai* University, Cluj-Napoca – the article “Femeia și avortul în perioada 1966-1989 / Woman and abortion during 1966-1989”, by Elena Bărbulescu (pp.177-194)
2. Alesandrescu, Dan; Luca, V.: *Concepția. Sterilitatea. Anticoncepția* (“Conception. Sterility. Contraception”), Editura Medicală, București, 1965
3. Almanahul *FEMEIA* ( *Woman* Almanac), 1947-1990
4. Assman, Jan: “Collective Memory and Cultural Identity”, *New German Critique* 65 (1995), pp.125-133
5. Baban and David, “The Impact of Body-Politic on Women’s Body”, p. 2 (<http://www.mona-hungary.org>, section “Gender-related academic studies, papers ”)
6. Berelson, Bernard: „Romania’s 1966 Anti-Abortion Decree: The Demographic Experience of the First Decade”, *Population Studies* 33 (2), 1979
7. Berliner, David: “The Abuses of Memory. Reflections on the Memory Boom in Anthropology”, *Anthropological Quarterly* 78 (2005), pp: 183-197
8. Ceaușescu, Nicolae: *Rolul familiei în societatea românească* ( „The Family’s Role in the Romanian society”), Editura Politică, București, 1988
9. -----: *Romania on the Way of Completing Socialist Construction*. Reports, Speeches, Articles, vol. 1-31, Meridiane Publishing House, Bucharest, 1969-1989
10. *Consecințele avortului*, (“Abortion’s consequences”), București, Editura Medicală, 1971, Biblioteca Editurii Sanitare
11. Courtois, Stephane; Wirth, Nicolas: *Cartea neagră a comunismului* (original title in French : « Le livre noir du communisme : crimes, terreur et répression »), Humanitas Publishing House, București, 1998
12. David, H. & N. H. Wright: „Abortion Legislation : the Romanian Experience”, *Studies in Family Planning*, 2, 1979
13. David, Henry P.: “Abortion in Europe, 1920-1991: A Public Health Perspective”, *Studies in Family Planning*, Vol.23, No.1, (Jan.-Feb., 1992), pp. 1-22,

14. JDeletant, Denis: *România sub regimul comunist* ( original title in English: "Romania under communist rule"), Fundația Academia Civică, 1997
15. Gedi, Noa and Yigal Elam: "Collective Memory: What Is It?", *History and Memory* 8(1996), pp: 30-50
16. Fodor, Eva: "Smiling Women and Fighting Men. The Gender of the Communist Subject in State Socialist Hungary", *Gender and Society*, Vol.16, No.2 (Apr., 2002), pp. 240-263
17. Heer, David M.: "Abortion, Contraception, and Population Policy in Soviet Union", *Demography*, Vol.2 (1965), pp. 531-539
18. Keil, Thomas J.; Andreescu, Viviana: "Fertility Policy in Ceaușescu's Romania", *Journal of Family History*, Vol.21, No.4 (Oct., 1999), pp.478-492
19. Klein, Lee: "On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse", *Representations* 69 (2000), pp.127-150.
20. Kligman, Gail: "Abortion and International Adoption in Post-Ceaușescu Romania", *Feminist Studies*, 1992, vol. 18, Iss.2, pp. 405-420
21. ----- *Politica duplicității, Controlul reproducerii în România lui Ceaușescu* (le titre original en anglais : "The Politics of Duplicity Controlling Reproduction in Ceaușescu's Romania"), Humanitas, 2000
22. Ionescu, Ghiță: *Communism in Romania, 1944-1962*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1964
23. MARTOR, The Museum of the Romanian Peasant Anthropology Review, no. 7/2002 (available also on line, at <http://martor.memoria.ro/>)
24. Nicolescu, Șerban: *Consecințele avortului provocat asupra sănătății femeii*, ("The consequences of induced abortion on woman's health"), București, Editura Medicală, 1985
25. Nora, Pierre (ed.) : *Les lieux de memoire*, Quarto Gallimard, Paris, 1997
26. ----- : "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire", *Representations* 26 (1989), pp. 7-24.
27. Ricoeur, Paul: *Memoria, istoria, uitarea* (original title in French: « La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli »), Editura Amarcord, Timișoara 2001
28. Ricoeur, Paul : *Soi-même comme un autre*, Éditions du Seuil, Paris, 1990
29. Rousso, Henry : *La hantise du passé*, Textuel, Paris, 1998

30. Șerbănescu, Florina; Morris, Leo; Stănescu, Alin: "The Impact of Recent Policy Changes on Fertility, Abortion, and Contraceptive Use in Romania", *Studies in Family Planning*, Vol.26, No.2 (Mar.-Apr., 1995), pp. 76-87
31. Teitelbaum, Michael S.: "Fertility Effects of the Abolition of Legal Abortion in Romania", *Population Studies*, vol. 26, No.3 9Nov., 1972), 405-417
32. Vasiliu, Vlad: *Ce trebuie să știm despre avort și consecințele sale*, ("What do we have to know about abortion and its consequences"), Editura Medicală, 1966

## APPENDIX NO. 1: Abortion and statistics

**Table no. 1: Monthly birth rates, 1966 – 1971**

Month	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970
January	12,7	15,4	29,5	25,3	20,1
February	14,8	15,7	29,5	24,9	21,5
March	15,1	16,5	29,8	25,1	22,6
April	15,4	17,8	28,1	24,7	23,5
Mai	15,2	20,7	26,8	24,1	22,3
June	14,8	29,9	26,2	22,7	22,3
July	14,3	38,7	26,0	23,6	22,1
August	14,4	38,5	26,1	23,3	20,6
September	14,1	39,9	27,8	24,9	20,8
October	14,5 <sup>27</sup>	36,1	26,4	23,0	20,5
November	13,9	31,1	24,2	20,8	18,8
December	12,8	27,7	21,5	17,9	18,4
Total per year	14,3	27,3	26,8	23,3	21,1

Source: Official Statistics of RSR, *apud* David, Wright 1971 : 206

---

<sup>27</sup> The month starting from which the anti-abortion decree was officially implemented.

**Table no.2: Romania's fertility rate, 1956-1996**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fertility rate</b>
1956	2,87
1957	2,72
1958	2,58
1959	2,42
1960	2,33
1961	2,17
1962	2,03
1963	2,00
1964	1,96
1965	1,90
1966	1,90
1967	3,65
1968	3,63
1969	3,19
1970	2,88
1971	2,66
1972	2,54
1973	2,43
1974	2,72
1975	2,62
1976	2,58
1977	2,59
1978	2,53
1979	2,49
1980	2,45
1981	2,37
1982	2,16
1983	2,00
1984	2,19
1985	2,26
1986	2,39
1987	2,42
1988	2,31
1989	2,19
1990	1,83
1991	1,56
1992	1,50
1993	1,44
1994	1,41
1995	1,34
1996	1,29

Source: Ministry of Health's Official Monitor, *apud* Keil, Andrescu 1999 : 484

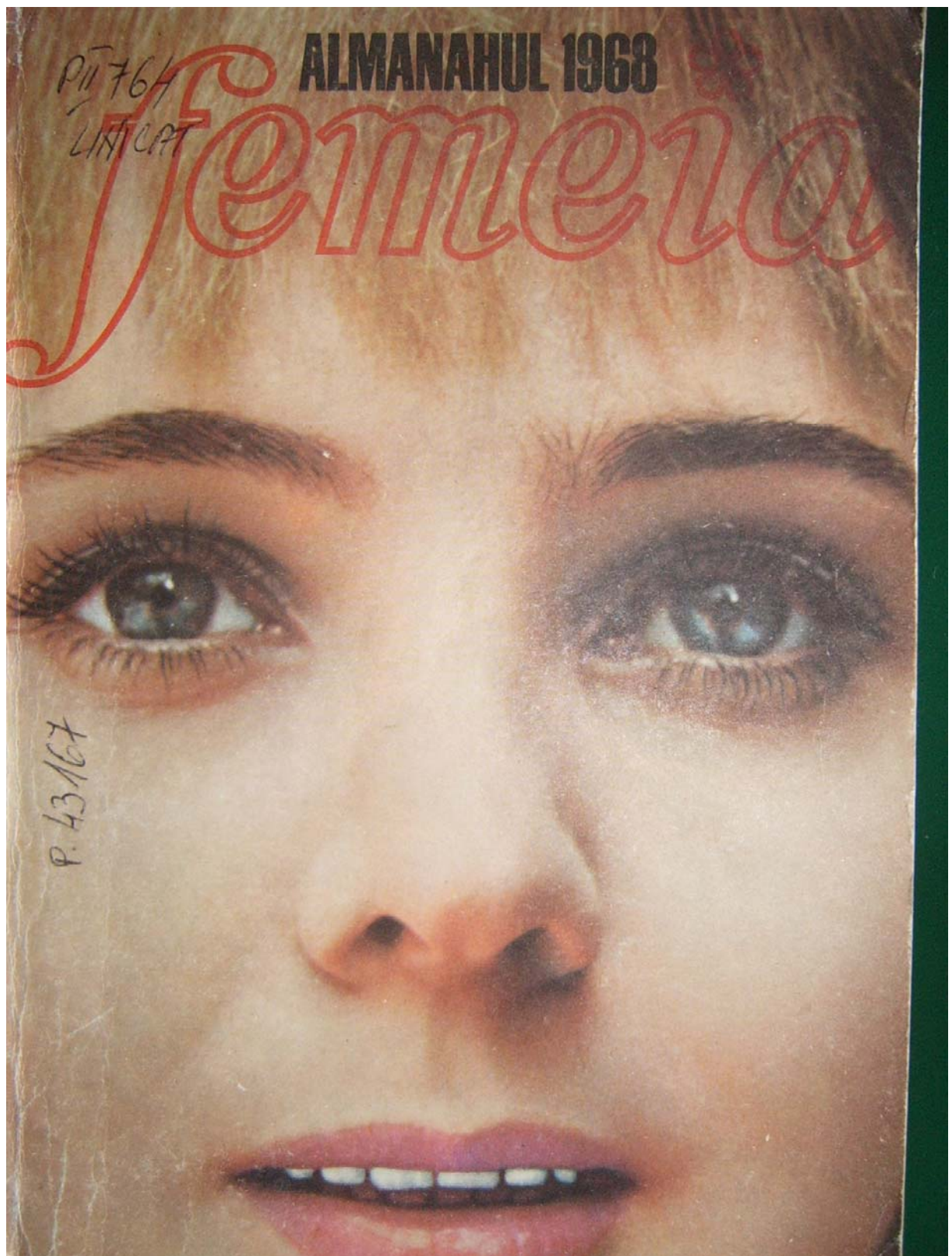


**Table no. 3: Infantile mortality and maternal deaths related to abortion, 1965 – 1991**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Abortions</b>	<b>Maternal deaths related to abortions</b>	<b>Infantile mortality per 1000 living-births</b>
1965	1 112 704	47	44,1
1966	973 447	64	46,6
1967	205 783	143	46,6
1968	220 193	192	59,5
1969	257 496	258	54,9
1970	292 410	314	49,4
1971	341 740	363	42,4
1972	380 625	370	40,0
1973	375 752	364	38,1
1974	334 621	381	35,0
1975	359 417	385	34,7
1976	383 220	432	31,4
1977	378 990	469	31,2
1978	394 636	447	30,3
1979	403 776	422	31,6
1980	413 093	441	29,3
1981	427 081	456	28,6
1982	468 041	511	28,0
1983	421 386	471	23,9
1984	303 123	449	23,4
1985	302 838	425	25,6
1986	183 959	488	23,2
1987	182 442	491	28,9
1988	185 416	524	25,3
1989	193 084	545	26,9
1990	992 265	181	-
1991	866 834	114	-

Source: Romania, Ministry of Health, *apud* Gail Kligman, *Politica reproducerii....* p. 237

**APPENDIX NO. 2: Images of the “socialist mother”**



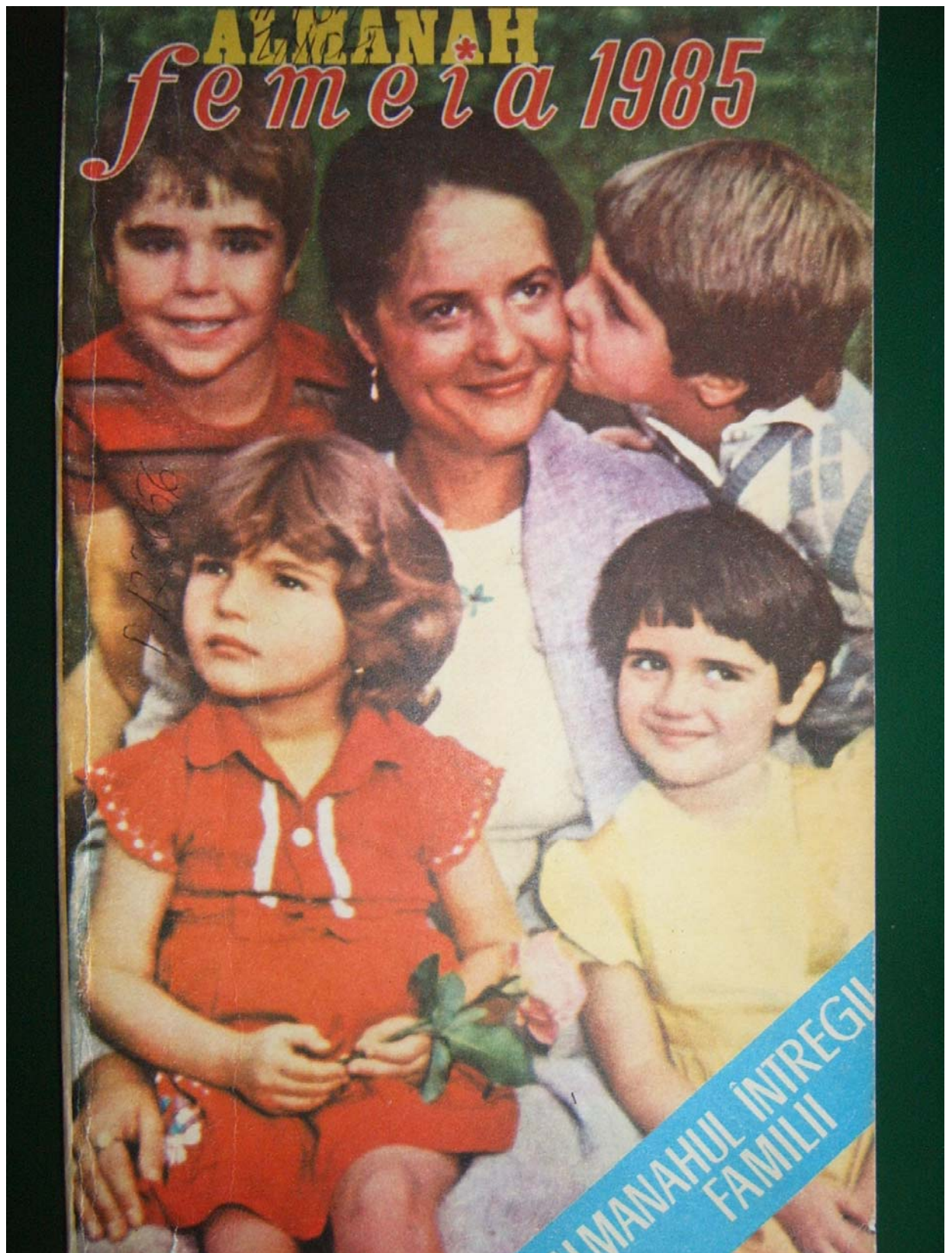
**FEMEIA Almanac's front page: 1968**





**FEMEIA Almanac's front page: 1972**





FEMEIA Almanac's front page: 1985