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CULTURA REZISTENTEI

EDUCATIE PENTRU REVOLUTIE

LOVE KILLS

SPECIAL ISSUE # 1

ANARCHA-FEMINIST ZINE



CULTURE OF RESISTANCE

EDUCATION FOR REVOLUTION

Dear friends of LoveKills,

Here is the new special issue of our zine. LoveKills special issue comes out once a year together with a soli music compilation, it is one of our efforts to raise funds for organizing LoveKills festival. The special issue is made out of some translated articles we are publishing in our romanian version of the zine (which has now reached number 15), but it also includes articles written by individuals and collectives from all over the world, who are sharing anarcha-feminist thoughts. If you are interested in sending us your thoughts, please contact us: lovekills@riseup.net

In solidarity,
LoveKills Collective

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CALL OUT FOR LOVEKILLS FESTIVAL # 3

LoveKills collective is trying to organize the third edition of the festival. It is our strong desire to continue this festival, as we consider it to be very important for our struggle to make a difference especially in the romanian context, to live up to our anarcha-feminist ideas in a fundamentalist/orthodox/patriarchal society and even in a completely ignorant+sexist "scene". We are welcoming every individual/collective involved/interested in anarcha-feminism to take part to our festival, to support and help us. The date for the festival is not fixed yet, it is a great possibility that it takes place in the beginning of september, we will announce it on our web-site (although it hasn't been updated since last year, we are trying to work on it) <http://www.aro.ecobytes.net/lovekills/>. You can also contact us directly for news and details: lovekills@riseup.net.

LoveKills Collective

History tells us that every oppressed class gained true liberation from its masters through its own efforts. It is necessary that woman learn that lesson, that she realize that her freedom will reach as far as her power to achieve freedom reaches.

documentaries would fit better than a party, and since people who were there expressed also their preference over the movies we just said ok then let's show movies all night long. But unfortunately most of the people were quit tired and we just had the chance to show "VAGINA MONOLOGUES" and a documentary about squatting in Amsterdam, the next one should have been a documentary about Emma Goldman (we were still having more interesting movies, besides these), but we stopped it since it was really late and people were already falling asleep.

During these two days, on the big hall we had tables for the anarchist distributions (from different countries which were present at the festival), with a lot of information on women issues in French/German/ English/Romanian... On the walls there was also an exhibition on animal rights.

You can find more info about the workshops, the groups/ individuals who presented them and the distributions that were present, on our website: <http://www.aro.ecobytes.net/lovekills/>. The importance of this festival will be seen in the future - if it will have continuity. People must be informed about women issues and about the struggle that must be done to solve these issues. It is impossible to be anarchist without being feminist! The struggle for women's liberation must be the fight against the State which is the guardian and shield of patriarchal society, of capitalism, of all hierarchy and injustice of the world. (This was the main idea of LoveKills Collective, when we decided to organize this fest).

OUR GOAL IS A SOCIETY FOR THE INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM !!!



WOMAN THE ENEMY OF THE STATE

Throughout history the woman has been the victim of the conflicts, real conflicts or invented by the State. I am saying this because the State is exploiting the violence and hatred between people. But when the State couldn't justify its own existence any longer, it had to create itself the conflicts so that it could stop them. The most powerful tool of the State is the army, but if there would be no war the army should be dissolved, this is how the conflict is being made up inside the State (or external conflicts, fictional ones such as the war against terrorism), so that people can forever suffer from the illness of „fear“. Fear of „anti-socials“, fear of minorities, fear of those with other colour of the skin, fear of neighbours, fear of women.

The woman was systematically tortured, humiliated, being ascribed the most dreadful sins of the world. During Inquisition times, „the witches“ were accused of „copulation with the Devil“, this is why the torturers were looking for specific marks all over their bodies. They were verified by the inquisitors even inside the vagina, they were looking for the „Devil's sign“ in the most intimate areas. The case of the „witches“ was refunded in paranoid forms in the XXth century; maintaining though the formerly motivation: „the body of women is an instrument for political and social exorcism of the Evil“. The women started to be systematically identified as „enemies“ of governments, especially in Latin America. They became, in certain places, the predilection targets of repression, the torturers were pursuing the intentional decline of the woman submitted to torture, being forced to pass from the „Madonna“ status to the one of the „whore“.



The torturers were perusing the humiliation of woman in front of those which she was supposed to protect (usually the children), especially to deny her "Virgin"-like nature. Given the fact that she was a prolongation of man, whom she was blacking out, the woman was tortured as a man would be. But in her case the torture was much more orientated towards annihilation of female identity, through aggression of female anatomy, especially in cases of group-rape, the metamorphosis wanted by the authorities - the woman was no longer holy, but repeatedly impurified.

The tortured body of woman, as it is presented in the XXth



century, must be as well seen in regard to patriarchal mentality according to which the woman is above all subject to offence. In the end, any kind of torture is a rape, not only a sexual torture. The sexualization of torture is based on the traditional idea of dominance: the patriarchal order and the function of masculinity. Out of the numerous types of rape that were classified, the one specific to the torturer is the domination rape, even if sometimes it goes together with the sadist rape. Rape is

a double torture: first because it is hurting as any kind of torture and secondly because it represents the supreme humiliation.

The strength of a torturer could be measured (this perverted cult of masculinity is saying) through his abilities of rapist, as a predator of women. Rape as torture is a test for verifying virility and omnipotence. But punitive rape is seen as a duty as well, as a legal right of the torturer, since he is the Man.

The idea of torture-rape is more evident though in the case of women. When the torturer is punishing a man, he doesn't feel the distinction of the body, but the one of status, because the body of the one who is being punished is a duplicate of the torturer's body. Whereas the body of the female victim has the distinction and in this way it is vulnerable. The female body is even more a defiance and a challenge that must be punished, since it is something different from the body of the torturer. From the physical point of view, it is everything that the torturer can not be: it is the "stranger" and the "opposite". This is the reason why

Romania people don't have a very positive reaction when they meet the word "feminism" in general but mostly when they see the word "anarcha-feminism", but maybe this is because people have misconceptions or don't know at all what's this about. This is in fact the aim of the festival: to make anarcha-feminism known in Romania. Very few people from Romania (especially from Timisoara) came for the workshops, most of them came for the after-party.

This is how the festival went on:

Friday, 6th of July. Most of the people who announced their participation arrived safely or with some strange experiences on their way through. The first day of the festival started just a little bit later than planned, but this was fine with everybody, since we are not at school! and don't have to keep up with a rigid timetable. So it all started around 13 o'clock with "UNMARKED CATEGORIES AND THE QUESTION OF POWER", after this first workshop we had a break for a delicious vegan meal and then continued with some JUGGLING activities outside and then the group discussion on "GLOBAL AND LOCAL SEXISM". The last discussion group was about: "STATE-MODERN FASCISM" but some other additional discussions on migration and institutionalized violence. For the first day we just skipped the movies because the last discussion finished around 22 o'clock. There were also a few workshops which were cancelled from different reasons. After a day full of information and discussions people had fun at the party, dancing, changing experiences and opinions or just chatting around our bar.

Saturday, 7th of July. The second day started also later than previewed with the "MYTHS AND REALITIES: HUMAN TRAFFICKING"

workshop, being followed by another delicious vegan meal. "EXPERIENCE AND POLITICS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE" was the next discussion group and the day ended with "BARBIE - SMILE IN PLASTIC" workshop. After all the workshops were finished, we took five minutes to say a good-bye word and to greet everybody and thank to all the people who were there and who made it possible to happen and also ask some opinions so that we can do it better next time. For the second night we thought that some good movies and



support and sensitivity to the issue and to what we wanted to do just for a few hours and going back (because they had to), receiving so much energy and positive feed-back from the people from other countries who were completely not at all familiar with the scene in Romania, we really appreciated their support and solidarity.

We enjoyed very much the place, the atmosphere – most of the time, the connections that were established between people, the flexibility of the program and of those who presented the workshops, the vegan meals, the camping, the sunlight and the sunset, the “temporary autonomous bar”, the party, the late night movies.

From the discussions we’ve had with people (especially those from Romania) who came and showed their interest on the workshops and group discussions, we think that the effort was definitely worthwhile and that all in all the festival had a quit strong impact on the scene. This made us think about the next year festival, having now a background we hope to avoid the aspects that made it so difficult (and sometimes unpleasant) this year.

Our perspective on how things developed around this festival is for sure 100% subjective and personal, but we preferred to present it this way since we definitely consider that our personal is and will always be political!!!

Bellow you have a short description of the festival: where, when and how it happened:

Lovekills festival took place on 6th and 7th July near Timisoara (West of Romania). The location was an airfield, 2 kilometers away from the city. It was a huge space where we had a big room from workshops, showers, camping and parking space and a huge space for outside activities. LoveKills festival was the first anarcha-feminist event where the focus was not on (punk) concerts, but on workshops and pragmatic discussions. This is maybe why not so many people showed their interest in this fest.

There were about 50 people attending, coming from Austria, Germany, Croatia, Ukraine, Greece, UK and some from Romania.



the female body is much more violated than the one of the man, this is the reason why the torture is sexualized, and the woman is implicitly humiliated, not only tortured.

A long time before the conflict in Bosnia, in the second half of the XXth century, the rapes that the women from Latin America were subjected to, have shown that the raped bodies of these women have become “political target”: on one side it was about a demonstration of the Power and on the other side there were psychological components like the idea of “award” or “war robbery” offered to the torturer soldiers. When the authorities themselves were stimulating the soldiers for raping, than it was about “psycho-sexual control”.



Klaus Theweleit is analyzing the mental structure of the proto-fascist man, to understand which are the roots of his warrior mystics and is showing that his native violence is coming from the fear and hatred towards femininity. One of the essential observations of the author is the one that shows that even though the language of the proto-fascist man was symbolically a sexual one, the Nazi system will plead for an anti-erotic tendency at its mystic level.

Theweleit is focusing on the masculine identity of the German proto-fascist soldier, to radiograph inside it the clenching between two dimensions perceived as cultural and psychological matrixes: the masculine one, threatened by disintegration and dissolution and the feminine one. The working demonstrations of revolt in which the women were used as living shields in front of the mass of men, blacked out behind them, were representing, the Freikorps, the terrifying image of an aggressive – vagina dentata – for the repressive apparatus.



Thus, the proto-fascist men have built up a phallic machinery, a function that later on was taken over by the members of Latin-American Juntas; this machinery was ideologically instrumented by the mystics of the super-man in the first case and by the

the machismo in the second one. But if the Freikorps man and the later fascist haven't tinted the psychological war against the feminine dimension, than the Argentinean torturer have revolted against two instances of clear identity: the maternal and the "subversives".

Klaus Theweleit is inventorying the frights that haunted the members of Freikorps, out of which a lot of famous Nazis will come out. The biggest fright was the one operated by the "red woman", the Bolshevik, the only one able to devour the Freikorps men, under the pattern of the ogre-woman. She is often projected as a "whore" who deserves to be tortured and killed: the proletarian woman represented, symbolically, a disgraceful gender which scared them and in the same time was challenging the proto-fascist men. The Bolshevik spartakist women were proven to be "castrators" since they were "females with penis" (in psychoanalytic language), hiding fire guns under their skirts.

During Inquisition time, the women were decreed "witches" and seductive, in MALEUS MALEFICARUM it was written that they were imperfect, liars, disappointing and inferior to men. The torturers of the XXth century would take over some of these ideas, adapting though, the "vices" of women to the context of the repressive system in question. There is a specific category, that of medusa "lioness" (warrior and horrifying), who whether were part of the proletarian category or not, they were "females with penises". In Argentina, where the machismo of Juntas has worked inclusively on ideological level, women were not respected by the torturers whether because they were "red women", or because they were on the position of accusing mothers. The torturer was "castrating" these women (most usually through rape), because they were the substitutes of their husbands. In Chile and Argentina most of the "subversives" have identified themselves with their missing men to such an extent that they literally became virile.



them and asking them as a group/individual to come and take part to our festival. The same happened to other activists who were expecting a more direct/personal calling.

While organizing this festival (from the moment it was conceived through it's happening and till it ended) we have met strange reactions from some of the people who got involved and intended to help us. Exercising their power, being arrogant, trying to intimidate us or ignoring our position towards how this festival should be from our point of view; all these when some of us were quite vulnerable due to stress and the pressure that was overcoming from everywhere.

It was the first time we were organizing a festival with international participation, so most of the experiences regarding organizing a festival were first-time experiences for us. Too many reproaches, when it shouldn't "OUR" (the collective, but it should be responsibility of son who was there one of the organizers or just visitors)...if we still we believe in diy not at all like this, ask people (from insistently to help with different things like cooking, picking up people that were coming from other countries, cleaning up the place and so on....



We also had to deal at some point with some "manarchists" who under the influence of alcohol were disgustingly acting like total "dudes". It was the most obvious situation that the scene sucks! And still the ignorant ones refused to see it!!!

The really good parts are still having a greater impact. Fortunately there were enough positive aspects that came out of this festival in the end. Like seeing new people getting involved, younger ones who showed their interest in anarcha-feminist issues, having friends who traveled 16 hours just to show their

LOVEKILLS FESTIVAL 2 REPORT

Organizing LoveKills Festival was by far the biggest challenge for LoveKills Collective until now. Considering the fact that the collective is split up in 3 different cities, putting our ideas in practice, coordinating and mostly communicating is quite difficult each time.

LoveKills Fest #2 was the greatest achievement for our collective and hopefully for the anarcha-feminist scene (though we believe there is no such scene, but maybe this will be a good start). Comparing to the first edition of LoveKills Fest, this year we have finally managed to organize a festival as we really imagined it to be. Meaning based on workshops and discussions, more info regarding feminist issues and not only on punk concerts, drinking, having fun and wasting your head with a bunch of posters on the wall, about the struggles of women around the world, and nobody talking about this or giving a shit that this should be a space where no sexism/racism/macho-ism is accepted (aspect which we wanted to avoid this second edition).

The problems we have had during organizing the festival and its happening were somehow expected, we knew how the diy scene in our place is, but that's why we decided in fact that this kind of event would be really useful. One of the biggest "surprise" was that most of the boys in the scene not only that they didn't want to show up at the festival but they didn't show any interest on it from the begging. Instead they were very ignorant and considered it "a waste of time" (as the whole anarcha-feminist issue). We've met the same reaction from a lot of girls as well. Most of the girls not only that they are not close to anarcha-feminism, but paradoxically they disdain and despise it.

One very important thing to mention is the reaction of some girls/groups of girls who consider themselves close to feminism or even feminist. These girls showed no interest on the festival, or on what we are doing in general, because we didn't contact them personally, meaning we didn't send them the invitation naming

UNMARKED CATEGORIES and the question of power

some anarcha-feminist notes
erinyen collective Berlin erinye@riseup.net

This is an ode to a Berlin "anarchist" collective of my past. I am sure, many have made similar experiences of being in collectives which at one point don't meet the same ideas oneself would affiliate with anarchism and working together in collectives, which are supposed to be based on anti-authoritarian standards. Well it sometimes becomes quite disillusioning after all those years, seeing the same stuff happening again and again. People remain in collectives, becoming one of the subordinated parts (you know how it is - planning collective actions, where a part is always cooking, cleaning, carrying around the stuff, building up the tables, technical stuff, painting banners and so on, while some other enjoy much more, always just to arrive in time to present themselves, putting their person in 'scene' while others have built it up) or stay because of the benefits they assume from being part of a 'famous' collective. While becoming more and more frustrated, many people only get their anger and frustration about dominant people out, behind their backs, but remain in their damn subordinated position. Moaning about other peoples actions and behaviour, but not realizing that a great deal also lies with them. If you want to change the power relations in a certain collective, because people have the impression that it is unequal or dominating, it's not the only solution that people withdraw from their power (which is hard enough to communicate and achieve), it also needs people who are willing to take up responsibilities for themselves, without being fuckin lead by someone or ascribed work loads by others. Well in some collectives people become one of the silenced part, because questioning authority becomes a vital threat, if you are surrounded by people who rather put their heads down than confronting people who are insulting or silencing others. I started to write this text with a focus on power, as well as the connected issue of various forms of constraint on human

action, to put my personal experiences in a broader context. Of course, even if I tell myself, I don't surrender to your damn rules, assumptions, ego games and power seeking behaviour, it has a personal impact if oneself is getting insulted, intimidated and made shut up, for criticizing dominant behaviour or hidden hierarchies. Especially if the majority of a collective remains openly silent on this, rather making the choice of criticizing hidden behind the back of the person who is insulting others, not confronting authoritarian behaviour over and over again, or giving time and space for the explanation and excuses of this person, rather than considering to give at least the same time and space for the people who were insulted. So what does it make? It makes you feel insecure, losing trust in people, avoiding places not to be confronted with the same people. It takes time to find your self-esteem, your place, your courage and your voice again in order to say, mean and live up to 'NEVER SURRENDER'.

So here it goes:



Power itself appears in a relational way: one cannot meaningfully say that a particular person 'has power' without also specifying the role of other people in the social collective. Also power very often runs reciprocally, but usually not with equal reciprocity. To exercise power over people, one must have control over things that others desire or need, but one can rarely exercise that power without a measure of reverse control. Of course in anarchist collectives power exists, which is not

necessarily bad in itself. But we have to distinguish between the various forms of power and power as such. Unlike power, hierarchical power relations are always based on social systems of command and obedience, whatever concrete expressions these may take. Hierarchies are structures, where the dominant part enjoys a privileged and coercive position towards the subordinate part which according to this social logic must subdue their will and obey (however subtly or unconsciously).

Power may be held through social class, personal or group charisma, ascribed power (acting on perceived or assumed abilities),

Princess Alexandrina's feminism is not only encaging women in the traditional roles of the patriarchal society but moreover it is highly poisoned by xenophobia, racism and ethnical patriotism. She claims that women contributed more than ethnic minorities to the nation-building process. Thus conceptualization of women's rights is made in contradiction with that of minorities' rights. In her speeches, Princess Cantacuzino promotes an assimilation of minorities (especially through means of education and culture). The greatest fear was that, if not controlled, ethnic minorities would build a state within the Romanian state (the same motif appears in her writings that discuss the role of the Catholic Church in Romanian society as opposed to that of the Romanian Orthodox Church).

Her frenetic ethnical patriotism goes on to the point of focusing on the preservation of those innate characteristics considered specific to women belonging to the 'Latin race' such as devotion to family, love of tradition, and respect for nation. She also sees the emancipation of women in terms of its subordination to the higher interests of the nation.

Princess Alexandrina's discourse is mainly focusing on the women's potential to operate a desired moral, religious and even ethnic purification of the nation. The woman, as the entire nation, has to regard as enemy everything is considered to be foreign and dangerous for the unity and purity of the nation. The means to fight against this 'enemy', are provided by education, work, religiosity and morality. Therefore, the school, the church and the family are considered vital for the nation.

As I mentioned above, I find this study case very actual to the nowadays context and significantly suitable to the discourse of the 21st century Romanian feminism. The only differentiating aspect would be that the emphasize is not any longer on building the nation, but on preserving the moral and religious traditions of the nation.

Orthodoxism is keeping women silent, submissive and uneducated.

"The Bible and the Church have been the greatest stumbling blocks in the way of women's emancipation."

- * fighting for the preservation of national values
- * and educating the masses through culture, the aim being to 'awake a feminist spirit in the consciousness of the masses'

Princess Alexandrina advocated emancipation of women, but this emancipation was seen only in relation to the reformation of society and nation in a moral/religious sense. The fight for women's rights was built on traditionalist and nationalist discourses, her feminism is based on the demands of nationalist projects from the view point of the woman as mother and citizen (woman is the "mother of nation"; the role of women in society interferes with the need for preservation of the traditional women's roles in society to ensure the nation).

Mother-tualized as a the woman into scribed gender and even denying choice and liberally it is conceived as a achieve an in society and a life - her status as not only to duties but also to rights



perpetuation of the hood is not conceivable of engaging the submissive pre-roles, restricting her freedom of ties, but paradoxicalized as a way to autonomous status role in the political mother entitles her and responsibilities and authorities.

The woman is conceived as the central factor in the national development - she can either help or ruin the national development given her great moral and ethical influence over the family. When Princess Alexandrina was attending an international meeting of women, and a member from Greece of the International Council brought up to discussion the reproductive and sexual rights of women, the princess closed the subject motivating that the right to abortion was a crime, a foreign concept, and not appropriate to "the European traditions, laws and rhythm of development".

Woman has to be regarded as an important social and political factor in the 'healthy' development of the nation, because women are the preserves of tradition and Romanian spirituality and the stable point in the societal and spiritual chaos (women are symbols of morality and pacifism and **educators of the nation**).

education (ability, skills), persuasion (direct or indirect), knowledge (granted or withheld, shared or kept secret), resources (financial, control of access to places), force (violence, coercion)... It could be also distinguished between 'power-over' (influence on other people) from 'power-to' (ability to perform).

The powerful comprise those people with easy access to resources, those who can exercise power without considering their actions. The unmarked category can form the identifying mark of the powerful. The unmarked category becomes the standard against which to measure everything else. One can often overlook unmarked categories. Whiteness forms an unmarked category, in many parts of the world, not comonly visible to the powerful, as they often fall within this category. Anarchist ten also fall trap to this view of power and dis- to gender and dis- body is the neutral outside of what is body; the man is the normal status. it is too thin, it is too fat, it is crippled, it is mad, it is unpredictable.



Because anarchism is purported to oppose all usage of power and forms of oppression the term anarcha-feminsim should actually be unnecessary. All anarchists should, if they really meant what they said about being against all forms of oppression, work against, or at least not support, the oppression of women. That's theoretically. However, our reality is that we are all products of our social surroundings. It is also a fact that those who find themselves in a hierarchical position of power have a hard time accepting that a hierarchy even exists. Men do not recognise the oppression of women to the same extent or to the same degree that women do. Those who have power and privilege are in addition, often unwilling to abandon these. Or people who claim to support equality have not actively confronted others on their dominating or harassing behaviour. Many male anarchists have not activated themselves in the struggle against the oppression of women and it has become necessary for female anarchists to signify themselves as anarcha-feminists.



If enough people accept 'common categories' based on unmarked categories learned through socialization, then these people exercise power by defining right from wrong and who, or what, is 'normal'. It is a subtle form of power: easier to overlook than power enforced by violence, hard to resist because it is all about 'normalization'. Many people simply do not seem to have any comprehension what it means to grow up as be-

ing different from the socially constructed dominant norm in society, which is largely hostile to your own sense of self and to your very existence. Even among anarchists it takes some effort to understand the experience of those who are different in some fundamental way, just to name gender, ableness, sexual orientation and/or ethnicity. We do not grow up or live in a vacuum; we grow up and live in a particular society at a particular time. All of us are influenced in countless ways by the world in which we live. You really think you are so special not to be affected by it?

The unmarked categories of privilege known as 'normal': If you are straight, white, able-bodied, mid-twenties to mid-forties person, you are as 'normal' as it gets. It also means you overwhelmingly occupy the main spaces, even if you are not falling in all of those unmarked categories. It also means, not always practiced active discrimination, but active inattention. What does it mean to speak and act as a privileged person? It means that you don't see a lot of stuff because you never experienced it or had to see it.

Often there is a 'masculinity' culture around anarchism that some people feel alienated from. Especially patriarchy teaches people, that they are entitled to other people's bodies, to take up space and to put their ideas and thoughts out there whenever they want to, without consideration for others. These issues bring about disempowerment not only for women, but for many men who cannot or do not want to live up to this 'masculinity' stereotype. This is a very different socialization than other people experience who are told to shut up, keep it to themselves, hide who they really are, get out of the way and to never forget how lucky they are to be allowed here.

Gender is a process of social construction, a system of social stratification, and an institution that structures every aspect of

tional ones.

- In 1910 she started building up the National Orthodox Society of Romanian Women (*Societatea Ortodoxa Nationala a Femeilor Romane*), a Christian Orthodox women's charity society, society which was the become the hugest one in Romania, by 1937 it had 57 branches all over the country.

- She was also the president of Romanian Women's Association (*Gruparea Femeilor Romane*), founded in 1928,

the president of Romanian National Council of Women (*umbrella organization for most romanian feminist and women's organizations and branch of the International Council of Women*), founded in 1921,

- the president of The "Solidarity" Society (*Societatea "Solidaritatea"*), founded in 1925,

- member of The Association "Woman's House" (*Asociatia "Casa Femeii"*), founded in 1928,

- takes part in building up the foundation "The Little Entente of Women" (*international organization of women from Romania, Greece, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Poland*), established in 1923.

- Other international organizations membership



All these organizations were based on the Christian orthodox and nationalist ideology and their agenda regarded mainly:

- * moral and religious education of the nation and especially education of women in the spirit of Christian Orthodox religious values in order to ensure a morally healthy future for the nation. (Alexandrina Cantacuzino claims that The National Council of Romanian Women was born out of a national necessity - it aims to inculcate in future mothers' consciousness the Romanian national ideals and religious concepts that will secure the continuity in the preservation and exploitation of national traditions).
- * building up hundreds of education establishments (many of them for children with special needs), churches, workers' and students' restaurants, hospitals (all these under the patronage of the orthodox church),
- * giving public lectures aiming to educate people in a moral, national and religious spirit,
- * fighting for women's political and civil rights (from the "maternalist" perspective) and educating women in order for them to be able practicing those rights once achieved

The church is the one and only authority in the village, it is governing people's lives, not only in the religious way, but it is involved in all the other aspects, it interferes socially, culturally, politically and even economically in the community dynamics. It is even more alarming when you think that the rural population is almost half of the Romanian population (45.1%). Eventually the priest was convicted for 14 years of jail. In his defense the lawyer of the priest has used arguments such as: exorcism is a wide spread practice all over the country and similar rituals of exorcism are happening all the time with the approval and guidance of the B.O.R.

Christian feminism

It is undisputable for me that church is the worst enemy of women's emancipation and that the bible is the root of the absolute oppression of women. This point of view is unfortunately not so widespread in the feminist movement. Very few critiques of the church are met in women studies, I would say that it is completely missing from the mainstream feminism and sadly rarely seen even in the most radical feminist approaches.

In this context I would like to discuss the portrait of one of the most important feminist figures of the interwar Romania, princess Alexandrina. I chose to debate this portrait because I find it is of particular actuality nowadays, it is a Christian-national feminism that was very popular one century ago, but prevailed and is characteristic for today's feminist discourse.

Princess Alexandrina Cantacuzino (1876-1944) is one of the greatest figures in the emerging Romanian feminist movement from the beginning of the 20th century. Most of her life she had dedicated to Christian charity and social work; her career and popularity were highly facilitated by her social status which in turn was provided by her husband's aristocratic background and political influence (Grigore Gheorghe Cantacuzino was an important conservative politician of those times). She advocated for the women's rights, but only from an orthodox-traditionalist point of view and her feminist thoughts were highly correlated to nationalism, as she envisioned women emancipation in the context of "spiritual revival of the nation".

Princess Alexandrina founded numerous national organizations for "women's rights" and was on the board of many other interna-

our lives because of its embeddedness in the current system, as well as in dominant sexuality, language and culture. Well even in anarchist/autonomous settings it is quite difficult for men and women to stay outside the discourse of heterosexual masculinity/femininity. If a female with a Mohawk, tattoos, piercing, dressed in tight shirt, mini-skirt and boots, might be considered a rebellious person outside of the 'norm' from society, how do you think she might be interpreted when entering an illegilized bar in a squat, where she is not known? Maybe as displaying availability to males in an anarchist surrounding, ready for being 'checked out' or rather as a political activist for interesting political discussions? Did you ever wonder what functions some 'dress codes' have? Why are there still so many differences between female and male dressing in the anarchist 'scene'? How would a male anarchist be viewed if he chooses to wear mini-skirts? Why do some guys always have to take their shirts off, as soon as they are in public and it's not raining or full of snow? With enough experiences of women in autonomous places who have their personal space violated by men who block their paths, stand too close, use a too intimate and insulting language, crude remarks, hearing others rate women's bodies like "nice ass", being groped or rubbed up against..., you can imagine that it has an impact on their behaviour. For some it might be necessary to form autonomous female only spaces, in order to breathe freely for a change. For others it means a constant fight against dominant gender assumptions, arguments and proving that you are equal in mixed surroundings. Privileges for men, whether they protect, threaten or aggress, are seldom analysed in a constant manner. Patriarchy is a dominant reality in our world, so much that many people cannot imagine any other way of organizing human life. Gender and sexuality are major components of structured inequality and discrimination. Of course the reality of family life is quite different from the sentimental ideal. Anarchists generally do not hold with conventional marriage. It is not acceptable that it is any business of the church or the State what people do with their sexual relationships. True emotional security for both children and adults is less likely to be found in a legally enforceable and artificially 'permanent' tie between two people of either



sex, than it is in a wider network of relationships that may or may not have a sexual component. The dominant forms of socialization keep people at an emotional distance from other people. As such it creates also some intense forms of loneliness and separation, often viewed to be resolved in terms of romance. Nevertheless it permeates other realms of relationships as well, from families to friendships. The dominant course in the current society constructs loneliness and separation in terms of lack-of-romance, rather than as lack of mutual connection to others in general. It is put forward that romance (and/or sex) is something that human beings ought to have, whereas other sorts of close emotional relationships people might have with others aren't valued as much.

As a consequence friends may not romantic relation- a sense of belonging- and power (to cases). The dis- theory and prac- advocacy of eq- tually more con- when it comes to be found every- chist 'scene'. The become the stan- measure every- also inside the an- Anarcha-feminism



thinking things through, especially experiences which have forced a submissive role upon me. Experiences where I have been taught that women are/should be weaker, that women should look a certain way and that women are just valued because of their bodies as well as sex. Yet how can we keep away how we've been taught throughout our lives and all those forces around us now from affecting us? How can we know if/when we're really free from our socialization, from what we've been taught, what had been ingrained in us, and the pressure we feel socially, collectively or from the closest persons around us? What unmarked categories are still remaining around us - even 'masked' in the anarchist 'scene' -holding people back, dominating or silencing

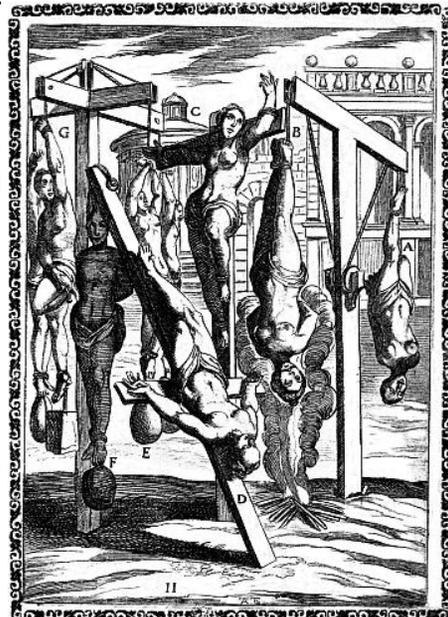
relationships with feel the same as a ship, creating as well ing, ownership, secu- be misused in many crepancy between ualitarianism and ac- ventional behaviour relationships, can still where in the anar- unmarked categories dard against which to thing else, of course anarchist 'scene'.

means for me also,

danger, a real threat to women's emancipation...well, those who are satisfied with this kind of arguments seem to be ignoring the fact that 100% of this vast majority are living in extremely oppressive patriarchal family and environments, guiding all of their values and aims in life according to Christian morality, which is socially and culturally inherited, and thus deeply engrained in their subconsciousness. All the hierarchies and male-woman / superior-inferior dichotomy are present in their lives, this is the role model of the family, all these are coming from the orthodox teachings and Christian morality.

The exorcism of Irina Cornici

The cruel madness and tyranny of the orthodox church is not to be found only in discrimination and oppression of women in any kind, it doesn't stop here, it goes up to torturing and killing in cold blood. In June 2005 in a monastery from the N-E Romania, a priest assisted by 4 nuns killed a young woman by crucifying her. Under the pretext that she was possessed by the devil, their Christian duty guided them in spearing her soul and applied on her a ritual of exorcism. They bound the young woman with chains on a wooden cross, blocked her mouth with a gag and left her immobilized with no possibility of feeding, hydrating or moving, conditions which lead to her painful death after three days. What the orthodox priest and nuns identified as the devil occupying the young woman's soul were in fact the symptoms of the emotional disorder, the girl had been previously diagnosed with and the priests were aware of it . The whole village and the rest of the nuns and priests from the monastery have declared solidarity with the murderers and expressed their gratefulness for saving them from the devil. The reaction of the community is alarming, since it is characteristic for the people's blind worshipping of the orthodox church.



the first day of menstruation, or if she is to receive the baptism and this would coincide with the menstruation, the process is canceled.

If a woman is pregnant she is not allowed to enter the church until she is subjected to some cleansing religious services. If a woman is giving birth to a male child she will be unclean for three weeks, but if she is giving birth to a female child she is going to be unclean for six weeks. Thus the future female is stigmatized before she is even born and she is in turn stigmatizing the mother twice, first because she is giving birth to a child and secondly because the child is female.



The marriage has the aim of encouraging procreation (which later on will determine once more the filthiness of woman) and preventing debauch and harlotry. When she is getting married, the priest is teaching the woman "to submit to man, because man is the head of woman" and "to fear man". Thus woman is changing the authority she had been subjected to all her life, before the marriage - the one of the father, to the new one - the one of the husband. If the woman had sexual intercourse before marriage without the approval of the father, she is whore (harlot), and even after the marriage she will live under the sign of harlotry. As for the woman who is committing adultery, she will be sent away by her husband. The reciprocal situation is not valid, the woman is going to keep the man who is committing adultery.

It is often argued that even if 86,8% of Romanians are registered as belonging to orthodox confession, an almost insignificant percentage of them are actually practicing orthodoxism. This is true only if you are looking after who is in fact going regularly to church, celebrating orthodox holidays, respecting the orthodox restrains and so on. The vast majority of these 86,8% Romanians are rarely passing by church, neglecting the holidays and restrictions, these are the so called "Sunday Christians", occasional ones, opportunists and in this way they do not represent a great

others? Calling yourself an anarchist/autonomous doesn't excuse you from responsibility over your own daily relationships with other people. How we choose to treat each other goes to the core of what we hope to accomplish. Must we always establish and follow new informal hierarchies in our collectives based on who is more popular or stronger versus who is unpopular and out of the 'scenes' mainstream? People cannot participate equally if they are not free to be and express themselves. Tolerance begins with the acknowledgement that people other than ourselves may see things differently than we do, and suspending judgment while those with whom we may disagree or whose point of view we may not understand are given a forum to explain their perspective and are actively listened to. The unmarked/marked categories need to be acknowledged more often, as well as the silences, protections and denials surrounding privilege/power/dominance.

The true focus of revolutionary change is never merely the oppressive situations which we seek to escape, but the piece of the oppressor or the repressed which is planted deep within each of us.



The Experience and Politics of Rape

Rape, along with being a terrible trauma, happens on a massive scale, and affects victims on many different levels. There is a lot of disagreement about what rape is, how widespread it is, why it happens, how it affects victims and whether it is a political phenomenon, specifically, an instance of patriarchal oppression. Although a high number of men and children experience rape, I will concentrate here on how it is experienced by women, since the vast majority of rapes are perpetrated against women, and it is also what I know most about.

What is rape and how widespread is it?

Definitions of rape vary, but groups working to support women in surviving attacks all agree that any coerced sexual activity is rape. The law very rarely has as broad a definition, and in Romania, for example, only coerced penetrative sex can be described as rape. Coerced oral sex is described by law as "sexual perversion", which implies a judgement of the activity itself, rather than of the presence of coercion. The Rape Crisis UK website notes that:

- 1 in 4 women in the UK have experienced rape or attempted rape,
- 1 in 7 have been coerced into sex, specifically, rising to 1 in 3 among divorced and separated women.
- The most common perpetrators of rape are husbands and partners
- 97% of callers to the Rape Crisis line knew their attacker
- Only 6% of reported rapes get criminally convicted

ORTHODOX CHURCH AND THE OPPRESSION OF WOMEN

"No institution in modern civilization is so tyrannical and so unjust to women as it is the Christian Church. It demands everything from her and gives nothing in return. The history of the Church does not contain a single suggestion for the equality of women... Though tyranny and falsehood alone is Christianity able to hold women in subjection."

The inferiority imposed on women for centuries is a direct result of the misogyny preached by the bible. The start point of this hatred towards women was the invention of the "Eve Myth" and from this point on the biblical texts are absurdly trying to prove the inferiority of women through lousy stratagems making use of the effect terror and fear have on human rationality. Fear and hatred of women were built on the devilish image of woman, the source of all misfortunes on earth, the evil in itself.

Here are some very few excerpts from biblical texts:

"Women should remain silent in churches. They are not allowed to speak; but must be in submission as the Law says." (I Cor. 14:34-35)

"A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner." (I Tim. 2:11-14)

"The head of every man is Christ, and the head of every woman is man." (I Cor. 11:3)

"For man did not come from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man." (I Cor. 11:8-9)

And here are only few of the real orthodox practices:

Women's fertility is regarded as something filthy. Whether it is about menstruation or pregnancy. If a woman is menstruating she is not allowed to enter the church for seven days from the

supposedly proving the existence of natural differences between men and women, and people are all too willing to forget basic mathematic principles in order to surrender to such a well-ordered world. Namely, arbitrarily dividing humanity into two sets (male and female) based on a very limited number of characteristics will invariably produce different averages for each set. People who do not know that an average does not express, but obscures, the diversity within a set happily declare these two sets to be natural categories and continue to make people feel like they are unnatural and abnormal if they do not fall close to the average of their set (God forbid they fall closer to the average of the other set. Let's pause for a moment to drink a toast to the impartiality of Science!)

In constraining women to nonviolence, it seems that pacifist feminists must also constrain our definition of women's "values and resources", thus defining which traits are essentially feminine, locking women into a role that is falsely named natural, and shutting out people who do not fit that role.

It is hard to tell how many feminists today accept the premises of essentialism, but it seems that a large number of rank-and-file feminists do not accept the idea that feminism and nonviolence are or must be inherently linked. On one discussion board, dozens of self-identified feminists responded to the question, Is there a link between nonviolence and feminism? A majority of respondents, some pacifist, many not, expressed the belief that feminists do not need to support nonviolence. One message summed it up: "There is still a substantial strain in feminism that links women with nonviolence. But there are also a lot of feminists out there, myself included, who don't want to see ourselves automatically linked to one stance (that is, nonviolence) merely because of our genitalia or our feminism."

(excerpt from HOW NONVIOLENCE PROTECTS THE STATE – Peter Gelderloos)

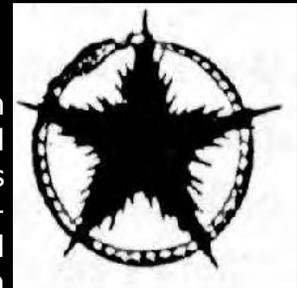


Many women who are coerced into sex without overt violence or threats do not consider themselves to have been raped, and so experience a good deal of guilt and personal regret. This can happen where coercion is more subtle, such as where the woman is not left alone to sleep until she consents to sex, and she finally consents out of exhaustion. Whenever one person is not interested in a sexual act, and the other is aware of this but persists anyway, it is rape. Additional violence is not necessary to the definition, since it is violent in itself. The statistics above demonstrate how extremely widespread rape is, and it is highly likely that if you haven't experienced rape yourself, then at least one woman you know has.

The experience from the victim's perspective

The way people experience rape varies from person to person. It is an individual thing and depends on what the nature of the rape was (subtly coercive or life-threatening, by a partner or a stranger etc), and on the individual victim and her circumstances. As such, I can only describe the way that I experienced it. Like many women, I have had more than one coercive sexual experience. However, the one that created the most marked trauma was a particularly violent attack. I will focus here on the levels of trauma I experienced, rather than what actually happened to me, but a very brief description will help understanding of my response.

I was attacked in the daytime by someone I didn't know. He managed to get me to go with him to his isolated house on the pretext of asking me to take something to the village where I was staying. When I got there he propositioned me, and then when I refused and tried to leave he blocked my way, pushed me into his bedroom and held me down on the floor. When I screamed and struggled he told me he would produce a knife if I didn't shut up and do what he said. I stopped struggling but continued to resist, begging, offering him money, appealing to his conscience, and finally telling him I had HIV. It was when I told him this that he changed his mind about forcing me into penetrative sex and settled for oral sex, after which he let me go. During the course of my resistance to the attack he punched me and started strangling



me a number of times, and I was left with bruises. It was the bruises that, in a sense, I was thankful for, because they meant that I was believed about the attack. For many women, no marks are left, so it's their word against the attackers, and many are not believed.

My response to the attack was complex. Part of it was a response to a life-threatening event. I had been convinced that the attacker might well kill me, and I knew that no-one could hear me scream, so I felt helpless to prevent my death. I saw the attacker as someone who had complete power over me. This was a major part of the trauma. Facing death in this way is terrifying partly because of the struggle of our animal instinct to survive, and also because of the sense of helplessness, and the feeling that another being has the power of life and death over you.

The fact that my life was threatened, on the other hand, meant I did not have to go through the guilt and self-blame that so many women experience after an attack. I felt very sure that I had done all I reasonably could to prevent it, and took courage from the fact that my persistent resistance had diminished the level of attack. While being forced into oral sex is also horrific, it seemed to me a lesser trauma than forced penetrative sex (perhaps because it is easier to distance oneself from this act), and certainly carries less risk in terms of pregnancy and disease. My struggle helped a great deal in my emotional and mental survival of the attack. Arguably, however, it might have put my life in greater danger. Many women who are raped submit at the first threat of force to the demands of their attacker. These women often torture themselves with what might have happened had they resisted, believing the attack to be their fault because they "gave in". However, to submit to a threat is a valid and common instinctive response to danger, as numerous psychologists and zoologists have noted. It might have saved the life of some of those women. Because each attacker is different and capable of different things, it is impossible to know whether one should fight back or not. Often our instincts are our best defense, and they will guide us through.



King's SCLC, whereas women (for example, Elaine Brown) at times held the top positions in the Black Panther Party (BPP). Yet it is the BPP, and not the SCLC, that is held up as the paragon of machismo, Kathleen Cleaver rebuts, "In 1970, the Black Panther Party took a formal position on the liberation of women. Did the US Congress ever make any statement on the liberation of women?" Frankye Malika Adams, another Panther, said, "Women ran the BPP pretty much. I don't know how it got to be a male's party or thought of as being a male's party." In resurrecting a truer history of the Black Panther Party, Mumia Abu-Jamal documents what was, in some ways, "a woman's party".

There is, however, a great deal of feminist literature that denies the empowering (and historically important) effects of militant struggle on women's and other movements, offering instead a pacifist feminism. Pacifist feminists point to the sexism and machismo of certain militant liberation organizations, which we should all acknowledge and address. Arguing against nonviolence and in favor of a diversity of tactics should not at all imply a satisfaction with the strategies or cultures of past militant groups (for example, the macho posturing of the Weather Underground or the anti-feminism of the Red Brigades). But taking these criticisms seriously should not prevent us from pointing out the hypocrisy of feminists who gladly decry sexist behavior by militants but cover it up when it is committed by pacifists - for example, relishing the tale that Gandhi learned nonviolence from his wife without mentioning the disturbingly patriarchal aspects of their relationship. Some feminists go further than specific criticisms and attempt to forge a metaphysical link between feminism and nonviolence: this is the "feminization of passivity" mentioned earlier. In an article published in the Berkeley journal *Peace Power*, Carol Flinders cites a study by UCLA scientists asserting that women are hormonally programmed to respond to danger not with the fight-or-flight mechanism, which is ascribed to men, but with a "tend or befriend" mechanism. When threatened, according to these scientists, women will "quiet the children, feed everyone, defuse the tension, and connect with other females." This sort of pop science has long been a favored tool to reconstitute the patriarchy by

anarcha-feminists in Bolivia; and British suffragettes who rioted and fought against cops. Forgotten are the women from the rank and file to the highest levels of leadership among the Black Panther Party, the Zapatistas, the Weather Underground, and other militant groups. The idea that fighting back somehow excludes women is absurd. Not even the history of the pacified white "First World" bears it up because even the most effective patriarchy imaginable could never prevent all transgender people and all women from militantly fighting against oppression.

Aside from protecting the patriarchy from militant opposition, nonviolence also helps preserve patriarchal dynamics within the movement. One of the major premises of current anti-oppression activism (born out of the joint desire to promote healthier, more empowered movements and to avoid the infighting which stemmed largely from neglected oppressive dynamics that crippled the previous generation's liberation struggles) is that oppressive social hierarchies exist and replicate themselves in the behavior of all subjects and must be overcome internally as well as externally. But pacifism thrives on avoiding self-criticism. Many are familiar with the partially justified stereotype of self-congratulatory, self-celebratory nonviolent activists who "embody the change [they] wish to see in the world" to such a degree that in their minds, they embody everything right and beautiful. A follower in one pacifist organization exclaimed, in response to criticisms of privilege, that the group's white, male leader could not possibly have white privilege and male privilege because he was such a good person, as though white supremacy and patriarchy were entirely voluntary associations. In such a context, how easily could a predominantly male leadership that is understood to embody the nonviolent ideal as a result of their participation in an impressive number of hunger strikes and sit-ins be called out for oppressive behavior, transphobia or sexual abuse?

It is often preexisting sexist assumptions that paint militant groups as more sexist than they actually are. For example, women were effectively excluded from leadership positions in



Another part of my response to the attack was disgust, and a struggle not to let it permanently taint my sexuality. A rape is a subverted sexual act. Sex should be sensual, mutual and enjoyable, and the rape act goes through the motions of the sex act, making gestures that are usually enjoyable unbearable. That is why, during the attack I experienced, I could cope with the punches, but could not stand him trying to kiss me. The punches were at least honest - they were pure violence. When he tried to stroke and kiss me, it was a sick parody of the mutually pleasurable sex experience. I struggled to contain this experience and to distance it from sexual experience in general. I did this by recognizing that it was not, for me, a sexual experience but merely a violent one. This removed it from my wider sexuality, which, after a while, made a full recovery.

Flashbacks and nightmares, and a generalized feeling of terror and anxiety also characterized the two years after I was attacked. In the first few months, I felt at times so filled with terror and horror that I wished he had just killed me, as I could see no way out of the horror in my head. I fought with this, however, and attended counselling and employed my own methods to deal with the flashbacks and the mental pain. I now feel almost completely back to normal, although still, nearly three years on, if I am walking alone along the street and a man walks toward me, an image of him flying at me to attack me often passes through my mind. The fear and horror get less with time, but often require action to address them. I found counselling only helped when I went to see counselors trained specifically in rape. I also found I had to develop a number of my own methods to deal with my trauma. People struggling with flashbacks and trauma can also find useful tips on the internet, by putting 'post-traumatic stress disorder' into a search engine.

Finally there was the anger. I found it hardest to deal with this, and never really did. I was afraid of my anger, worried it might take over and I'd become a bitter, angry person. I don't know how people should deal with anger, but I recommend they pay



more attention to it than I did, as it is valid and must be dealt with. I was right to be angry with the man who attacked me, and to consider him scum was not, in retrospect, a great threat to my view of human nature. Having quite a positive view of human nature, I was traumatized specifically by being faced with that degree of malice from another human being. This is something I still struggle with.

Is rape patriarchal oppression?

In her book *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*, Susan Brownmiller says of rape that

"It is nothing more or less than a conscious process by which all men keep all women in a state of fear"

Many feminists believe, like Brownmiller, that rape and the threat of rape is a terror campaign carried out against women by men to keep them in their place. Brownmiller, among others, links marriage to rape, since she considers marriage to have come about through women seeking the protection of one man against attacks by all the others. It is an extreme stance to take that all men profit from rape, and knowingly keep the fear of it alive. However, rape, especially on the enormous scale on which it happens, is useful to patriarchal power in many ways, and is often directly expressed as an exertion of authority (most clearly through the wholesale rape of woman slaves in 19th century USA, or the way that rape takes place during war). Rape serves as a "reminder" of women's powerlessness and of the status quo. It "reminds" women of the following:

1. that women 'belong' to men. Where rape takes place (as is most common) in a relationship, there is an implicit reminder that the woman is her partner's private property. This is clear when, for example, it takes place after a woman cheats on her husband. Where it takes place by a stranger or a recent acquaintance, it can remind women that they are public property, meaning that if they are not the private property of one man, then all men are entitled to access to her body.
2. in a marriage, it can remind women, on some views (such as Frye and Shafer, 1975), of the "bargain" that was struck implicitly, since marriage means that the woman "services" the



erment and protection in the short term.

Pacifists and reformist feminists have often charged that it is militant activists who are sexist. In many cases, the accusation has been valid. But the criticism is frequently broadened to suggest that the use violent activism itself is sexist, masculine, or otherwise privileged. As Laina Tanglewood explains, "Some recent 'feminist' critiques of anarchism have condemned militancy as being sexist and non-inclusive for women ... This idea is actually the sexist one." Another anarchist points out, "In fact, the masculinization of violence, with

concomitant, the fem- really owes more to the whose notion of change lution or the annihila- Likewise, whose notion include women's being selves? Responding to women can only be social structures, activ- minds us, "A woman



its unstated sexist inization of passivity, presumptions of those does not include revotion of the State." of freedom does not able to defend them- the presumption that protected by larger ist Sue Daniels re- can fight off male at- tacker by herself...It is absolutely not a question of who is physi- cally stronger - it is a question of training". "The Will to Win! Women and Self-Defense", an anonymously authored pamphlet, adds the following:

It is ridiculous that there are so many counseling and support organizations for women who have been raped, attacked, and abused but hardly any that work to prepare and prevent these things from happening. We must refuse to be victims and reject the idea that we should submit to our assailants to keep from arousing further violence. In reality, submitting to our assailants will only contribute to future violence against others.

The entire idea that violence is masculine, or that revolutionary activism necessarily excludes women, queers, and trans people is, like other premises of nonviolence, based on historical whitewashing. Ignored are the Nigerian women occupying and sabotaging petroleum facilities; the women martyrs of the Palestinian intifada; the queer and transgender warriors of the Stonewall Rebellion; the innumerable thousands of women who fought for the Vietcong; women leaders of Native resistance to European and U.S. genocide; Mujeres Creando (Women Creating), a group of

supports us as we build healthy relationships and heal from generations of violence and trauma. This is perfectly compatible with self-defense training for women and transgender people and attacks on economic, cultural, and political institutions that exemplify patriarchy or are responsible for an especially brutal form of it. Killing a cop who rapes homeless transgender people and prostitutes, burning down the office of a magazine that consciously markets a beauty standard that leads to anorexia and bulimia, kidnapping the president of a company that conducts women-trafficking—none of these actions prevent the building of a healthy culture. Rather, certain powerful people who consciously profit from patriarchy actively prevent a healthy culture from emerging. Valuing healthy relationships is exploitive and violent relationships, and striking out against the most egregious and probably incorrigible examples of patriarchy is one way to educate others about the need for an alternative. Most of the work needed to overcome patriarchy will probably be peaceful, focused on healing and building alternatives. But a pacifist practice that forbids the use of any other tactics leaves no option for people who need to protect themselves from violence now.

In the case of rape and other forms of violence against women, non-violence implies the same lessons that patriarchy has taught for millennia. It glorifies passivity, “turning the other cheek,” and “dignified suffering” among the oppressed. In one of the most lucid texts defining the preservation and implementation of patriarchy – the Old Testament – story upon commandment upon parable upon law counsel women to suffer injustice patiently and pray for the divine Authority to intervene. (This prescription is remarkably similar to pacifists’ faith in the corporate media to disseminate images of dignified suffering and motivate the “decision-making authority” to implement justice).

Because patriarchy clearly prescribes a one-sided male violence, women would be disrupting this power dynamic, not reinforcing it, by relearning their propensity for violence. To reiterate, women reclaiming the ability and right to use force would not by itself end patriarchy, but it is necessary condition for gender liberation, as well as a useful form of empow-



man’s sexual and emotional needs in exchange for his protection. This view has the problem of going along with the stereotype that only men enjoy and need sex, however, since that view is still widespread, it makes sense to think that husbands exert their “conjugal rights” through rape.

3. it can remind women of the still common view that women should not enjoy sex, and if they do they are ‘whores’. Any decent woman, the stereotype says, finds sex a terrible ordeal, not a pleasurable experience, and rape makes sure that this is how it is experienced, and that all the pleasure is gone.
4. Finally, it can serve as a reminder that women are not generally respected as persons in society. Rape is a stark reminder of the contempt with which women are viewed. It “shows them who’s boss”, and makes them aware of their vulnerability to male power. According to Frye and Shafer (1975),

“It reveals the perception of the person simply as an object which can serve some purpose, a tool or a bit of material”



The prevalence of rape in contemporary society has been linked with the prominence of pornography and more generally of “raunch culture” (Ariel Levy, 2005), or “sexual liberation without sex role liberation” (Diana Russell, 2003). The idea here is that the ‘sexual revolution’ of the 60s, and the way it was co-opted by capitalist males (such as the Playboy empire), promoted a false emancipation for women,

where they were encouraged to flaunt their sexuality. While on the surface it seemed like a step forward, because women were no longer expected to be ashamed of their sexuality, the idea of the sexually active woman as ‘whore’ remained, and the overt sexuality was to be flaunted for men. Rather than removing the stereotype that the sexually proactive woman is a whore, it merely made it desirable for women to be ‘whores’. And it was still OK to treat ‘whores’ with contempt. This shows how rape forms part of the oppression faced by women on a wider scale

including that which happens through advertising, pornography, women's magazines, men's magazines, marriage and religious institutions. Rape is not an isolated act of violence by a crazy sick individual. It may not either be part of a conscious conspiracy of male domination. However, it is a demonstration of patriarchal power, and is connected to patriarchal oppression in general.

Further Reading:

Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*, 1977

Mary Vetterling-Braggin, Frederick Elliston and Jane English (ed), *Feminism and Philosophy*, 1989, especially the articles by Frye and Shafer and Foa.

Susan Estrich, *Real Rape*, 1987

Diana E.H. Russell, *The Politics of Rape: The Victim's Perspective*, 2003

Ariel Levy, *Female Chauvinist Pigs: Women and the Rise of Raunch Culture*, 2005

bell hooks, *Ain't I A Woman?*

www.rapecrisis.org.uk



all its manifestations. But pacifists seem not to have given the violence of patriarchy its due consideration. After all, in wars, in social revolutions, and in daily life, women and transgender people are the primary recipients of violence in patriarchal society. If we take this philosophy out of the impersonal political arena and put it in a more real context, non-violence implies that it is immoral for a woman to fight off an attacker or study self-defense. Nonviolence implies that it is better for someone to be raped than to pull the mechanical pencil out of her pocket and plunge it into her assailant's jugular (because doing so would supposedly contribute to some cycle of violence and encourage future rapes). Pacifism simulates a future day unless those people live in some extravagant bubble of tranquility from which all transforms of civilization's pandemic reactive violence have been pushed out by the systemic and less visible violence of police and military forces.



From another angle, nonviolence seems well-suited to dealing with patriarchy. After all, the abolition of patriarchy in particular requires forms of resistance that emphasize healing and reconciliation. The Western concept of justice, based on law and punishment, is patriarchal through and through. Early legal codes defined women as property, and laws were written for male property owners, who had been socialized not to deal with emotions; "wrongs" were addressed through punishment rather than reconciliation. Furthermore, patriarchy is not upheld by a powerful elite who must be forcibly defeated, but by everyone.

Because the distribution of power within patriarchy is much more diffused than within the state or capitalism (for example, a male general who also sits on the advisory board of a major corporation holds significant power within the state and capitalism, but does not derive much more power specifically from patriarchy than any other male, except perhaps as a role model of manliness), fighting against power holders or those most responsible plays a much smaller role. Instead, people must build a culture that allows everyone to self-identify in terms of gender and that

NONVIOLENCE IS PATRIARCHAL

Patriarchy is a form of social organization that produces what we commonly recognize as sexism. But it goes well beyond individual or systemic prejudice against women. It is, first of all, the false division of all people into two rigid categories (male and female) that are asserted to be both natural and moral. (Many perfectly healthy people do not fit into either of these physiological categories, and many non-Western cultures recognized – and still do, if they haven't been destroyed-more than two sexes and genders). Patriarchy attempts to destroy, socially or even physically, anyone who does not fit into one of these two categories or who rejects this "gender binary". Patriarchy goes on to define clear roles (economic, social, emotional, political) for men and women, and it asserts (falsely) that these roles are natural and moral. Under patriarchy, people who do not fit into or who reject these gender roles are neutralized with violence and ostracism. They are made to seem and feel ugly, dirty, scary, contemptible, worthless. Patriarchy is harmful to everybody, and it is reproduced by everyone who lives within it. True to its name, it puts men in a dominant position and women in a submissive position. Activities and characteristics that are traditionally associated with "power", or, at least privilege. Mostly belong to men. Patriarchy gives both the ability and the right to use violence almost exclusively to men. With gender, as with race, non-violence is an inherently privileged position. Nonviolence assumes that instead of defending ourselves against violence, we can suffer violence patiently until enough of society can be mobilized to oppose it peacefully (or that we can expect to "transform" any aggression that threatens us individually). Most proponents of non-violence will present it as not merely a narrow political practice but a philosophy that deserves to penetrate the very social fabric and root out violence in

ABORTION IS EVERY WOMAN'S RIGHT!

Romanian communist system (1947-1989) just as the Nazi system developed the idea of "heroine mother" who has to give birth to at least 4 children for the social and economical development of the country. But in order that the woman accomplishes this role without objections, the abortion had to be forbidden. The drama that came with the prohibition of abortion, in a time when women's equality was an idea met only in the state propaganda movies, is hard to imagine. Those women who chose to have an abortion were enormously risking, just as those who chose to help them did. First of all the sentence was from 1 to 5 years in jail for the one who was doing the abortion as well as for the one who was having the abortion. If the woman who had an abortion was having a haemorrhage (bleeding) afterwards and was going to the hospital, the militia (police name during communism) was hearing about this and they would give orders so that the woman doesn't get any medical attention and even let alone to die if she would refuse to denounce the one who did the abortion. Because of the prohibition of the abortion many women wouldn't dare to make this decision, and this is why they were forced to abandon their new-born babies in orphanages. In the same time due to the unsucceded abortion there were children being born with different handicaps, and placed as well in the orphanages, but of course being treated much worse than those children considered normal. The idea promoted by the church which said that the woman was a sinner and that she can overcome this curse only by giving birth, was still present in the so-called communist regime which was not admitting the legitimacy of the church, but it was silently approving its existence and was using its power to control and

manipulate people more easily.

During the communist regime the women were those who suffered the most; behind the false idea of equality between people and between sexes, the woman was bound to work as hard as a man in factories and agriculture, she had to take care and watch out after the children and the elderies and according to the old traditions against which communism didn't bother to do anything, the woman was the one to do all the house work. Besides the fact that the prohibition of the abortion was the main tool for woman's enslavement, this aged the relationship over society and individual.

The change of december 1989 has brought the fall of this bidding the aborgarded in that against the freeing. We have to in December 1989 people have died to win their freedom and the right for abortion implicitly.

Now, in the years 2000, in full ascension of „democracy“ in Romania, there are many kinds of organizations (more or less terrorist) like ProVita – a sort of romanian ProLife, under the shield of the State and Church and directly supported and financed by politicians, parties and extreme right wing organizations (New Right, New Generation Party etc). Besides all these even the romanian society has begun to support more and more openly the xenophobic and conservative ideas of right wing ideology. Many young people fall into this because of the intense media campaign which is being done directly or indirectly against abortion. In the sexual education classes in schools they show films and „terrifying“ materials about how atrocious an abortion can be, insinuating the idea of torture and crime. The president of the country being concerned about the demographic decline of Romania has recently assembled a „team of experts“ to handle, one way or another, the



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1989 people have

problem with the decreasing number of births.

In the same time I find it revolting that the Cannes Festival has awarded a film which tries to impress the spectators just like an anti-abortion propaganda documentary does. In this case „Palme d'or“ has become a patriarchal palm (slap) towards every woman. The movie „4 months, 3 weeks and 2 days“ is presenting the abortion as a big mistake, the supreme sin, and the woman who is committing it as the most dreadful human being on Earth. It is denigrating the image of woman through the two characters who embody the foolishness, ignorance, lack of sensitivity and lie. This film is shown all over Romania, being supported by the federal authorities, which under the mask of national pride, they reopen the cinemas that were closed for the last years in villages and small towns in every corner of the country. It is important to remind that the youth is encouraged to come and watch this movie. And the reaction of those who are in the cinema is first of all one of disgust against abortion and then revolt and hatred against the stupidity and ignorance of the woman who is doing it. Concerning is the fact that the film seems to be a sample of feminine solidarity turning the revolt and hatred against this character into a despise against all the women.

In my opinion the film is doing nothing else except from proving and reinforcing the traditional preconceived ideas, according to which the woman is stupid, liar and whore through her nature. These preconceived ideas will continue to repeat history, to destroy harmony between people, to turn family into a compromise based on constraint, materialism and self-lying, to be a barrier against the happiness of humanity.

The fact that a handful of politicians, mostly men, decide what I may or may not do with my own body, is shocking. Neither the State, nor the Church has the right to restrain the freedom of the individual to decide over his own body! The only master over your life is yourself!

