

Decolonizing Feminism: the NGO-ization Paradigm between the Global Circuits of Neoliberal Power and the Politics of Location. The Case of Romania

Abstract

While the NGO-ization paradigm helped explain the institutionalization, professionalization, and bureaucratization of feminist movements around the world, from the late 80s and early 90s on, by focusing on the most visible actors, it often concealed the multiplicity of feminisms and their internal heterogeneity. By looking at the institutionalization of feminism in Romania through decolonial lenses, this essay aims to understand some of the transnational processes that have been overlooked or curtailed within the NGO-ization literature, the mechanisms through which certain forms of feminist knowledge and practice became hegemonic and institutionalized, and some of their consequences. The essay argues that the travelling and crossings, initiated by those excluded through these processes and who inhabit liminal, in-between spaces, contributed to making visible multiple worlds of sense towards a pluralist feminism, opening the possibility to build deep coalitions by engaging in complex communication.

Introduction

After feminist activists gained access to politics through official channels, scholars argued that there was a shift in movements' organization and tactics, from horizontal autonomous collectives engaging in disruptive actions to professional NGOs advancing the movement's goals through lobby and advocacy. The emergence of a global gender equality regime, under the influence of supranational institutions, supported the consolidation of state feminism as a new mode of governance based on the alliance between gender policy agencies and feminist movement activists. Due to demanding accountability mechanisms, the financial costs to build up professional organizations to become stable dialogue partners of the state or international organizations entailed donor dependency and increased bureaucratization. These transformations have been theoretically discussed and empirically analysed under the NGO-ization paradigm. As a process, NGO-ization has been negatively evalu-

ated as entailing depoliticization, demobilization, and co-optation of feminist movements. Although NGO-ization as a process has been identified in different parts of the world, as part of global neoliberal governance, in the European semi-periphery, it was associated with *transition* and sometimes EU accession and, in the Global South, with development and structural adjustment programmes. In Eastern Europe, scholars claimed that social movements underwent an early institutionalization within the democratization process and under the influence of funds available to NGOs (Della Porta and Diani 2006, 246).

A polarized scholarly debate emerged, with normative conceptualizations of NGOs, between the neoliberal imperial evil and the savers of humanity (Grewal in Roy 2017). While the NGO-ization theory helped explain the widespread adoption of the NGO as the common organizational form within feminist movements or the latter's institutionalization, professionalization, and bureaucratisation, by focusing on the most visible actors, it often equated feminist movements with NGOs for equality between men and women. This concealed the multiplicity of actors and feminisms and their internal heterogeneity, who sometimes co-exist at ease, sometimes in tension, at times collaborating through coalitions, at others pursuing disjoint strategies. Furthermore, enclosed in the post-Cold War hegemonic discourse, the NGO-ization paradigm discarded the contributions of left-wing and state-socialist women's organizations acting internationally to the institutionalization of a transnational feminism and gender equality regime. In post-socialist countries, this overlapped with the anti-communist backlash in public discourses, enhancing the view of progressive neoliberalism (Fraser 2016) as the only option. In this context, I argue that a decolonial analytic helps rectify the existing knowledge about the last decades' transformations of feminist movements, concerning their institutionalization and NGO-ization, by acknowledging and understanding some transnational processes that have been overlooked or curtailed within the NGO-ization literature and the mechanisms through which it has been possible to do so. By investigating the institutionalization of feminism in Romania – an empirical case study, this paper seeks to disentangle the processes through which certain forms of feminist knowledge and practice became hegemonic and institutionalized. What role did the imperial and colonial differences play in shaping feminism in Romania after 1989? What were the bases for the constitution of a hegemonic feminist subject rendered universal? What were the gendered consequences, tensions, exclusions, and resistances of this process? What challenges did this pose in terms of coalitional politics? How can they be overcome?

In what follows, after providing a brief overview of the NGO-ization narrative, I will explain how decolonial theories can help to fill in some gaps in the feminist movement literature. Subsequently, I will analyse the institutionalization of feminism in Romania and the development of a “catching-up” with modernity and the lost feminist wave narrative that paved the way for the consolidation of liberal feminism as the mainstream form. Further on, I will explore what was overlooked through the constitution of a hegemonic form

of feminism. Lastly, I will investigate the processes of travelling and crossings between different actors, feminisms, and across movements and the way they contributed to shattering the hegemony of universalist forms of feminism, paving the way towards deep coalitions.

How can a decolonial feminist perspective help?

Decolonial theories question the global hegemonic model of knowledge based on the European historical experience (Escobar 2007, 218), allowing to bring forward illegitimate knowledge by delinking from racist epistemology, locating theory in the geopolitics and body-politics of knowledge (Tlostanova 2010, 35; Mignolo and Tlostanova 2009). While its development was most often linked with Latin American scholars, decolonial theories were embraced by other academics at the (semi)-periphery as a response to the violence of the imperial/territorial epistemology and the rhetoric of salvation and to the colonial and imperial differences that imposed hegemonic discourses on people classified as inferior, whose knowledge was rejected (Tlostanova 2010, 26). Accordingly, contributions from Eastern European (Țichindeleanu 2010; Boatcă 2010) and decolonial feminist scholars (Lugones 2007; Marcos 2006; Schiwy 2007) allowed us to move beyond the totalizing frameworks that characterized foundational decolonial authors (Karkov and Valiavicharska 2018).

A decolonial perspective on the institutionalization of feminism in Romania aims to de-link from the post-Cold War hegemonic discourse that articulated a symbiotic relationship between free-market capitalism and liberal democracy, channeling the public reflection in terms of transition, democratization, and the build-up of civil society. This imaginary allowed post-socialist states to be included in the linear history paradigms and epistemes and “catch up” with the progress towards modernity – *interrupted* by state-socialist regimes, marked as a history’s deviance. The consolidation of such an imaginary is related to the external imperial difference established by the West, vis-a-vis Eastern Europe – as an aspirant and mere reproducer of Europe’s modernity’s stages (Boatcă 2015, 136–137) and the internal colonial difference, established within the nation states, by Romania, vis-à-vis the internal Other, the Romani people.

The interplay between the post-Cold War hegemonic discourse and the imperial and colonial difference had at least two consequences in terms of discursive opportunities in Romania: (1) the constitution of an anti-communist backlash (Ban 2015) and the discursive privatization of social restructuring and displacement (Hemment 2014: 139) that depoliticized the economic and (2) the attribution – through (institutionalized) racism, of the socio-economic disadvantages to the Roma minority, further depoliticizing the economic aspects their oppression (Vincze 2016). These shaped the conditions for the kind of feminism that became institutionalized after 1989.

Catching up with modernity reverberated in catching up with the “lost” feminist wave – the second wave in Europe, “interrupted” by the state-so-

cialist regime. Facilitated by the Cold War legacy, the international feminist contributions from the European East, the newly independent states of Asia and Africa, after World War II until the fall of the state socialist regimes, were boxed as highly politicized – meaning communist, instrumentalizing women’s issues to serve the Communist Party (Popa 2009), opposed to the presumed political neutrality of their western counterparts and discarded in the literature (De Haan 2010). Similarly, Romanian historiography ignores, for example, that the proposal made to the UN Commission on the Status of Women to organize a WCW came from a delegate from state-socialist Romania (Fraser 1987, 17) and described the state-socialist period as lacking feminism.

These historical omissions inform about the mechanisms through which the Western feminist subject was rendered universal, but also for the subjects who were excluded and the historical experiences that were erased or rendered invisible (Vergès 2017; De Haan 2010). De-centering from the hegemonic history and knowledge, decolonial feminist scholars challenged the universality of the white feminist subject based on a presumed commonality of women’s experiences. They showed how the production of race is integral to the production of gender – the gender system being racially differentiated (Lugones 2010, 748). As the Western heterosexist dimorphous gender construction only applied to humans, and since the colonized and the enslaved peoples were denied humanity, they were also denied gender (Lugones 2010). Analysing gender as a principle of organization of societies is not the object of this paper, but rather understanding how this conception of gender brought by the modern/colonial capitalist system – the coloniality of gender, made gender a sign of belonging to humanity, echoing Sojourner Truth’s 1851 speech – “Ain’t I a woman?”, at Women’s Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio. What one could take from Lugones’ claim that “gender is irrevocably white, European, and modern” (2020, 45) is not the denial of gender as an organising principle of societies¹ but a focus on the exclusions and erasures based on which it was built.

The centuries of Romani slavery and the Romani Holocaust – Porajmos, their absence from the history and collective memory reinforce the processes of universalization and homogenization within nation-states, along with today’s marginalization through racialization processes that associate “the Romani with the “East-European poverty” and patriarchal ideologies (Vincze 2019) and the perpetuation of stereotypes that exoticize and dehumanize them (Costache 2019). As Vincze (2019, 128) argued, today’s racism against the Roma “has the role to protect an authentic Europe from the ‘invasion’ of poor populations, symbols of primitivism, from second-hand Europe”. As a gendered phenomenon, racism manifested and still does today through forced sterilization and hate speech inciting it (Gheorghe 2019).

¹ Lugones argues that gender as an organising principle of societies should be investigated rather than taken for granted in research.

Lastly, decolonial feminism moves beyond critiquing unitary homogeneous feminism that consolidated the white middle-class woman subject. It gives some keys to understanding how people have been constructed as separate and argues that engaging in coalitional crossings might foster new resistant practices, echoing Johnson Reagon's (1983) imperative of coalitions as a question of survival of those at the margins. Against an abstract unitary self and cohesive feminist movement, Western and white, decolonial feminism reveals multiplicities and erasures, not fragmentation, arguing for pluriversality – not additive, but conflictual, posing contested narratives and imagining new liberatory paths, epistemologically and in practice, through deep coalitions. Liberation can be radically imagined from the fractured locus (multiple and contradictory) outside the hegemonic single world of sense that conceals the others (Alcoff 2020, 208).

Decolonial feminism opens the possibility to imagine different worlds from the fractured locus of coloniality² by cultivating sensibilities, imaginaries, and desires that would reveal multiple worlds of sense, not in the additive logic of sharing – making space within the single hegemonic framework, but conflictual pluralities, outside the dominant worlds of sense. Its liberatory prospect is to be found in the shift from the harmful effects of the modern/colonial capitalist system to potentialities nurtured through decolonial imaginaries that change the way liberation can be defined (Alcoff 2020, 208). Working against homogenizing tendencies and universalisms by giving up the quest for grand narratives, decolonial feminism argues that deep coalitions among those excluded from the mainstream power and status can be achieved by crossing to other worlds and engaging in complex communication with Others with responsibility and humility.

Engaging in crossings and complex communication does not guarantee the success of creating deep coalitions, as they are difficult practices that might involve painful confrontations, rejections, losses and discomfort (Roshanravan 2020), sadness, and anger when acknowledging the difficulties of working across oppressions as “we are separate in difficult-to-overcome ways” (Lugones 2003, 115), but it contains the possibility. The unwillingness to give up and the motivation to engage with others to explore non-dominant differences stems from “the possibility for the broken or betrayed relation to transforming into a loving connection that motivates the tremendous efforts to resist coloniality's ingrained epistemological habits that erase or distort that which exceeds dominant cultural logics” (Roshanravan 2020, 130).

The institutionalisation of feminism in Romania

In post-socialist Romania, the institutionalization of feminism was related to three developments. First, the build-up of an institutional architecture for gender equality and non-discrimination was linked to Romania's acces-

² The fractured locus of coloniality is not a singular place but a multiple locus.

sion to the European Union (EU) in 2007³. Non-discrimination, domestic violence, and gender equality laws and policies were drafted and implemented through a top-down process to comply with the EU law. Public entities were created, amongst others, the National Council for Combating Discrimination in 2001, the National Agency for Equality between Women and Men in 2004, and Equal Opportunities Commissions at the Senate in 2003 and at the Chamber of Deputies in 2004. Defined as *room-service feminism* to describe the import character of laws and policies, Miroiu (2004b), who coined this term, argued that the consolidation of an international political agenda for women's rights drove conservative countries, such as Romania, to adopt legislation and policies for the protection of women's rights.

Second, the institutionalisation of gender studies at the university took place through the creation and consolidation of specialized postgraduate master's degrees in Bucharest, Cluj, and Timisoara. The Master's Programme in Gender Studies at the Bucharest National School of Political Science and Public Administration (SNSPA), consolidated with a World Bank grant (Vlad 2013, 36), has subsisted until today. The programme adopted a liberal perspective on gender studies and a universalist approach to women's rights, which became mainstream in the public sphere⁴, failing initially to integrate class and anti-racist perspectives (Gheorghe in Gheorghe, Mark, and Vincze 2019, 116). The programme in Cluj adopted an intersectional approach, which became more visible during the second half of the 2010s, when class was rediscovered (Ana 2020).

Third, institutionalization was related to creating women and gender equality NGOs, as formalized civil society that collaborated with the newly created governmental agencies for equality between men and women. Some distinguished between Phoenix organizations (Fabian 2007) – new entities ingrained in the old state-socialist system through their membership, and new NGOs focused on emancipation and democracy (Moloea 2015). As scholars emphasized the pre-Cold-War synchronicity and convergence of the Romanian feminist movements with their Western counterparts (Miroiu 2006, 21), consolidating the idea of a geographical and temporal lag, the aim was to recover the gap between the East and the West by breaking with previous (women's) structures, including the so-called Phoenix organizations, and consolidating the new gender equality NGOs with the help of international funds that supported collaboration and the creation of networks and coalitions⁵.

While in Romania, the transition towards democracy and the free market became an endpoint in the liberal temporality, at the international level, states reconfigured through the intensification of neoliberal governance (Kantola and Squires, 2012), dismantling of the welfare apparatus and the

³ Interview I.C., Filia; Interview M.C., ANES; see Massino and Popa (2015), Frunză (2004).

⁴ as far as possible in a conservative society with public intellectuals practicing what Miroiu (2009) calls "preventive anti-feminism".

⁵ M.P. from CPE; B.M. from Filia.

increased in the importance of NPM. Consequently, governing activities were framed as non-political and non-ideological problems that needed technical solutions (Ong 2006, 3), laying down the conditions for the proliferation of NGOs to fill the welfare gaps and ensure opposition (Harvey 2005, 78), but also of norms and practices stemming from the market to the functioning of the state, universities, and civil society (Hibou 2012).

Modernity and “catching up” with the *lost* feminist wave

The “room-service” feminism at the level of state infrastructure for gender equality, the consolidation of gender studies in academia, and the *development* of civil society organizations with the support of international funds recall both the rhetoric of salvation and the technologies of imperial-colonial mimicry. With the *help of advanced* democratic states, through international entities and their *development* programs, the long-standing aspirations of the Romanian democratic elite to “feminism and Western-style modernity, which has always been a target” (Mudure 2004), could be achieved by ‘catching up’ with progress, while ‘retrieving’ some of the accomplishments of the second wave of feminism. Miroiu (2010, 576) argued that Romania lacked the experience of the second wave of feminism – an aspect thought to matter considerably in terms of “continuity, coherence, and a sense of the history of women’s rights”. She maintains that “the post-communist era must recover the feminism of affirmative action and equal opportunities” in order to resist the modern patriarchy, the rebirth of traditional patriarchy, the post-feminism in the media, and the “room-service” feminism – as a form of EU paternalism (Miroiu 2010, 576). In the same vein, Băluță (2010), gender studies academic, explains in the weekly magazine *Dilema Veche* that:

Romanian feminism, both theoretically and practically, had to cover a gap created by communism to recover a huge difference compared to its evolutions in Western Europe and the United States, an evolution that, starting from the feminist manifestations of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, would have characterized Romania.

According to this perspective – widespread at the time, the synchronicity of Romania’s first wave of feminism with its counterpart in the West would suggest that Romanian feminism would have continued with its “natural” evolution if it had not been interrupted by communism. While both scholars explain that filling this gap is not simply cultural or political mimicry (Băluță 2010), denouncing the paternalism of the EU (Miroiu 2010), they seem to show enchantment with modernity and its “linear and univocal sense of social space and time” (Schutte 2020, 111), adopting the naturalized division of feminism into three waves, which claimed universal status while being a product of a “Western-centric and evolutionary ideology of modernity” (Tlostanova 2010: 31).

Reiterating the critical contributions of the second wave feminism (Miroiu 2010, 576), without engaging with its critiques, scholars and public intellectuals considered that post-1989 feminism was facing a dilemma between an “unreserved embrace” of “the third wave of multiple differences between women, which divides women into various groups without having a second wave that draws attention to the fact that women share common problems?” (Băluță 2010). This account starts from the assumption that all women share *some* common experiences as women, which are universal. Numerous criticized the second wave’s hegemonic tendencies to universalize the white heterosexual middle-class women’s experiences of oppression, excluding many other peoples (Martinez 2011; Thompson 2002).

Engrained in the modern/colonial system, as the heterosexual white man were chosen to represent the face of humanity, so were the heterosexual white women to represent the face of feminism and women’s emancipation. Universalizing these experiences was possible by erasing and denying humanity – hierarchic and dichotomously gendered, to working-class women, poor, ethnicized and racialized women, queer, trans and LGBTI, older women, migrants, and sex-workers, among others.

To understand the consequences, the examples of the Western second-wave framing of domestic violence (Crenshaw 1990) or reproductive rights are enlightening. The latter is a direct target of today’s anti-gender mobilizations (Verloo and Paternotte 2018; Avanza 2018). The second wave’s framing of reproductive rights gave a central position to abortion claims, ignoring the experiences of women of colour that have had little control over their reproductive freedom, being the target of coercive sterilization. The birth control discourses and policies in the US, based on racist eugenic theories, made the African-American (Flores 2014, 1–3), American Indian, Mexican, and Puerto Rican women’s experiences of birth control genocidal and racist through coerced sterilization, unlike white women’s experiences of liberation through access to family planning. Similarly, during the 1960s and 1970s, the French state forbade abortion and contraception in mainland France and supported anti-natalist policies in overseas regions and departments (Vergès 2021). From the 1970s, Roma women experienced forced sterilization in back then Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Sweden, and Norway (Gheorghe 2010, 60). After the 1990s, Roma women were forcibly or coercively sterilized in the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia (Brooks 2009; Kovács 2009). In Romania, in 2013, an far-right organisation, made a public call, writing they offer money to Romani women who can prove they have undergone voluntary sterilization (Red Network 2013) and the leader of the National Liberal Youth organization of Alba County proposed the sterilization of Romani women on his Facebook page (United States Department of State 2014). Previous research already showed that women from marginal groups do not have the rights and opportunities to make a free choice regarding reproduction; their choices are affected by the living conditions, institutionalized racism at the level of health system and pressures from

family members stemming from cultural and social norms (Magyari-Vincze 2006, 78–79).

Thus, the *common* experience regarding access to reproductive rights and abortion was not common at all.

By accounting for the experiences of those omitted within the mainstream feminist literature and for the processes of exclusion, scholars demystified the *universality* of the heterosexual white middle-class women's experiences. Chicana produced their historical analysis of events and organisations, to shed light on *Chicana movidas*, whose histories have been exiled "to spaces of extra-institutional memory" (Cotera, Blackwell, Espinoza 2018, 3). Similarly, Romani scholars and feminists pleaded for a comprehensive history that would explain, rather than just mention (Furtuna 2019, 26), the colonial practices – genocide and slavery, to which the Romani have been subjected (Iancu 2019). As Costache affirms about Romani history: "We must face the palimpsest of written histories that erase and deny, that reinvent the past to make the contemporary vision of racial harmony and pluralism seem more plausible" (Costache 2019, 19). Blackwell (2011) pleads for a "retrofitted memory", to reclaim the erased histories of feminist engagement. Gheorghe (2019) explains how Romani women's gesture of lifting up the skirt, as a claim against the instigation of racial hatred, through sterilization proposals from public officials, was generated by the anger and helplessness in front of injustices (from authorities, police, and others).

Despite these critiques, the framework of universal claims, based on presumed common experiences, was justified as a chronologically necessary step in Romania that *missed* the second wave, discarding the multiplicity of women's experiences shaped by class, ethnicity, and race, sexuality, on the grounds that they divide.

Asking what kind of feminism activists and scholars opt for: between synchronization with the Western third wave or diachrony, because "the linearity of the transformations in "western feminism" highlighted changes that you cannot skip?", Băluță (2010) argued that taking into account the local heritage, the third wave is challenging in Romania, appearing as a cultural mirage for many feminists, insisting that one should recall the shared experiences. The myth of linear, successive, homogenous development at the basis of the modern construction of the history of humanity and the violence of this imperial/territorial epistemology (Tlostanova 2010, 21) made it seem imperative to follow similar pathways and catch up with the *lost* second wave, aspiring to reach modernity, becoming "*almost the same, but not quite*" (Bhabha 1984, 126).

How and why did liberal feminism become the mainstream form?

Nation-building and value-based cleavages translated into the ambivalence between the desire to enter the cohort of modern democratic states and reinforcing national sovereignty, in front of international institutions' pater-

nalism and imperialism. While institutionalized racism and the suppression of inter-ethnic conflicts through repression played a role in the re-construction of a homogenous nation, opposition to “gender ideology” was ensured by framing it as the new Marxism (Kuhar and Paternotte 2017) or as part of the Western imperial tendencies to impose values and norms (Graff and Korolczuk 2018), as in the Global South.

In this context, the most influential feminist theorising during the 1990s, taking the example of Miroiu’s work, framed democratization as inseparable from massive privatization and insertion into the global economy (Vlad 2013; Mihai 2021). This perspective favoured “self-assertion as central to an emancipatory political project, emphasizing the need to focus more on liberty and equality than on material, economic principles” (Vlad 2013, 47; Miroiu 1999). This view was enhanced by the left-wing conservatism that delegitimized the redistributive claims of workers affected by the economic restructuring (Vlad 2013, 43), deterring subversive movements, such as the feminist one, from engaging with a structural critique, not just of welfare state retrenchment, but also of global capitalism and welfare chauvinism that divided people between worthy contributors and non-worthy Others, based on xenophobic, racist and anti-poor attitudes (Ana 2020).

Adding to the anti-communist backlash, the process of national construction was built on ethnic marginalization and racism, reflected in the interplay between the internal colonial difference and the external imperial difference, visible when the increased negative media coverage of Romanian migrants in Italy and Spain prompted violence against Romanian and Roma. To sort this out, the Italian government adopted an emergency decree that facilitated the removal of EU citizens (Armillei 2018, 80). Simultaneously, the Romanian government launched an expensive national branding campaign at home and abroad, based on racism and the racialized construction of Romanian alterity, to prevent the othering of non-Roma Romanians – thought to successfully adapt to the Euro-capitalist values (Kaneva and Popescu 2014). Becoming modern, overcoming their inferior status stemming from the imperial difference, the efforts to construct Romanianness were based on internal colonial difference.

In post-socialism, the entwinement between class and ethnicity, between the internal colonial and external imperial differences, shaped the form of feminism that became mainstream. Liberal feminism reposed not only on the total equivalence between state socialisms and patriarchal oppression in a self-colonizing quest to recover the gap with Western modernity (Sandu 2021) but also on universalisms and the *common* experiences of women, excluding claims stemming from intersectional positions considered divisive and enhancing the gap between feminist activists and ordinary women.

Emphasizing the import of liberal Western theories, a former member of a feminist organization that initially functioned as a research centre to support the gender studies MA at SNSPA discusses the gap between the develop-

ment of a Western-style feminist activism and women's issues in Romanian society:

(...) it is very interesting because we are feminists, but we are western feminists. I mean, we learn Western theories because we do not have theories about our Romanian women. We do not know who the women in Romania are. We do not know what their needs are. (...)

I know about working-class women because my mother is a worker, so I have direct experience.

My feminism was like after the transition: liberalism, democracy ... it took me several years to say that I am on the left. I was so... what do you mean not to be liberal? Especially since my mentor was a liberal. A simple psychological click, I just couldn't say it, I couldn't.

We come up with these theories from the West, Western activism, activism done elsewhere and we put them here and we act like monkeys (...) But where is our Romanian feminism as nationalism but nationalism not necessarily in the pure sense but 'don't we know our Romanian women?' we do events that seem cool to us.⁶

The testimony informs about the proliferation of liberal Western feminist theories in post-socialist spaces that rely on the critique of the paternalism of socialist states. It also tells about the personal mechanisms of struggle with assimilation and rejection of the universalized imperial-colonial epistemological habits. The gap between feminists – trained and educated in a Western liberal tradition of universal feminism and other women, whose experiences were neglected, through the exclusionary effects contained in this universality, translated into a divide regarding claims and issues at stake⁷. but also modes of action, between feminist raising-awareness and women's workers' strike⁸. Inquiring about the realities of Romanian and working-class women, the interviewee seems to call for delinking from the thinking programs, which were imposed by culture, education, and environment, marked by imperial reason (Tlostanova 2010, 26–27). Nevertheless, when re(making) communities, one might ask who is left out. A call for Romanian working-class women and their needs might reproduce the salvation logic applied to less privileged women and render invisible the ethnically heterogeneity in Romania and the histories of violence against and the resistance of Roma Romanians – the internal Other, against which genocide and eugenic policies were committed.

Similarly, referring to the proliferation of liberal Western feminism, not just in activist spaces but also in academia, Gheorghe (2019), founder in 2013 of the Roma feminist organization E-Romnja, explains how she could not find herself in the feminist space of the SNSPA Gender studies programme, where they read Western American literature, learned about white women's femi-

⁶ C.T. from Filia.

⁷ M.R. 1 from Front; C.T. from Filia; M.M. 2 from CPE; C.B. from Filia.

⁸ C.B. from Filia.

nism and the second wave, coming from spaces and problems different than those of Roma women. She explains that while Roma women talked about access to essential utilities, feminist colleagues talked about gender quotas and political representation. She asks herself: “Where do all these leave me as a Roma woman? Where are we Roma women, in this story? And the feeling that I am partly in one world and partly in another started to increasingly capture my attention” (Gheorghe in Gheorghe, Mark, Vincze 2019, 115–116). These insights recall Vincze’s argument that racism depoliticized the socioeconomic dimensions of Roma marginalization (Vincze in Gheorghe, Mark, Vincze 2019), making political representation a principal concern while downgrading the economic. While acknowledging and criticizing the gender division of labour, the unequal burden of care work, or women’s exploitation in the private sector (Vlad 2013), there was a presumed belief that privatization and opening to the global market would improve the economic situation of many people. A critique of the “liberal-conservative politics” of this period, defined as free-market economics with conservative national affinities, started to coagulate during and after the economic (Ban 2015) and the so-called migrants’ crisis as an opposition to the neoliberal consensus (Ana 2020).

Who was left behind, outside, overflowing, erased, ignored, neglected, or stepped on?

The feminist movement after the 1990s developed as an intellectualist-elitist endeavour within a liberal framework, paying little attention to class, sexual orientation, or ethnicity (Moloea 2015). Drawing its legitimacy on lived experiences and the studies conducted by Western researchers in Eastern Europe (Sandu 2021), the liberal feminist framework was anti-communist and universalist, based on the indivisibility between the free-market and democracy and concerned with catching up with the West and the second wave of feminism. Nevertheless, mainstream liberal feminism was paralleled by the development of other feminisms that remained more marginal in the public sphere due to the anti-left backlash, threats from the extreme-right, police repression⁹, and racism.

Roma women activists organized since the 1990s, alone or together with men, related to racist violence, hate speech, and discrimination against Roma in employment, education, health care, administration, and other public services. To contextualize, numerous bodies documented and reported the abuses, violence, the use of excessive force against Roma, by law enforcement officials (Szente 1996; United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 2010; United Nations Committee against Torture 2015) or the racism in public discourses that develops unabated, in a climate of impunity

⁹ C.L.1 from Dysnomia, Claca, Biblioteca Alternativa <https://activewatch.ro/ro/freeex/reactie-rapida/6-ani-de-la-summit-ul-nato-la-bucuresti-jandarmeria-gasita-vinovata-pentru-abuzuri-asupra-cetatenilor-dar-lasata-nepedepsita> accessed July 14, 2019.

for hate-speech, stigmatisation and discrimination (ECRI 2014). The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) condemned Romania innumerable times, for police violence and abuses¹⁰. In one of its last cases – *Lingurar vs. Romania*, the Court found that the national authorities targeted the Roma because of their ethnicity (ethnic profiling) (ECHR 2019).

The work of Roma women activists, within Roma communities, in the context of institutionalized violence and interethnic conflicts, occasioned a process of reflection regarding the difficulties and oppression they faced inside and outside their communities (Vlad 2013, 98). In 1997, Letitia Mark founded the Association of Gypsy Women “For Our Children” out of a need “to support Roma children from marginalized communities and their mothers in their efforts to go through school education” (Mark in Gheorghe, Mark, Vincze 2019). She enrolled in the gender studies MA at Babeş-Bolyai University, coordinated by Eniko Vincze, and together launched in 2009 the Roma women’s journal, *Nevi Sara Kali* – “a crucial reference in the history of Romani feminism” (Ibidem). In a recently edited volume, “*Problema românească: o analiză a rasismului românesc*” Romani and non-Romani authors address the question of racism in Romanian society, to bring new knowledge perspectives and open potential pathways for communication (Drăgan and Dobanțu 2019, 8). In one of its chapters, Popa (2019) explores the possibilities of resistance to the hegemonic norm of Romanian ethnicity and relates the anti-racist politics to resistance to capitalism, through the performance of Romani music.

Through institutions and discourses, one is taught during their lifetime to define their identity in terms of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or status. Also, one learns to select among them and hierarchize them (Magyari-Vincze 2009, 14). Roma women activists faced various tensions: with the Roma rights movement, non-Roma women activists, and between two generations of Roma women activists (Vlad 2013, 99–104). In times of racist violence and hatred, Oprea (2012, 14–15) shows how it becomes difficult to speak about harmful practices or the specificities of Roma women’s oppression in their communities when these are used to legitimize racist sentiments. Roma feminist activists felt their issues were also rejected from the agenda of the feminist movement (Vlad 2013, 100).

As the Romani women’s movement started to coagulate, the Soros Roma Women’s Initiative was established in 1999, within the Network Women’s Programme, with activist Nicolata Bițu playing a leading role (OSI, 2002). Though paying off in the long run, Bițu recalls the Network’s meeting in Budapest and the disturbing interaction with mainstream women’s organizations, when asked about palm reading (Vlad 2013, 100), illustrating the denial of subjectivity and treatment “as exotic others, useful objects of derision and desire, as problems to be solved” (Brooks 2009, 21). These tensions were slowly mitigated through crossings and encounters between mainstream

¹⁰ Case of *Boacă and others v. Romania*; Case of *Ciorcan and others v. Romania*.

feminist organizations and Romani feminists (Ana 2020). E-Romnja became a leading actor in gender equality and non-discrimination coalitions, leader and partner in various projects with other feminist organizations and grassroots movements. Their role in the reproductive rights struggle contributed to decentre the heterosexual white middle-class women as principal subjects, whose experiences were generalized, and to show the entanglements between racism and gender (Gheorghe 2019). On the art scene, *Giuvlipen*, the Roma queer feminist theatre company, was founded in 2014; while valuing Roma belonging, it also addresses issues such as arranged under-age marriages, lack of access to education, mental illness, and Roma LGBTQIA issues through their plays¹¹.

Other feminism that initially remained underground were the anarchist and queer self-managed collectives associated with the anarcho-punk scene. They started to organize during the second half of the 1990s in Timisoara, Iasi, Craiova, Cluj, and Bucharest. They build-up alternative spaces to commercial society, created feminist zines, organized festivals, feminist reading groups, and political art projects (Ana 2019). LoveKills, the first anarcho-feminist collective in Romania, active between 2003 and 2009, defined themselves more as part of the Do It Yourself (DIY) movement rather than the feminist one, considered liberal feminism (Marincea 2021). In 2005, Ladyfest Timisoara described itself as a “positive outlet for our anger in response to cowardly and insidious sexism that exists in our everyday life”¹². The following years, at Ladyact Bucharest, Crina Morteau – Roma feminist activist, and Florentina Ionescu – psychologist and LGBTQIA activist, held workshops about non-dominant differences, addressing gender, sexuality, and ethnicity. Out of the Ladyfest collective, the F.I.A. group (‘girls/women/feminism in action/activism’) was created in 2008 to foster collaboration and support among more significant initiatives on social justice. Some members of F.I.A. got actively involved in *Alternative Library (BA)* created in 2010, which hosted a library considered richer and more diverse ideologically compared to Filia’s gender studies library, becoming one of the few alternatives to mainstream liberal feminism¹³. They organized a feminist reading group, integrating an intersectional approach to social justice and a sustained critique of capitalism, imperialism, racism, and heterosexism¹⁴. Together with the feminist association Front that manages feminism-romania.ro, they organized Slutwalk Bucharest in 2011¹⁵. Understanding feminism in interaction and co-created with other social movements, self-managed queer feminist collectives were engaged in anti-militarist and anti-imperialist actions, such as the anti-NATO protests in 2008, several occupations, the anti-austerity protest in 2012 or later, the housing movement in Cluj and Bucharest. In 2016, Macaz: Bar Teat-

¹¹ <https://giuvlipen.com/en/> accessed 29 April 2020.

¹² <https://fia.pimienta.org/05/index-en.php>, accessed February 8th, 2018.

¹³ M.R. 1 from Front.

¹⁴ M.R. 1 from Front.

¹⁵ B.T. from Biblioteca Alternativa.

ru Coop was created, comprising some of the members of previous self-managed collectives, and which played a crucial role in bridge-building between movements and collectives (Ana 2020).

Travelling, crossings, and encounters: between strategic and deep coalitions

If during the first two decades of post-state-socialism, liberal feminism was the mainstream form, after 2007-2008 financial and the 2015 European refugee crisis, processes of bridge-building, at the level of discourses – between class, gender ethnicity, and at the level of movements, between white liberal feminist organizations, Roma feminist NGOs and groups, queer informal collectives, and also with the housing and LGBTQI movements, fostered a move towards a more intersectional politics of hope (Ana 2020).

In these processes, the role of travelling and encounters, initiated especially by those in liminal, in-between spaces, played a crucial role to “drop [her] enchantment with ‘woman,’ the universal, and begins to learn about other resisters at the colonial difference” (Lugones 2010, 753). They revealed border places and epistemologies – as borderlands inhabited by those “who cross over the confines of the normal (*atravezados/as*)” (Anzaldúa 1987). In this sense, Gheorghe (2019: 116) explains what it means to exist in the fractured locus/cracks of colonial difference: “The theory of intersectionality does not satisfy me completely in saying that yes, I have several identities, and I come with all of them into a feminist space and find myself complete. I do not think a place or space exists where this can happen. This is why intersectionality does not seem to be complete for me.” In Lugones’ (2003) terms, Gheorghe seemed to explore and feel around – *tantea*, for a place where she would fit, in between academia and grassroots activism, Roma and non-Roma:

Practically, all these years I had been in organizational environments, I worked in many types of organizations, from left to right and from academic to grassroots, Roma and non-Roma. I tried to enter each environment to learn something, take it from there and bring it to another environment. In fact, this is my way to test and see where I fit best. I asked myself all the time: where am I, where does it leave me? (Gheorghe in Gheorghe, Mark, Vincze 2019)

Travelling across different worlds, and exploring non-dominant differences, through tensions, cracks, and openings that make up the social (Lugones 2003, 5), Gheorghe contributed to making multiple worlds of sense visible, towards a more pluralist feminism. By opening discussions about structural differences, inequality, power, and privilege at the SNSPA gender studies MA she challenged the way Muslim and Roma women were spoken about – as distant, alien, and altered the mainstream feminist discourse (Gheorghe in Gheorghe, Mark, Vincze 2019). Another example is Andreea Braga, from Filia Center and Carmen Gheorghe, from E-Romnja who met while working at “Împreună” (Together) – an organization that focused on developing Roma

communities. After they left “Împreună”, they continued a close collaboration and joint programmes with Roma and non-Roma women communities¹⁶.

Over the years, organizations fighting for gender equality and non-discrimination engaged in strategic coalitions to respond to threats concerning attempts at restricting the right to abortion¹⁷, the inclusion of rape in the mediation law¹⁸, to advocate for the introduction of healthy reproduction and sexuality in schools or to condemn various forms of discrimination¹⁹. However, it seems that strategic coalitions might leave those participating, their subjectivities intact if they do not address underlying tensions by engaging in complex communication. Lugones’ (2007) deep coalitions involve mutually transformative subjectivities and the creation of new meanings (Medina 2020). Compared to strategic coalitions, often directed at the oppressor, deep coalitions are oriented towards connecting multiple liminal subjects onto shattering hegemonic worlds of sense and creating new ones from multiple liminal locations, cementing relational identities (Medina 2020, 219–221). World-travelling might foster the willingness, of those who encounter each other to engage in complex communication, to create new resistant worlds of sense and deep coalitions “to combat the monologisms and false universalisms that are the ruse of coloniality” (Velez and Tuana 2020, 12). But “how do you cross over without taking over?” (Lugones 2010, 755). Coalitional crossings “inevitably produce states of affective dis-ease” (Roshanravan 2020, 126) in which one feels “threatened”, “incompetent”, and “tolerated” – an “unwanted outsider” (Roshanravan 2020, 121). They might involve painful confrontations and losses, rejections, and being summoned for acting in complicity with the very oppressions one may have believed to be against (Roshanravan 2020).

The PolFem campaign is an example of rather failed communication. A 2014 project promoting women’s participation in politics, PolFem was part of a larger campaign financed by the European Commission, in which other organizations in Europe participated²⁰. In PolFem, feminist activists from different NGOs dressed in men’s suits and wore moustaches to draw attention to women’s challenges and low representation in politics. Some queer feminist activists criticized this mode of action as a form of appropriation of drag by non-queer persons, who take advantage of their privileges as heterosexuals, adopting normative femininity (Ruxi 2014). When the tensions escalated, PolFem campaigners consulted members of the LGBT association, ACCEPT, who seemed to confirm their framing while not taking an official position. Some queer activists considered this was an instrumentalization of a “pro-LGBT” discourse while closing off contact with offended people. The feminists

¹⁶ A.F. 2 from Filia.

¹⁷ M.R. 1 from Front; A.T. from Filia.

¹⁸ C.S. 2 from Front; A.F. 2 from Filia.

¹⁹ A.T. from Filia.

²⁰ PolFem Facebook Page https://www.facebook.com/pg/polfem/about/?ref=page_internal.

working in PolFem denounced the latter's aggressivity and blocked them on the campaign's Facebook page (Ruxi 2014).

Another example of difficult communication concerns the edited volume "Problema romaneasca: o analiza a rasismului romanesc" (2019). In the preface of the book, Mihaela Drăgan and Oana Dorobanțu (2019, 8–9) recount that one of the conditions for realisation of the book project was to have parity between Romani and non-Romani authors and coordinators. This demand faced opposition from two non-Romani authors who, "because of their own strongly internalized racism", did not publish with them (Ibidem).

These examples illustrate the challenges when engaging in complex communication. However, from a decolonial feminist standpoint, it seems imperative to do so to avoid becoming complicit with and reproducing coloniality's hierarchical dichotomous categorial logics of erasure (Roshanravan 2020, 121). Responsibility and love should guide those who reside in these worlds with "a maximum sense of ease" (Lugones 2003, 90), but also that yearn recognition to master performance, master resistance, claim center-stage, and "become the best at best practices" (Roshanravan 2020, 127).

In recent years, the consolidation of the anti-gender mobilisations reinforced the necessity of engaging in complex communications towards building deeper alliances. The specific framing against the "gender ideology" started with the 2015 citizens' initiative and the subsequent constitutional referendum to change the definition of the family, to prevent the legalization of same-sex marriage. It continued in 2020, with initiatives aiming to restrict sexual education in schools and to forbid references to gender. Resistance to anti-gender campaigns was organized by larger groups of actors through formal entities, such as the *Coalition for Gender Equality* and the *Antidiscrimination Coalition*, composed of LGBTQI, Romani, feminist, and human rights organizations or punctual informal cooperation, as was the case in 2020, against the adoption of the law proposal that aimed to forbid any discussion about gender in schools and universities. In this latter case, feminist, Romani feminist, LGBTQI, and sex-workers organizations mobilized a protest in front of the Presidential Palace, despite Covid19 restrictions.

Though this organised opposition might be understood as strategic coalitions oriented towards the oppressor, the fact that anti-gender campaigners expressly target contentious issues among feminists, such as transgender or sex-workers' rights, rather than dividing this might open the possibility for addressing tensions and divisions within and among movements, by engaging in complex communication, paving the way towards deeper alliances.

While crossings and travelling contributed to the coagulation of more intersectional politics, accounting for gender, sexuality, and ethnicity, feminist activists' relation with trade unions or groups defending workers' rights has been very weak until now (Mihai 2021). The Covid19 health crisis engendered a transformation by making precarious working conditions in care domains more visible. Politicizing women's work and the double burden, shaped by class, gender, and ethno-racial differences, but also by the inter-

national division of labour, activists, and representatives from trade unions (Cartel Alfa and Impact trade unions), migrant carers groups (DREPT pentru îngrijire), Romani feminist groups (E-Romnja), housing rights movement (FCDL), sex-workers organizations (Sex Work Call) and workers in the arts and culture industry, debates, among others) organized a debate in March 2021, within the campaign #MisoginieCealaltăPandemie (#MisogynyTheOtherPandemic)²¹. Unprecedented communication between trade unions and migrant workers' groups brought to the forefront the rights of migrant carers and the working conditions of social workers. These groups collaborated through protests, petitions, manifestos, and debates, during and after the campaign, engaging in crossings towards each other's worlds of sense, furthering communication between precarious women workers and activists.

Conclusions

While unravelling significant civil society transformations, at the end of the XXst and beginning of the XXIst century, the NGO-ization theory proved its limits in accounting, both for the geopolitical power relations that shape(d) feminist movements and their institutionalization and for the diversity of feminisms and the exclusions operated through the institutionalization of specific forms that became mainstream, hegemonic. A decolonial analytic helped explore these confines precisely because it served to understand the role of the imperial and colonial differences in the build-up of feminist movements in post-socialist spaces, specifically in Romania, and to account for the role played by the Cold War legacy in the historiographic reports about the transnationalisation and institutionalization of feminisms at global level, as well as in shaping the discursive structure of opportunity at a national level.

A decolonial analysis allowed to explore the exclusions engendered by the abovementioned processes and the resulting tensions that shape movements for justice, such as the feminist one, the LGBTI and queer movements, the Romani movements, the housing justice, and the precarious workers. It also helped understand the bridge-building processes beyond the build-up of strategic coalitions, when faced with threats, towards consolidating deeper coalitions, through crossings and travelling and engagement in complex communication with others.

Activists who found themselves in-between movements, those who did not fit within the mainstream liberal framework, built their agenda at times separately, sometimes in the underground, and, at other times, engaged in travelling and crossings, studded with tensions and deceptions but also with joy, stemming from the creation of bridges and solidarities.

²¹ Dezbateri: Munca femeilor și dubla exploatare (Debate: Women's work and the double exploitation) moderated by Oana Uiorean, 20 March 2021; available at: <https://www.facebook.com/TaraMunciiLeftine/videos/1173597223084119>.

While awfully hard, engaging in complex communication, seems to contain the potential to overcome the isolation and separation of different struggles and resistance movements towards consolidating relational identities. Far more than an intellectual endeavour that would remain abstract, decolonial feminist analytic urges to relate lived experiences “to an awareness of what lies hidden, unseen, or unmentioned in the sociocultural worlds we inhabit” (Schutte 2020: 107). It urges not to stop at the creation of affinity-resistant communities nor to see them as an end in themselves, as safe spaces and gated communities, within the oppressive hegemonic order, or as “additive pluralities that cohabit spaces without friction”, but to travel and cross towards “conflictual pluralities that pose contested narratives” (Alcoff 2020), because inhabiting the limen it is not revolutionary in itself, but rather a “creative preparation” (Lugones 2006, 79).

ANNEX

Interview list

Name-unrelated acronyms	Organization/ collective	Place	Date	Duration of the interview
I.C.	Filia	Bucharest	25.06.2015	60:04
M.C.	ANES	Bucharest	19.02.2016	62:41
M.P.	CPE	Bucharest	29.06.2016	32:19
B.M.	Filia	Bucharest	27.01.2016	67:44
C.T.	Filia	Skype	27.02.2016	131:10
M.R. 1	Front	Bucharest	7.07.2016	60:23
M.M. 2	CPE	Bucharest	4.02.2016	107:23
C.B.	Filia	Bucharest	25.06.2015	163:37
C.L.1	Dysnomia, Claca, Biblioteca Alternativa	Bucharest	25.06.2015	111:39
B.T.	Biblioteca Alternativa	Bucharest	26.06.2015	68:26
A.F. 2	Filia	Bucharest	26.01.2016	84:58
C.S. 2	Front	Bucharest	3.07.2016	36:19
A.T.	Filia	Bucharest	1.02.2016	94:55

References

- Alcoff, Linda Martín. 2020. “Lugones’s World-Making.” *Critical Philosophy of Race* 8 (1–2): 199–211.
- Aldawood, Danielle. 2018. *Decolonizing Human Rights Education*. Arizona State University, PhD thesis.
- Alvarez, Sonia E. 1999. “Advocating Feminism: the Latin American Feminist NGO ‘Boom,’” *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 1 (2): 181–209.
- Ana, Alexandra. 2019. *The NGO-ization of Social Movements in Neoliberal Times: Contemporary Feminisms in Romania and Belgium*. Scuola Normale Superiore, PhD thesis.

- Ana, Alexandra. 2020. "Hope as Master Frame in Feminist Mobilization: Between Liberal NGO-ization and Radical-Intersectional Street Politics." *Hope and Nostalgia at the Intersection between Welfare and Culture*, ed. by A. Hellström, Ov. C. Norocel, and M. Bak Jørgensen, 185–202. Amsterdam: Springer.
- Anzaldúa, Gloria. 1987. *Borderlands/La frontera: The New Mestiza*. San Francisco: The Aunt Lute Books.
- Armillei, Riccardo. 2018. *The 'Camps System' in Italy: Corruption, Inefficiencies and Practices of Resistance*. Amsterdam: Springer.
- Avanza, Martina. 2018. "Plea for an Emic Approach Towards 'Ugly Movements': Lessons from the Divisions within the Italian Pro-life Movement." *Politics and Governance* 6 (3): 112–125.
- Ban, Cornel. 2015. "Beyond Anticommunism: The Fragility of Class Analysis in Romania." *East European Politics and Societies* 29 (3): 640–650.
- Banaszak, Lee Ann, Karen Beckwith, and Dieter Rucht, eds. 2003. *Women's Movements Facing the Reconfigured State*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Banaszak, Lee Ann. 2010. *The Women's Movement Inside and Outside the State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Băluță, Oana. 2010. "Cui îi mai e Frică de Feminism ? Feminismul Romanesc si Valul Sau," *Dilema Veche*, <https://dilemaveche.ro/sectiune/tema-saptamanii/articol/feminismul-romanesc-si-valul-sau>
- Bernal, Victoria. 2001. "Equality to Die For?: Women Guerrilla Fighters and Eritrea's Cultural Revolution," *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 23 (2): 61–76.
- Bernal, Victoria, and Inderpal Grewal. 2014. "The NGO Form: Feminist Struggles, States, and Neoliberalism." *Theorizing NGOs: States, Feminisms, and Neoliberalism*, ed. by V. Bernal and G. Inderpal, 1–18. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Bhabha, Homi. 1984. "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse." *October* 28: 125–133.
- Blackwell, Maylei. 2011. *Chicana Power! Contested Histories of Feminism in the Chicano Movement*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Boatcă, Manuela. 2010. "Multiple Europes and the Politics of Difference Within." *The Study of Europe*, ed. by H. Brunkhorst, G. Grözinger, 51–66. Nomos, Verlagsgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG.
- Boatcă, Manuela. 2015. "The Quasi-Europes: World Regions in Light of the Imperial Difference." *Global Crises and the Challenges of the 21st Century*, ed. by T. Reifer, 132–154. Oxon: Routledge.
- Brooks, Ethel. 2009. "(Mis)recognitions: Romanies, Sexualities, Sincerities." *Nevi Sara Kali, Revista femeilor rome*, ed. by L. Mark and E. Magyari-Vincze, 21–29. Cluj: Editura Fundatiei Desire.
- Čisáň, Ondřej. 2010. "Externally Sponsored Contention: the Channelling of Environmental Movement Organisations in the Czech Republic after the Fall of Communism," *Environmental Politics* 19 (5): 736–755
- Cîrstoceana, Ioana. 2008. "Between the Past and the West: Le Dilemme du Féminisme en Europe de l'Est Postcommuniste." *Sociétés contemporaines* 3: 7–27.
- Coalitia pentru Egalitate de Gen, 2019. "Scrisoare Deschisa către Guvern Privind Accesul Elevilor și Tinerilor la Informații Privind Egalitatea de Gen și Sănătatea Reproduserii", 20 November, <https://ongen.ro/scrisoare-deschisa-catre-guvern-privind-accesul-elevilor-si-tinerilor-la-informatii-privind-egalitatea-de-gen-si-sana-tatea-reproducerii/>

- Costache, Ioanida. 2019. "Politica Diferențelor: Romii ca Homo Sacer în Discursul Public Naționalist și Rasist sau de ce Materializarea Stereotipurilor Este Dăunătoare," *Problema Românească: O Analiză a Rasismului Românesc*, ed. by M. Drăgan and O. Dorbobanțu, 13–23. București: Hecate.
- Cotera, Maria, Maylei Blackwell, and Dionne Espinoza. 2018. "Introduction: Movements, Movimientos, and Movidas." *Chicana Movidas: New Narratives of Activism and Feminism in the Movement Era*, ed. by D. Espinoza, and M. Blackwell, 1–30. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Coy, Patrick G., and Timothy Hedeem. 2005. "A Stage Model of Social Movement Co-optation: Community Mediation in the United States," *The Sociological Quarterly* 46 (3): 405–435.
- Crenshaw, Kimberle. 1990. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color." *Stanford Law Review* 43 (6): 1241–1299.
- De Haan, Francisca. 2010. "Continuing Cold War Paradigms in Western Historiography of Transnational Women's Organisations: The Case of the Women's International Democratic Federation." *Women's History Review* 19 (4): 547–573.
- Della Porta, Donatella, and Mario Diani. 2006. *Social Movements: An Introduction*. Malden: Blackwell.
- Drăgan, Mihaela, and Oana Dorobanțu. 2019. "Prefata," *Problema Românească: O Analiză a Rasismului Românesc*, ed. by M. Drăgan and O. Dorbobanțu, 7–11. București: Hecate.
- Escobar, Arturo. 2007. "Worlds and Knowledges Otherwise: The Latin American Modernity/Coloniality Research Program." *Cultural Studies* 21 (2–3): 179–210.
- European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI). 2014. "Fourth Report on Romania", 3 June, <https://rm.coe.int/fourth-report-on-romania/168094d771>
- European Court of Human Rights. 2016. Case of Boatcă and others v. Romania, no. 40355/11, January 12, <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/fre#%22itemid%22:%22001-159914%22>
- European Court of Human Rights. 2017. Case of Ciorcan and others v. Romania, no. 29414/09 and 44841/09, January 17.
- European Court of Human Rights. 2019. Case of Lingurar v. Romania, no. 48474/14, April 16, <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%22itemid%22:%22001-192466%22>
- Fábíán, Katalin. 2007. "Making an Appearance: The Formation of Women's Groups in Hungary." *Aspasia* 1 (1): 103–127.
- Fagan, Adam, and Indraneel Sircar. 2013. "Environmental Movement Activism in the Western Balkans: Evidence from Bosnia-Herzegovina," *Beyond NGO-ization. The Development of Social Movements in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. by S. Saxonberg and K. Jacobsson, 213–236. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Finnemore, Martha, and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change," *International Organization* 52 (4): 887–917.
- Flores, Stephanie. 2014. "Redefining Reproductive Rights in an Age of Cultural Revolution." *On Our Terms: The Undergraduate Journal of the Athena Center for Leadership Studies at Barnard College* 2 (1): 1–32.
- Fraser, Arvonne S. 1987. *The U.N. Decade for Women: Documents and Dialogue*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Fraser, Nancy. 2013. *Fortunes of Feminism. From State-Managed Capitalism to Neoliberal Crisis*. London: Verso
- Fraser, Nancy. 2016. "Progressive Neoliberalism versus Reactionary Populism: A Choice that Feminists Should Refuse." *NORA-Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* 24 (4): 281–284.

- Frunză, Mihaela. 2004. "Equal Chances? The Ambiguity of the Romanian Liberal Feminist Discourse." *Gender and the (Post)'East'/'West' Divide*, ed. by M. Frunză, and Th.-E. Văcărescu, 97–110. Cluj-Napoca: Limes.
- Furtună, Adrian-Nicolae. 2019. "O Istorie a Rușinii. Discurs Ideologizant între Robia Țiganilor în Moldova și Țara Românească și Sclavia Romilor în Spațiul Românesc." *Problema Românească: O Analiză a Rasismului Românesc*, ed. by M. Drăgan and O. Dorbobanțu, 24–36. București: Hecate.
- Georghe, Carmen. 2010. "Privește-mă Așa Cum Sunt. Cuvinte și Imagini ale Femeilor Rome." *h. arta*.
- Georghe, Carmen. 2019. "Cu Fustele-n Cap pentru Feminismul Rom" *Problema Românească: O Analiză a Rasismului Românesc* ed. by M. Drăgan and O. Dorbobanțu, 135–148. București: Hecate.
- Georghe, Carmen, and Letitia Mark, Eniko Vincze. 2019. "Towards an Anti-Racist Feminism for Social Justice in Romania." *The Romani Women's Movement: Struggles and Debates in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. by A. Kóczé, V. Zentai, J. Jovanović, and E. Vincze, 111–134. Oxon: Routledge.
- Gomez-Barris, Macarena. 2017. *The Extractive Zone: Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Gradskova, Yulia. 2020. Women's International Democratic Federation, the 'Third World' and the Global Cold War from the Late-1950s to the Mid-1960s. *Women's History Review* 29 (2): 270–288.
- Grosfoguel, Ramon. 2000. "Developmentalism, Modernity, and Dependency Theory in Latin America." *Nepantla: Views from South* 1 (2): 347–374.
- Grunberg, Laura. 2000. "Women's NGOs in Romania." *Reproducing Gender: Politics, Publics, and Everyday Life After Socialism*, ed. by S. Gal and G. Kligman, 307–336. Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Halley, Janet. 2006. *Split Decisions: How and Why to Take a Break from Feminism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Harvey, David. 2007. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford University Press.
- Helms, Elissa. 2014. "The Movementization of NGOs? Women's Organizing in Postwar Bosnia- Herzegovina." *Theorizing NGOs: States, Feminism, and Neoliberalism*, ed. by V. Bernal and I. Grewal, 21–49. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Hemment, Julie. 2014. "Global Civil Society and the Local Costs of Belonging: Defining Violence against Women in Russia." *Theorizing NGOs: States, Feminism, and Neoliberalism*, ed. by V. Bernal and I. Grewal, 815–840. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Hibou, Beatrice. 2012. *La Bureaucratization du Monde à l'Ère Néolibérale*. Paris: La Découverte.
- Hoagland, Sara Lucia. 2020. "Aspects of the Coloniality of Knowledge." *Critical Philosophy of Race* 8 (1–2): 48–60.
- Hodžić, Saida. 2014. "Feminist Bastards: Toward a Posthumanist Critique of NGOization." *Theorizing NGOs: States, Feminism, and Neoliberalism*, ed. by V. Bernal and I. Grewal, 221–247. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Iancu, Valentina. 2019. "Contribuția Artelor Vizuale la Definirea Rasismului Românesc în Perioada Formării Statului-Națiune." *Problema Românească: O Analiză a Rasismului Românesc*, ed. by M. Drăgan and O. Dorbobanțu, 37–53. București: Hecate.
- Jacobsson, Kerstin. 2013. "Channeling and Enrollment: The Institutional Shaping of Animal Rights Activism in Poland." *Beyond NGO-ization. The Development of*

Social Movements in Central and Eastern Europe, ed. by S. Saxonberg and K. Jacobsson, 27–49. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing.

- Jacobsson, Kerstin and Steven Saxonberg. 2013. "The Development of Social Movements in Central and Eastern Europe." *Beyond NGO-ization. The development of social movements in Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. by K. Jacobsson and S. Saxonberg, 1–25. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing.
- Kaneva, Nadia, and Delia Popescu. 2014. "We are Romanian, not Roma: Nation Branding and Postsocialist Discourses of Alterity." *Communication, Culture & Critique*, 7 (4): 506–523.
- Kantola, Johanna, and Judith Squires. 2012. "From State Feminism to Market Feminism?." *International Political Science Review* 33 (4): 382–400.
- Kardam, Nüket. 2007. "The Role of National Mechanisms in Promoting Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Turkey Experience." *Cairo: EUROMED Project on Role of Women in Economic Life*.
- Karkov, Nikolay R., and Zhivka Valiavicharska. 2018. «Rethinking East-European Socialism: Notes toward an Anti-capitalist Decolonial Methodology.» *Interventions* 20 (6): 785–813.
- Korolczuk, Elżbieta, and Agnieszka Graff. 2018. "Gender as 'Ebola from Brussels': The Anticolonial Frame and the Rise of Illiberal Populism." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 43 (4): 797–821.
- Kovács, Éva. 2009. "The 'Fact' of Gypsiness. A Case from Hungary." *Nevi Sara Kali. Roma Women's Journal* 1: 30–44.
- Kuhar, Roman, and David Paternotte, eds. 2017. *Anti-Gender Campaigns in Europe: Mobilizing against Equality*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Laforest, Rachel, and Michael Orsini. 2005. "Evidence-based Engagement in the Voluntary Sector: Lessons from Canada." *Social Policy & Administration* 39 (5): 481–497.
- Lang, Sabine. 1997. "The NGOization of Feminism. Institutionalization and Institution Building within the German Women's Movements." *Transitions, Environments, Translations: Feminism in International Politics*, ed. by C. Kaplan, J. Scott, and D. Keates, 101–120. New York: Routledge.
- Lugones, María. 2003. *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes: Theorizing Coalition against Multiple Oppressions*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- Lugones, María. 2007. "Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System." *Hypatia* 22 (1): 186–219.
- Lugones, María. 2010. "Toward a Decolonial Feminism." *Hypatia* 25 (4): 742–759.
- Lugones, María. 2014. "Indigenous Movements and Decolonial Feminism." *Seminario de Grado y Posgrado, Department of Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, The Ohio State University*, 21st March, <https://wgss.osu.edu/sites/wgss.osu.edu/files/LugonesSeminarReadings.pdf>50
- Lugones, Maria. 2020. "Gender and Universality in Colonial Methodology." *Critical philosophy of Race* 8 (1–2): 25–47.
- Massino, Jill, and Raluca Maria Popa. 2015. "The Good, the Bad, and the Ambiguous: Women and the Transition from Communism to Pluralism in Romania." *Gender (In) Equality and Gender Politics in Southeastern Europe: A Question of Justice*, ed. by C. Hassenstab, and S. Ramet, 171–191. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Magyari-Vincze, Eniko. 2006. *Excluderea Socială la Intersecția dintre Gen, Etnicitate și Clasă*. Cluj: Editura Fundației pentru Studii Europene.
- Magyari-Vincze, Eniko, 2009. "Cine Suntem?" *Nevi Sara Kali, Revista femeilor rome*, ed. by L. Mark and E. Magyari-Vincze, 13–20. Cluj: Editura Fundatiei Desire.

- Marcos, Sylvia. 2006. *Taken from the Lips: Gender and Eros in Mesoamerican Religions*. Leiden: Brill Academic Pub.
- Marincea, Adina. 2021. *AstA (nu) e o Poveste de DrAgoste! LoveKills, Punk și Primii 20 de Ani de Anarcha-feminism în România*. Pagini Libere.
- Martinez, Pilar Rodriguez. 2011. "Feminism and Violence: The Hegemonic Second Wave's Encounter with Rape and Domestic Abuse in USA (1970–1985)." *Cultural Dynamics* 23 (3): 147–172.
- Medina, José, 2020. "Complex Communication and Decolonial Struggles: The Forging of Deep Coalitions through Emotional Echoing and Resistant Imaginations." *Critical Philosophy of Race*, 8 (1–2): 212–236.
- Meier, Petra, and David Paternotte. 2017. "La Professionnalisation des Luttes pour L'Égalité de Genre: les enjeux." *La Professionnalisation des Luttes pour L'Égalité: Enjeux Théoriques et Politiques*, ed. by D. Paternotte and P. Meier. Louvain-la-Neuve: Academia/L'Harmattan.
- Meyer, David, and Sydeny Tarrow. 1998. "A Movement Society: Contentious Politics for a New Century." *The Social Movements Society: Contentious Politics for a New Century*, ed. by D. Meyer and S. Tarrow. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Mignolo, Walter. 2002. "The Geopolitics of Knowledge and the Colonial Difference." *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 101 (1): 57–96.
- Mignolo, Walter. 2011. *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Mihai, Tudorina. 2021. "Acțiuni Civice Feministe din România. O Cartografiere din Perspectiva Relației cu Critica de Clasă." *Critica Socială și Artistică a Capitalismului Românesc*, ed. by S. Gog, M. Braniște, and C. Turcuș, 121–138. Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană.
- Miroiu, Mihaela. 1994. "From Pseudo-power to Lack of Power." *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 1 (1): 107–110.
- Miroiu, Mihaela. 1999. *Societatea Retro*. Bucharest: Editura Trei.
- Miroiu, Mihaela. 2004a. *Drumul catre Autonomie. Teorii Politice Feministe*. Iasi: Polirom.
- Miroiu, Mihaela. 2004b. "State Men, Market Women. The Effects of Left Conservatism on Gender Politics in Romanian Transition." *Feminismo/s* 3: 207–234.
- Miroiu, Mihaela. 2006. *Nepretutele Femei. Publicistică feministă*. Iasi: Polirom.
- Miroiu, Mihaela. 2009. "An Exotic Island: Feminist Philosophy in Romania." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 34 (2): 233–239.
- Miroiu, Mihaela. 2010. "'Not the right moment!' Women and the politics of endless delay in Romania." *Women's History Review* 19 (4): 575–593.
- Moloea, Andreea. 2015. "(Re)constructia Feminismului Romanesc in cadrul Miscarii de Femei (1990-2000)." *Mișcări Feministe și Ecologiste în România (1990–2014)*, ed. by M. Miroiu. Iasi: Polirom.
- Mudure, Mihaela. 2004. "A Zeugmatic Space: East/ Central European Feminisms." *Gender and the (Post) 'East' / 'West' European Divide*, ed. by M. Frunză, and T. Văcărescu, 1–10. Cluj-Napoca: Limes.
- O'Reilly, Kathleen. 2014. "Resolving a Gendered Paradox: Women's Participation and the NGO Boom in North India." *Theorizing NGOs: States, Feminisms, and Neoliberalism*, ed. by V. Bernal, and G. Inderpal, 143–166. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Open Society Institute. 2020. *Bending the Bow: Targeting Women's Rights and Opportunities*. Network Women's Program.

- Ong, Aihwa. 2006. *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Oprea, Alexandra. 2004. "Re-envisioning Social Justice from the Ground up: Including the Experiences of Romani Women." *Essex human rights review* 1 (1): 29–39.
- Oprea, Alexandra. 2012. "Romani Feminism in Reactionary Times." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 38 (1): 11–21.
- Paternotte, David. 2016. "The NGOization of LGBT Activism: ILGA-Europe and the Treaty of Amsterdam." *Social Movement Studies* 15 (4): 388–402.
- Petrova, Tsveta, and Sidney Tarrow. 2007. "Transactional and Participatory Activism in the Emerging European Polity: The Puzzle of East-Central Europe." *Comparative political studies* 40 (1): 74–94.
- Popa, Raluca Maria. 2009. "Translating Equality between Women and Men across Cold War Divides: Women Activists from Hungary and Romania and the Creation of International Women's Year." *Gender politics and everyday life in state socialist Eastern and Central Europe*, 59–74. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Popa, Bogdan. 2019. "Antirasismul și Politica Frecvențelor Joase." *Problema românească: o analiză a rasismului românesc*, ed. by M. Drăgan and O. Dorboanțu, 98–111. București: Hecate.
- Quijano, Anibal. 2000. "Coloniality of Power and Eurocentrism in Latin America." *International Sociology* 15 (2): 215–232.
- Reagon, Johnson. [1983] 2000. "Coalition Politics: Turning the Century." *Home Girls: a Black Feminist Anthology*, ed. by B. Smith, 343–356. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Red Network. 2013. "Extremist Group Proposes to Pay Roma Women Who Get Sterilized," 10 January, <http://www.red-network.eu/?i=red-network.en.items&id=1015>
- Richardson, Troy. 2012. "Disrupting the Coloniality of Being: Toward De-colonial Ontologies in Philosophy of Education." *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 31 (6): 539–551.
- Roshanravan, Shireen. 2020. "Compelled to Cross, Tempted to Master: Affective Challenges in Lugones's Decolonial Feminist Methodology." *Critical Philosophy of Race* 8 (1–2): 119–133.
- Roy, Arundhati. 2004. "The NGO-ization of Resistance," 16 August <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgYaZAUzwuY>
- Roy, Arundhati. 2014. *Capitalism: A Ghost Story*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.
- Roy, Srila. 2017. "The Positive Side of Co-optation? Intersectionality: A Conversation between Inderpal Grewal and Srila Roy," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 19 (2): 254–262.
- Ruxi. 2014. "Feminisme si Delimitari", Blog F.I.A., 11 February, <https://fia.pimienta.org/weblog/?p=2571>
- Sandu, Laura. 2021. "Spații Feministe de Stânga: Dinamici Formatoare," *Critica Socială și Artistică a Capitalismului Românesc*, ed. by S. Gog, M. Braniște, and C. Turcuș, 139–156. Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană.
- Schiwy, Freya. 2007. «Decolonization and the Question of Subjectivity: Gender, Race, and Binary Thinking.» *Cultural studies* 21 (2–3): 271–294.
- Schutte, Ofelia. 2020. «Border Zones, In-Between Spaces, and Turns: On Lugones, the Coloniality of Gender, and the Diasporic Peregrina.» *Critical Philosophy of Race* 8 (1–2): 102–118.

- Sloat, Amanda. 2005. "The Rebirth of Civil Society. The Growth of Women's NGOs in Central and Eastern Europe," *European Journal of Women's Studies* 12 (4): 437–452.
- Szente, Veronika Leila. 1996. "Sudden Rage at Dawn: Violence against Roma in Romania." *A Report by European Roma Rights Center*.
- Thompson, Becky. 2002. "Multiracial Feminism: Recasting the Chronology of Second Wave Feminism." *Feminist Studies* 28 (2): 337–60.
- Tlostanova, Madina. 2010. *Gender Epistemologies and Eurasian Borderlands*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Tlostanova, Madina, and Walter Mignolo. 2009. "Global Coloniality and the Decolonial option." *Kult* 6: 130–147.
- Țichindeleanu, Ovidiu. 2010. "Where Are We When We Think in Eastern Europe?" *Art Always Has Its Consequences*, 85–91. Zagreb: WHW/Tranzit/kuda/ Muzeum Stzuki.
- Velez, Emma. and Nancy Tuana. 2020. "Editors' Introduction Tango Dancing with María Lugones: Toward Decolonial Feminisms." *Critical Philosophy of Race*, 8 (1): 1–24.
- Vergès, Françoise. 2017. *Le Ventre des Femmes: Capitalisme, Racialisation, Féminisme*. Paris: Albin Michel.
- Verloo, Mieke, and David Paternotte. 2018. "The Feminist Project under Threat in Europe." *Politics and Governance* 6 (3): 1–5.
- Vincze, Enikő. 2016. "The Racialization of Roma in the 'New' Europe and the Political Potential of Romani Women." *AnALize: Revista de studii feministe* 7 (21): 60–66.
- Vincze Eniko. 2019. Rasializarea Romilor în Noua Europă și Potențialul Politic al Femeilor Rome in *Problema Românească: O Analiză a Rasismului Românesc*, 121–135. București: Hecate.
- Vlad, Ioana. 2013. *Women's Rights Activism in Romania after 2000. Studies on the Forms of Organization, cooperation, action and influence*, Doctoral thesis.
- United Nations, Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. 2010. Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Supplement 18 (A/65/18).
- United Nations, Committee against Torture. 2015. Concluding Observations on the Second Periodic Report of Romania <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/815802?ln=en>
- United States Department of State. 2014. "2013 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Romania", 27 February <https://www.refworld.org/docid/53284a82b.html>