

need for the formation of new social binds within the changed political order was answered by manifold elaborations of various convictions, projections and, most significantly, by regressions to some almost forgotten values in an effort for social agents to impose their ideological or even straight political hegemony. Although the countries in Eastern Europe represent a vast diversity, we may assume that they are all mostly occupied with a very much controversial construction of society. Politics of gender and the corresponding ideologies, almost un-important or at least less critically exposed in the time of opposition to the bureaucratic socialism, took a place on the central stage.

With some exceptions (notably Romania), the socialist societies in the last decades of their existence introduced many reforms in the domain of sexual politics. The communist parties in a desperate search to modernise their ideologies, along with an effort to patch up the economic systems, introduced a range of reforms in the “soft sectors” of society, such as education and culture and, last but not least, in the domain of rights of women. Therefore, it is not surprising that especially in Central European countries (mostly sharing common Catholic tradition) new governments introduced (or were at least exposed to such pressures) explicit or implicit policies for reducing women’s rights. This reduction of rights touches most explicitly upon the right to have abortion on demand.

Conservatism and Traditionalism vs Freedom of Choice

Many efforts of political groups, and characteristically the Catholic Church, to cancel or limit women’s rights have become a boring fact of daily life in most former socialist countries. On the phenomenal level something very similar to what has taken place in the USA in 1980s occurred. Questions of abortion, along with the neoliberal concepts of economy, became a constitutive element of a new variance of conservative ideology. Although the underlying social circumstances are plausibly totally different, American slogans and pointed phraseology entered the ideological discourse of various traditionalist political groups. Among such slogans we can find the “right to life”, coined by the Family Division within NCCB (National Conference of Catholic Bishops) in USA in 1970. (All references to the American anti-abortionism are to be found in Petchesky, 1986.) Later on, when the front against abortion broadened, miscellaneous forms of the protestant fundamentalism, groups of the orthodox Jews, Mormons and black Muslims entered in to its ranks. This strongly religiously marked social bases of the