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WOMEN AND THE ORTHODOX VIEW

THE CHALLENGES OF THE CONTEMPORANEITY

- MISSIONARY PERSPECTIVE -

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THE ORTODOX VISION ON THE WOMAN AND THE CONTEMPORANEITY CHALLENGES

- MISSIONARY PERSPECTIVE -

The Church's mission in a post-modern society requires a complex analysis of the reality from the theological perspective, identify the major issues that worry and disturb society, and also according to them, a coherent strategy covering all responses to the challenges of the contemporary Church.

Contemporary man, living in this post-modern society, gravitating in a lesser or greater extent between the two fundamentals idols of today's world: the idol of power and the pleasure, these ones transforming the society into a mixture of utilitarianism and hedonism, making us “pray” to the so-called "Trinity" of the evil given by the verbs: to have, to be able to and to want, in a materialistic and autonomous manner. Suffering from loneliness, lack of authentic meaning in life, selfishness, individualism and consumerism, seeking a real and sincere communion, a viable alternative to all this.

When analyzing the orthodox view on the woman and the challenges regarding her in the contemporaneity, from the missionary perspective, we must have in mind that for the Church woman is fundamental, both in terms of man's relationship with God in the Church and society, and in the Divine economy plan where the woman effort to acquire salvation with her family along is considerable.

This doctoral thesis aims to finalize the relationship between man, woman, children and society from an eminently missionary perspective, emphasizing on the missionary priorities of women in the contemporaneity.

Before being valued and recognized as such in the Church and in the Christendom, the woman was evaluated both in terms of pre-Christian or post-Christian religions and philosophically. Moreover, pre and post Christian religious vision blends with the philosophical one, attending the that religious vision and we see with sorrow that this was not valued, but rather depreciated due to shortfalls of Revelation that were supposed to defend the role and status of women in family, religion and society .

Thus, in all these contexts, woman is considered inferior ontologically speaking to man, without having any rights and any freedoms, just like he does.

Being created “after God's image”, the human being has just like her Creator an Apophatic size, that does not leave easily herself to be defined or restricted in human conceptions.

Much more harder it is when considering a Christian conception about the human being, which believes that the current state of the human being is not a „natural" one, in line with the relational plan of God, but is one of failure, of abnormality.

But the Divine Revelation, reveals us that the human being must attain a new state, a state of holiness, different from both the heavenly, prototype one, as well as from the current one, the one of the fall.

However, nothing is more normal and impetuously necessary to human kind like to know himself and his becoming history.

I think that the emergence of the feminist movement is due to this precise failure of defining the human being as a relational being, the definition of human being, not as individual but as a relationship. The human being cannot come to the likeness of God, if it didn't previously come to light in himself the image of God that is expressed also through its relational character.

The philosophical thinking or the pagan religious thinking floundered precisely on this revelation truth, which is that the human being is a relational being created after the Trinitarian model, having common nature, but different personal functions.

Unfamiliar with the Trinity dogma, monotheistic or polytheistic ancient thinking separated the human being because of the inability of referral of the common nature of man and woman. Living in a world of pride that cultivated physical strength and pride, the ancients saw in man their ideal expression of humanity, and so positioning woman on a lower tier.

This work begins with Chapter I, „Woman from a inter-religious and philosophical perspective" addressing the vision on women within monotheistic religions: “**Judaism**,” (Subsection 1.1.1, pg. 10) and “**Islamism**” (Subchapter 1.2, pg. 33), then in Eastern religions: “**Hinduism**,” (Subsection 1.2.1, pg. 50) and “**Confucianism**” (Subsection 1.2.2, pg. 64), then reaching the ancient vision on woman, “**The Roman Antiquity**” (Subchapter 1.3., pg. 69).

If in Greece the urban civilization gradually led to the confinement of women in apocarps, the Judaic world emphasized woman's depreciation through religious justification. In

the previous century before Jesus' birth, the synagogues are demonstrating the categorically gender separatism between man and woman by building different places in the houses of prayer, women remaining behind and being registered the contempt for them by the rabbinic prayer itself, addressing thanks to God from those who were not born „*pagans or women*”.

Excluded from the religious life, sold like cattle or rejected by suspends through divorce,, book paints " they formed, just like the slaves, a sub-social blanket with no rights. The exceptional cases of women that became famous in Jewish history are there only to confirm that only an act of heroism can remove women from their anonymity.

Oriental mentality that concerns the status and social position of women, falls and is defined best by one of Manu's precepts, falling also in Israel „ *woman during childhood, depends on her father, during her youth, on her husband; if her husband dies, on her sons, if she has no sons, on the close relatives of her husband, because she should not follow her own way.* "

In ancient times, surrounded by an intensely patriarchal society, Judaism, having at his turn a patriarchal role too, women's role is influenced by this character and the Hebrew attitude towards women is modeled by the Hebrew law Halah in an ambivalent way, oscillating between respect and preservation of stereotypical notions.¹

Jewish mindset about women and family involves these presences in Jew's life: "Who does not have a woman, has no joy, no blessing, neither the good nor the Torah, no moat, no peace, no life"says a rabbinic saying.

The Jew woman had however a great value compared to women of other nations, which is based on the Revelation mission that this nation has had in history until the coming of Christ, but she was subdued to the man, the „*pater familias*", who had almost discretionary powers, being head of the family, but not only head in the sens enshrined in Christianity but also a kind of despot's house, the woman is a kind of ownership of her husband, being purchased under the laws of those times.

The society being a patriarchal one, man was one around which all revolved and the center of gravity of the Israelite woman was her home life.

The mentalities on women in Judaism are: one of ritual nature, she having no access to the temple, cannot participate in any cultic life, and one of social nature, the woman being seen as a good of her husband and a property, her duty as a woman being to procreate.

¹ *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Judaism*, Publisher Hassefer, Bucharest, 2000.

The absolute authority in the family was given to the „baal” husband, which exercised his power over his wife, the wife having rights and freedoms only in the context of this authority. The woman was fundamentally linked to property rights, being one of the assets of the family head, her crucial role being to beget as many children as she could. This function of procreation, it is also one that determine her status in society.

Within the family, so in the social nucleus where she lived, her appreciation grew when becoming a mother, and especially when she was having a son (Gen.16,4) because the father with multiple sons ensure continuity of the name and the family (I Samuel 4.20 Samuel 12, 18; Rut.4,13), and her husband was more tied to her and her children owed her obedience and respect, just like to their father (Exodus 20.12). The greater number of new born children was, the greater her prestige in society was, „ ... of them the firstborn had special rights, a double inheritance to others, priestly dignity and guardianship on the younger brothers. ”

Notable is Leah’s attitude that at Asher’s birth said: „To my happiness was born, the women will call me blessed ”(Genesis, 30,13).

Infertility attracted public opprobrium being considered divine curse due to personal sins, that attracted the scorn of all, especially the concubines who gave birth to babies like in the case of Anna and Penina, Elkana’s women (I Kings 1), or Sarah and Hagar (Gen. 16.4-5) and the jealousy of the fruitless.

Demeaning for women and reinforcement of the fact that the woman does not have the same rights and privileges as her husband, always in a relationship of subordination to him, it is the practice of polygamous marriage where the woman is forced to live with her husband and his many other wives.

At the beginning of biblical history, we are presented with the monogamous marriage, as God has always desired to for humanity. Polygamy appears as an abnormal state, generalized in certain moments of Israelite society (Deuteronomy 21:15), where wife could easily be repudiated by man because she was representing just one of his assets (Exit 20.15).

Hebrew men could divorce their wives at will,² divorce being another disease that grind the good reports in the relationships between husbands family in the Old Testament.

² Onciu Isidore, *Manual of Biblical Archaeology*, Chernivtsi, 1884, p.309; Pr.Pof.Dr.Dumitru Abrudan, and Diac.Prof.Dr. Cornițescu, *Emilian Biblical Archaeology* Bucharest, 1994, p.126-135.

In the Old Testament, those who benefit from social protection were poor, widows, orphans and strangers.

Widows fit into the category of those who could not possess a property, thus lacking the daily basis existence, and in its prescriptions the Law put them under divine protection and the care of the society.

After oriental old law, a woman became „ *almanac* " (Deuter.24,19-20) when after the death of her husband she had no good son or a half to maintain her and could not contract a Levira marriage.

Also in the help of the widow, demonstrating compassion and care compared to the neighboring peoples, it is seen the **levirate obligation**³, because through it is carefully considered not only the welfare of the extended family, the descendants thus gain but also care for welfare person⁴, and a man refusing to fulfill this obligation was considered of public shame.

Subchapter 1.2. treats Islam's vision regarding the woman.

Islam is the monotheistic religion that is based on the Quran and whose prophet is Muhammad.

Islam, in Arabic „ *ibada* " (ibadat), through its ritual practices, is trying to approximate the believer to God and the conscientious fulfillment of obligations in the ritual ensures peace of mind to the individual.

Among them, are essential the testimony of faith, prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, alms, ritual that is strictly governed by Muslim law, both based on the Quran and tradition (hadith), which include words and deeds of the Prophet.

The weight given to each of the five ritual practice called „the five pillars” varies by sex, time and place.

The lower condition of the woman apparent from the way one is dealing with these practices, the majority of regulations aimed at men and women being „forgiven” regarding the fasting when breastfeeding; if not accompanied they can quit the pilgrimage practice and common prayer is not obligatory for them; the mosque entrance is separate from that of men, and they have a special place for them. Instead, they maintain „ the worship of saints ", foster

³ *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Judaism*, Hassefer Publishing, Bucharest, 2000.

⁴ Willis, M. Timothy, *Levirate Lons*, in *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, London, 1990, p.434.

superstition and magic which are combated fervently in Islamic teaching. In general, female religiosity is more concrete facts and external attitudes, but poorer in introspection⁵.

Marc Helys says in his work „ *Le jardin ferme* "that in Islam „ social life" in the sense that we give to this word does not exist, Muslim society being divided into two distinct and hostile world: the world of women and that of men⁶.

Dominique Sourdel paints the portrait of the Muslim woman: *“up to seven years, the boy is raised by women, then learn a trade with his father. Girls for marriage, are kept in the house and are devoid of any teaching”*. The role of the Muslim woman is not to educate or to train, she barely knows how to recite the prayer.

We can say that the woman's sphere of activity taking place within the home, where they enjoy limited freedom, because the family is founded on Islamic authority father made for him, and doomed with his death. Therefore, the role of women in social life is only one of sister, wife or mother, without being held to be a passive instrument of responsibilities and pleasures of man.

In such a society, the woman never has the independence or initiative and is not legally subject to a matrimonial than transactions. Not just the old pre-Islamic traditions but Qur'anic prescriptions woman sits in a state of inferiority to man. „ *Men - says the Coran- are superior to women, because God has given them precedence over them and because they endow them of their belongings*, "quote eloquently showing that gender inequality has its substrate in law divine, she is not considered a human being in the true sense of the word: „ *Your wives are for you as a field; So click on your field as you please. But before that trained and soul and fear of God, knowing that you come before him* "(II, 223).

This mindset wrong woman on nature has its echo and reflect on all the circumstances is a woman in Islamic society.

For a thorough scan of how a woman is perceived in Muslim society, it is necessary to consider the conditions in which it appears and develops Islam Arab group deserves special attention because it is the largest community that exerts an influence modeling continues on other groups.

Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, did not make too many innovations in existing family morals in the Arab tribes of his time maintaining traditional institution such sanctioning

⁵ Angelescu, Nadia, *Introduction to Islam*, Encyclopedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1993.

⁶ Helys, Marc, *Le jardin ferme, Scenes de la vie feminine en Turquie*, Paris, 1908, p.12.

polygamy and abuse of male power over women and their children. Family morality is severely affected, leading French historian opinion Lanessan mental and intellectual degeneration of the Muslim woman.

Because women's role in man's vision was merely to please conjugal relations and sentimental, its value grew and was assessed only to the extent that live up to this role.

The Muslim conception, prostitution is a very serious sin, they have been validated many forms of cohabitation, which takes the form of marriage, still called Nikah.

Mut'Ah Nikah (*temporary marriage*) is not permitted by law orthodox Sunni Muslims, Shiite Muslims but there is (*Muslim sectarians*) and as the name indicates, a temporary connection for a period of time which ends when the contract . It is a nuptial bond groom paid by money (*Mahr*) as dowry for the bride temporary. The Qur'an clearly prescribe this type of marriage (*Nikah mut'ah*), seen as a paid receipt prostitution: „ *In fact, it is said in the Qur'an, you are allowed, apart from them (married women), take your wife after your property, save the reprobate. For that you have benefit from them have it, give them dowry. This is a judgment. Do not sin free if you sign a covenant with them, apart from what was decided. God is knowing, wise* "(iv, 28).

Being all one type of marriage, and it needs nuptial contract (*Nikah nama*), the only difference that distinguishes it from the normal one is in the opinion of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the way you can loosen: normal divorce, by temporary expiry of the time agreed in the contract.

The contract may be concluded for a period of one or more days, months or years, but with a precise indication of the time and remuneration, no need for witnesses, but only by a Cadi, before whom it gives more fixed formula. There is a kind of formula established for this type of marriage the woman utters: „ *marry you for dowry (they say amount) and for a period of time (specified period), "the husband replies: „ Accept"*.

In Hebrew and Christian marriages with women, guardians consent is not needed, he did not make a commitment to ensure maintenance of the woman and there is mutual inheritance rights⁷.

Adultery was severely punished, women in this position was closed in prison or stoned, so it leaves cohabitation of different ways. The Quran commands through physical punishment penalties for those involved in this situation: „ *wanton and adulterer to be punished each with a*

⁷ W.Heffénig, ant Mut`Ah, in *Encyclopedie de l'Islam* t.III, p.827.

hundred whips "(XXIV, 21). From these studies, we find that Muslim women have an inferior position in Muslim society, and this, as in Judaism, being circumscribed inside the house, without a social life because Islam was a serious obstacle to women's empowerment. Therefore, the woman wanting along the time to get out of this yoke, appeared renewing currents in the contemporary Islam, among which is found the bábism, a preparation for the empowerment of women.

Thus, in all these contexts the woman is considered inferior ontological man without also have its rights and freedoms.

In **Hinduism**, analyzed in **Section 1.2.1**. Women's situation is circumscribed to a report of inferiority as in the pagan religions.

The situation of women in Hindu society of the classical period is reflected in the Book of the Law of Manu. With few exceptions, in all respects, the status of the woman was one of disadvantage, with her being almost always in the shadow of the man.

Although she is not a transaction subject as it happens in Islam, however inferiority of women emerges clearly from Manu's Law which states that no matter the circumstances, virtuous woman must respect her man just as a God, the woman's main debt being related to motherhood.

In addition, she also had ritual obligations, it must dabble daily fulfillment of religious acts, but only when it was part of the same caste with her husband, both belonging to the first three of those named, *reborn* ".⁸

The Second Book specifies that for the bodily cleaning, woman has to fulfil the same ceremonies as the man (it's at the stage of disciple) at the time and the established order, but without prayers (mantras), being totally excluded from committing acts of sacramental.

Regarding the three traditional ways to achieve supreme knowledge and liberation from the chain of transmigration:., *way of works* "(karma marga),, *path of knowledge*" (jnana-marga) and,, *path of love* "(bhakti-marga) it was only the first available woman. But if there is a way,, *the facts* " and for women, it is limited to duty to serve with dedication and devotion to their husbands, women can not be, as stated in dense rows Law of Manu, never independently.

In succession, the woman was generally devoid of rights, being always at the hand of the family head, who was the father or the son. As for the girls, their situation has never been clearly

⁸ *Manu's Law*, IX, 86.

defined. In theory, they not only inherited the „ pecunius " of their mother, that this wealth inherited from her parents, and they kept right on objects which were bequeathed to them personally but had only usufruct goods that they could come back when it was about buildings. It is currently admitted that when the father died, they are maintained by their brethren who had to take care of their marriage and dowry.

In the IX Book of the Law of Manu it is quoted a maxim: „ The man and the woman are one person ", emphasizing the indissoluble unity within a couple. But before speaking of equality of men and women, a considerable distance remains, this being subjected until death to the man, her role being diminished at all levels, this not being never able to be independent, ontological equality of man and woman is totally foreign to the spirit of Hindu society.

The relationship between man and woman demonstrates a certain upper positioning of the man, and the imposition of masculinity in Hindu society is not achieved in terms of their relations in marriage, but by doctrinal issues, especially through the practice of “sati” which means truth or faith, because the woman demonstrates her loyalty to man, by sacrificing herself on the same rug that burns the husband's body. Although it is said that the practice is voluntary, yet it seems that throughout history there have been cases of pressure on women that had to agree to a suicide in order to give a prestigious image to her family, a practice that does not apply in the case of a widowed man.

We can see an inferior position of women in relation to men also in the conservative Buddhism present in the Eastern India. The “elders” system in the Theravada Buddhism refuses to the woman the right to have the last reincarnation in a woman's body but must be in a state of man, however holy her life would have been. The fact that woman is removed from the soteriological process and from the samsara perspective religion proves the idea that in this religion the man and the woman are not equal before the Divine and the eternity.

We can say that Hinduism, and this applies to all pagan religions, the woman could not propel one step higher dignity, because it's located in a narrow framework of a natural religion. On the contrary, Christianity could rise to such a high conception about the role and the woman's importance of women, because it was handy and has two fundamental elements that are missing all the other religions of revelation and divine grace.

Hinduism, however, is only a pseudo-religion in which God is impersonal and presented as a „Great Everything” pantheism being denounced by the Church as false religiosity.

Hinduism, however, is only a pseudo-religion in which God is impersonal and presented as a „Great Everything" pantheism being denounced by the Church as false religiosity.

„ The role and the mission of women in Confucian morals "are listed in Section 1.2.2.

Confucian moral philosophy based on the principle that man being the whole piece of nature, a microcosm, has in itself the general characteristics of nature: order, justice, goodness, sincerity, so human nature is good at first, but when in contact with bad teaching it changes.

Confucius's philosophy target was to achieve improvement of man himself first and then of the others like him. But Confucius stopped at the command: „ Do not do to others what you do not want to be done to yourself. "

Being a moral of subjection and obedience, her practicing forms the superior man, which is ideal Chinese morality, but do not consider the depths of the human soul, but only the outside human form, not the inside one, this moral affecting the person and the human personality, especially the woman's who had in Confucianism a humiliating role, almost like that of the Roman slaves, this religion having an impersonal character.

„Being created by God's image", the human being has as its Creator Apophatic size, which does not leave easily be defined or restricted in human conceptions.

Pagan philosophical or religious thought floundered precisely the revelation of this truth, that human beings are relational beings created in the Trinitarian model, having common nature, but different personal functions.

A Romanian woman briefly sketched portrait can be found in **Section 1.3.1., Pg.69.**

Roman society was the expression of pre-Christian pagan polytheistic societies, the woman being depreciating and also her role in society, women being seen as objects, necessity and possession in relation to man. Deprived of rights and freedoms, simple tools with which men ensured the perpetuation of their names, she holds a master always considered inferior by nature, having this civic capacity.

The Roman Paganism is the expression of man's fall with the consequences known to the mind, feelings, will, conscience and freedom level.

Unfamiliar dogma of the Trinity, monotheistic or polytheistic ancient thinking human being separated from the inability of referral common nature of man and woman. Having lived in

a world of physical force cultivating pride and pride, the ancients saw in their ideal expression of humanity man, positioning woman on a lower tier.

The condition of the woman is still well represented in divine revelation. In the light of the revelation in the Old Testament, woman appears valued as a special creation by God's direct involvement - Holy Trinity. The fall in the sin, with the well knowing disastrous consequences for humans, affects more women than men due to effective entry into the world of sin by accepting the first woman temptation of the enemy in the face of the serpent.

Therefore, **the second chapter** deals with **women's condition in light of the „ Old Testament "**(Subchapter 2.1., Pg.75) and, **„ New Testament "**(Subchapter 2.3., Pg.119), **starting from the origin of man "**(Subsection 2.1.1., pg.75) showing nature's primordial mission to the fall, but highlighting redemption and salvation in Jesus Christ.

Man is the meeting point of spirit and matter, uniting and sharing itself as the sensible and the intelligible world, the crown of creation, unlike other creatures, belonging to either the material or spiritual world.

By virtue of its dual nature, man belongs to the intelligible world high, but below the phenomenal world: the body was taken from the earth is closely linked to the earth, and the soul is the breath of God Himself, he is linked to the world invisible, spiritual, and looks to the heavens.

As we have seen, the Fathers speak disfigurement of the image of God in man, although they remain present and active in it, because after the fall man is capable of good and virtue.

Subject of divine love, restoring human nature before sin through Jesus Christ was possible that had this mission since becoming man, which by taking this condition could lead to the beauty image copies to be what was initially.⁹

To be able to accomplish it, The Saviour took flesh of the Virgin Mary and the descent of the Holy Spirit, He did not had original sin and any other personal sins (John 8.46) was able to die in our place, and through its Son of God was the only one who could give full satisfaction and infinite Creator to forgive our sins. After his death on the cross, He raised and then ascends to heaven, where always intercedes for his faithful, as a true Priest (Hebrew 8:14).

Man being created in the image of God is able to reach his likeness, having stated vocation to live forever with his Creator, but it can urge freedom to choose evil man. In the state

⁹ Grigorie de Nyssa, Saint, *I-st Homily for the Hapinesses* , PG44, col.1197 BC.

of imperfection in which he was the beginning of creation, there was the possibility of using his freedom to sin. By freedom, human affirms his dignity and its specificity to God, but does not exclude the freedom of choice that is manifested in the choice between good and evil.

Cappadocian Fathers who's teaching, I synthesized and exposed it in this work, emphasizes that man is truly free when progressing through a pure life in the likeness of God, thus fulfilling His will.

This explains the status of the woman so differentiated in the Old Testament, even if by God's providence, and through the work of preparation of the Holy Spirit, the salvation of man and the world through the Incarnation of the Logos, at the fullness of time (Galatians 4,4) can be seen a sharp accentuation of the role of women in the Biblical history of the world. The woman is present in the genealogy of the Christ recorded in St. Matthew the Evangelist and St. Luke the Evangelist, which shows the active role of women in the history of salvation as participation in the mystery of salvation of man kind and of creation.

The New Testament Revelation fundamentally changed the perspective on women due to fulfillment and perfection of divine revelation, on the one hand, and on the other hand because of the Savior's attitude towards women, but also of the Christian Church about it. The Savior is the only one in the mankind history that rehabilitates really and not just formally the woman, showing that man is ontologically equal and equally enjoy the love and care of God - the Holy Trinity.

In her first stage, the woman has only the suffering part. She suffered a lot as a mother, then the eagerness to man and the subordination to him. The woman becomes the man's maid, to whom she addresses with the word „ gentleman ". The inferiority state of women proves the fact that the husband buys it. She was a possession of the parents who first sold her, then for the man who bought her".

The stature that the Bible makes to the woman (seen in the Subchapter 2.3.1., page 119) is that of a loyal partner of conversation for Jesus, his collaborator in daily activity, the character of hope in difficult moments of His Passion. No theorization can be expect from the ranks of the Bible. Neither anthropology, nor Christology, nor mysteriological the Bible can provide, so we cannot look for any theoretical considerations on the place of women in society and in the Church. The theorizing came later and their justifications later on, when the presence of women would be completely faded from Christian theological concerns.

What should be noted is, however, the impartial treatment that Jesus applied to women and how He honors her at the end of his life, wanting to restore her appreciation that her conaturals had forgotten and the equal dignity of the image of God with whom every human being is endowed. He defends the woman as many times as she is accused by men, just like in the case of the woman caught in adultery or anointing of Bethany, showing that those who think themselves innocent have no rights to accuse because they have been accustomed to not seeing the beam in their eyes, but to accuse the oppressed, of which the most downtrodden was the woman.

Condemning the superficiality and the contempt, Jesus sits on the side of the weak, the most burdened category being that of the woman, who was despised in the Jewish law, prey to all attacks and injustices.

Jesus' preaching stands at the highest level the law of love, meekness, forgiveness and contempt of the visible world, rigid structures. Because "What is a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Matthew 16, 27; Mark 8, 36; Luke 8, 25).

Woman appears in the Bible Gospel in a considerable position, although is not frequently mentioned. Lord Jesus, balances her position in society, by comparison with that of men, giving to her a value that later on the tradition often neglects. The Resurrection Evangelical periscopes reports show a stronger coloring feminine in their essence. The attitude of women at the Crucifixion and then to the Tomb of Christ, wraps this event in an aura of love, courage and altar, which overshadows the attitude of disciples. So that the stature that the Bible gives to the woman is that of a real partner of conversation for Jesus, the collaborator in the daily work, the character of hope in the difficult moments of his Passion.

What should be noted is the impartial treatment and how He honors her at the end of his life, wanting to give her the appreciation that the people of her country had forgotten and the equal dignity of the image of God with whom is endowed every human being.

In the **epistles of St. Paul (Subsection 2.3.4, pg.130)** lists several women who have played an important role in the life of Christian communities: Lidia, "godly" (F. apostate. 16, 14, Euodias and Sintihi (Phil. 4: 2), "working together" Paul's gospel, Febe "is deaconess of the church in Chenhreea" (Rom. 16: 1), Priscilla and Aquila (Rom. 16: 3) Maria, Junia (Rom. 16, 6-7) are women with "outstanding among the apostles" and many others are people who enjoy life carefully Church of Christ and the Apostle Paul has a special consideration.

From the Pauline theology, we can also detach the report male and female: „*I desire you to know that Christ is the head of every man and woman is the man's head ...* "(I Cor.11,3), and that,, ...*woman is the glory of man. Because is not the man that is from woman, but the woman is from man. And because it was not built the man for the woman, but the woman for the man ... However, neither the woman without the man nor the man without the woman, in God. Because just like the woman is from the man, also the man is through the woman, and all are from God* "(I Cor.11,7-12).

Therefore, God does not distinguish between women and men. Incidentally, the name,, *daughter of Abraham* " reveals us that women belong too „...*to the community of the redeemed at the end of time*".

St. Peter (Subsection 2.3.5., Pg.137) advised women: women „, *also you, submit yourselves to your husbands, even if one does not accept the word by the behavior of their wives without preaching, seeing the close your lives pure and full of shyness* "(I Peter III, 1-2).

Compared to these spouses, Christian women owed allegiance as some that were related to their husbands through marriage law. These spouses could be won to Christianity, without preaching, by wearing women's exemplary. It is not excluded preach apostolic missionary who was entrusted to men, but women Apostle Peter taught by the example of silent wisdom facts.

So St. Peter advised them women, to give the ornament the outside and replace it with the inside: „, *Whose adorning let it not be the outside, like braiding hair, like putting gold ornaments and apparel as expensive; but the mysterious man of the heart, in the incorruptible adornment of the meek and quiet spirit, which is precious to God* "(I Peter III, 3-4).

This should also be the chief concern of Christian women after the Apostle Peter, to adorn thoughts, feelings, affections, to enrich their minds with useful knowledge, to be his mistress in all inclination, to -and all passions and inclinations curb inappropriate new Christian life; to work relentlessly to putting off the old man and putting on the new man, the image of Jesus Christ.

Chapter III - „ Mary-female archetype” paints a portrait of the Virgin, starting from Our Lady „ Life" (**Subchapter 3.1., Pg.141**) „, *showing her earthly mission* "(**Subchapter 3.2., Pg.142**) and emphasizing the importance of religion „, *Virgin and its forms of expression* "(**subsections 3.4. and 3.5., pg.149-153**).

The prototype and model par excellence of women in the New Testament is the Holy Virgin Mary, who by listening to and accepting the call received from God soteriological Eve rehabilitate and heal the sin of disobedience thereof. The vision of the woman in the Gospels, and Epistles of the New Testament (Pauline and catholic) regardless of the model mentioned Mariology and valuing women's honor and follows naturally from this model.

Virgin Mary is the Church's mission plan, really perfect female archetype with a special mission in the plan Divine economy naturally having an over-honoring worship from people integrated into the Church of Christ.

Our Lady has reached exemplary and majestic full responsibility that he received from God the Father through the Archangel Gabriel and the truth is emphasized with great theological depth in the Orthodox Church Fathers, despite the differences to honor the Virgin Mary in Catholicism, valuing the Blessed Virgin Mary is a foundation of faith both Eastern and Western. These issues are addressed in **subsections 3.6.**, Pg.158, „ *Mother of God in the theology of the Holy Fathers* "and **subsections 3.7.**, Pg.163, „ **Orthodox Mariology. General considerations.** "

The Christianity grew under the sign of this renewed mystery, giving back to woman, through his theanthropic grounds, the main dignity and her specific and un-substitutable purpose. If through the woman, through Eve, the sin entered into the world, also through the woman, Maria, salvation came from sin. The mother of God represents the ideal icon of the feminism, totaling mysteriously, motherhood and virginity. The Marian cult decisively contributed to the reconsideration of the religious and social status of women, raised by the Christianity to heights that feminism could not rise it again.

The Christian woman, mystically born from Mary's fiat is fully engaged in the sense of salvation of mankind: it is the source of life and resurrection, under the transfiguring radius of divine grace.

Through the old Eve, God has given life, and through the new Eve, which is the Mother of God, He gives eternal life, because the incarnation of Jesus Christ is the one opening to us the way of eternal life after the fall in the sin. Virgin Mary is the purest sacrifice and yet the most valuable and cleaner gift humanity has offered to God. The human race cannot give anything more than he gave through the Virgin Mary.

Mankind brings threefold clean offering, the Virgin made by God his Mother and thereby Mother of all human kind. The human recipient shows himself worthy of the uncontainable

nature Mary being the crowning woman, the new Eve. The Holy Spirit descends upon her, making human condition objectively Incarnation of the Lord, uniting close relationship with God.

Virgin Mary is the representative of the human conscience in the preparation of the objective salvation. She is the moral representative where the free will works without fail, the answer to the salvation of the restoration of human freedom, instead of the Adamic pair.

She chooses,, in place of Adam "by,, Your will be done". Is the convergent pole of human being where the magnetism of love reunites the dispersed elements of the old nation of Adam.

Things take a dramatic turn in Protestantism, in neoprotestant sects and denominations and where the Virgin Mary is devalued and presented as a single woman, unfortunately, mistakes and failures human being treated this subject in detail in **Section 3.8.-Mother of God in Catholicism and Protestantism.**

Next, **Chapter IV** presents,, *patristic vision on women* "(subsections 4.1. - 4.5., Pg.174-210) as it is reflected in the works of the Holy Fathers.

Many of the Parents and the Church Writers have embraced Christianity in the adulthood, some of them being prominent representatives of the pagan culture of their times. In this situation, the social and cultural conceptions and the historical conditions of the late Antiquity and the early Middle Age build their training and activity environment. A lot of them still used the culture that they have accumulated during the pagan period.

Also, the mentalities and the social structures characteristics of that time, were known to them and they have largely accepted them. Fathers and ecclesiastical writers have tried to present the Christian teaching mediation by popular conceptions of the era, by Christianizing terms borrowed from pagan culture and philosophy. The Bible was preached and interpreted by many of them through the subtleties of different philosophical currents they have learned with their cultural formation.

So throughout history, women's issues always stood under the influence of socio-cultural context. Christian theology has accepted from the beginning, based on Revelation, the thesis that man in his otherness - man and woman - has been created in God's image (Genesis 1, 27). Despite this certainty disclosed under the influence of various current and philosophical

orientations and social conceptions of time, some of the writers and the Church Fathers only limited *imago Dei* to man, denying to women this position gained through creation.

In a society dominated by men, the woman, as *imago Dei* became for some of the representatives of patristic theology a stumbling block, the woman received the chance to become the image of God only in Christianity or through man's mediation.

The Cappadocian Fathers' anthropology is not content with half measures and states unequivocally that the woman is created just like man after God's image.

St. Basil the Great states in this regard that "*woman, like man, has the privilege of being created in the image of God*" (PG 31, 240). And St. Gregory of Nazianzen (Or. 37, 6, PG 36, 289) reinforces: "*The same creator for men and women, for both the same land (which were created), the same face, the same law, the same death, the same resurrection.*"

St. Gregory of Nyssa (Or. 1 in Genesis 1, 26, PG 44, 276) also tells us that: "*male and female he created them. So the woman is exactly like the man the image of God.*" Not only Cappadocians, but also other parents said that the woman is created in God's image.

Particular attention gives to this subject, Saint John Chrysostom (Chrysostom), one of greatest patristic authors of the fourth century.

His work includes many different subjects treated on an extensive correspondence and comments on most biblical writings, and by its vastness, allowed that beside many issues discussed to be involved also the one of the ratio between male and female.

Leaving itself always guided by the revelation of Holy Scripture, St. John Chrysostom managed largely to overcome the prejudices of his time, and moreover, attempted to amend them "christen them". When his texts seem to be affected by misogyny, it is more than taking public opinion than the personal opinion of the Holy Father.

As a staunch defender of revealed truth, St. John showed that indeed the woman was created for man, because of the great love that God had towards people. But this does not mean that it is inferior to man, but she has the same nature and the same honor as him, just like the Son is of the same nature and the same honor with God the Father, who born him out of love.

After St. John Chrysostom, the missions that can meet the woman are: mother, wife, mistress of the house.

As a wife, full of love, piety and kindness, she will be an invaluable help for her husband. The mission will be fulfilled as a parent that perfect woman, thereby realizing the promise will be saved by encouraging the birth of babies.

As a Christian mother, she should model primarily the Christian conscience and feeling of her infant, being a wellspring of affection and living icon of care giving and wearing for the whole family, a sign of divine blessing and joy for the church.

St. John Chrysostom, considers that the woman stands at a special dignity especially by the ideal of virginity. After him, married woman is praiseworthy, but virginity is worthy of admiration, because it mimics, to some extent, the angelic purity.

Among the Eastern Holy Fathers, St. Basil made a real eulogy to the Christian woman, seen both as wife and mother and as a virgin.

Marriage is, in the thought of St. Basil the Great, a great mystery that requires both spouses mutual respect, conjugal love and faith. But virginity is the most precious pearl.

Marriage has a natural cause, but Virginity is supernatural.

St. Basil the Great has words of praise to the Christian virgins, that leadeth to add to the bodily virginity the chastity of mind too, in order to reach perfection.

St. John Chrysostom, who was thinking huge, covered the entire Christian horizon and resolved the various theological issues, he believes that woman is worthy of respect in the highest degree. He reaches this conclusion from the words of the Apostle Paul: „ *The man is head of the wife.* "

St. John Chrysostom, considers that the woman stands at a special dignity especially by the ideal of virginity. He says that married woman is praiseworthy, but virginity is worthy of admiration, because it mimics, to some extent, the angelic purity.

The Holy Jerome also dealt closely with the issue of women, focusing on the beauty and virginity, and on family life too. The Christians Spouses - he says – have the same divine law which imposes for both.

The Holy Fathers are, as you may see, unanimous in their respect towards woman and in appreciation of her qualities.

Even if there were some excesses of language at some Christian writers, we have to consider whether their rigoristic character and their penchant for rhetoric.

Woman's image reflected in the writings of the Holy Fathers, and the attitude they had towards woman, it is clear from their writings and their works, which through the ages have not ceased to stand up witness and instruction for women of all ages and today's.

One of the merits of Christianity is restoring the dignity of women, raising it to the height of a man, although their roles in life remain different according to her natural skills.

This was possible through the Incarnation; the Son of God willed to make himself Son of Woman, to these one giving the mother role.

Thus, His Mother became the model, the hope, the nuns' protector, finding in her the ideal example of maternal love.

The purpose of the Christian life is to make every human being a mother, predestined mystery of birth, "*until Christ is formed in you*".

Women's way is not the way the peace or pleasure, but is the path of duty and this is a multiple one: to family, relatives and society.

The woman is destined to love and her love is foreshadowed the union of earth with heaven. The first vocation of creation "*the created nature union with the uncreated Divine*" is providentially ordained to be fulfilled by woman. In this way, the woman is called to perfection and eternity.

Thus **Chapter V** addresses „*The condition and role of women in the Divine economy*” highlighting the two paths to holiness: „**Marriage**” (subsections 5.1., Pg.219) with its noble mission, motherhood and education (Subchapter 5.2.) And “**female Monasticism**” (Subchapter 5.5., pg.244) showing the mission and vocation of nuns and virgins.

Marriage is one of the sacraments of the Church, is the mean by which man and woman are made partakers of the Kingdom of Heaven. Through the cooperation of the two and the Holy Grace it can be reached along earthly life to a state of spiritual joy, fundamental step towards closeness to God.

In order to become a path to holiness, marriage must involve a spiritual growth, and each married couple is called to live in perfect union and harmony so that their links to reflect Christ's relationship with His Church.

Thus, by deepening spiritual life we can move more easily over the trials and hardships of life, taking him into the center of our lives Christ Himself as Guide, Healer, Counselor, light, making himself for us everything.

As love is the last word of the new law, motherhood is the last word of the woman, her fullness and perfection. Motherhood can be bodily and spiritual and regardless of her kind, it is a religious state specific to the human nature and also its ability to receive divine virtue, responsible love to use natural means to achieve the vocation of co-creator with God.

Christian woman, wife or mother, understands to guide her family and raise her babies in God's law, giving the example of her life itself, model of dedication and responsibility, love and hard work they poured into the family bringing joy and hope to home and society.

I illustrated this study model heroine mothers who are Orthodox Church's proudness and parables praise to be followed by mothers in every age, presented in the **Subchapter 5.3.**, pg.233.

Another way of holiness and perfection of woman is virginity and chastity, that wears or not the monastic dress or clothing as natural motherhood transfiguration into spiritual motherhood hristofore metaphor of eternity, which is always the same in its uncharged purity.

The first persons with monastic life in the Church were widows and virgins (to which St. Peter refers in his letters). They have always existed everywhere in the Church, even if at first their way of life had not been institutionalized.

Subsequently, the monasticism began to organize. Female monastic institutions were organized, for example, within Christian communities (parishes) or their immediate and near centers of Bishops, due to safety guarantee to them in a particular community or episcopal center.

In the mid-third century in Byzantium it was already organize a female monastic community. It seems that in caution against the risks which would be undertaken starting in the desert, virgins and women with a consecrated life remained inside ecclesiastical communities or in their immediate vicinity, consecrating them to the church's charitable activities.

The monastic community founded at the beginning by aristocratic women were more of a domestic nature, the community originally composed of founding matron and her maids or servants, was usually socially stratified into different groups who met only to prayer. Subsequently, women's monasticism developed as the masculine one, women understanding the paradogmatic call of Jesus to follow Him, leaving behind everything that was mundane.

"Woman's Priesthood", subject covered and treated in postmodernism, is presented as orthodox vision in *Section 5.6.*, Pg.254.

Protestant world under the pressure of the feminist movement of liberation and emancipation „ **Women Liberation Movement** ", fighting for the ordination of women in all hierarchical superior, and this issue urgently reformed environment appears on the agenda of many international theological church meetings being tackled Orthodox theological discussion environment through multilateral and bilateral theological dialogues of the contemporary ecumenical movement.

Feminism fight for gender equality, but equality that goes to the extreme, negating any natural or social distinction. It is a fight to dismantle patriarchy and feminization of the whole society, for total sexual freedom, an unnatural effort to create androgynous man.¹⁰

In this regard, the theologian Paul Evdokimov says: „*Participation in community economic output introduces woman profession male ... independence ... Woman gives man contracted diseases quickly: seduction and attraction of pleasure. The same professional lineup falsify feminine nature ... The need for equality makes women aggressive and put in a position of rivalry. Woman man doubles, but its specific potential female affection exhausted and risks losing its true nature.*”¹¹

The whole demonstration of opting for the ordination of women is based on the popular conception of the primacy theological essence (*nature*) on the person. Based on this vision, supporters of women priests are justified to say that the Son of God assumed human nature in the Incarnation act beyond male-female distinction, reaching a “logical” and simplistic conclusion : sharing the same human nature, woman all activities must be human fellowship, claiming the right to any profession: manager, writer, lawyer and pastor (*priest*).

For churches that make a clear distinction between the universal priesthood and priestly sacramental, which is obtained through a special mystery, the mystery ordination, there never was a real canonical problem, their views were clearly expressed: the ordination of women can not be admitted, being contrary revelation.

The word „*ordination*” has multiple meanings in both Scripture and Holy Tradition, being interpreted in terms of choice „*eklogy*” or putting hands „*heirothesis*” with implicit reference to the mystery ordination.

¹⁰ Würtz, Bruno, *New Age*, West Publisher, Timisoara, 1994, p.145.

¹¹ Evdokimov, Paul, *The woman and the salvation of the world*, the Christian medical charity, Christiana, Bucharest, 1995.

In the Orthodox Church, ordination is identified with the canonical ordination, sacramental priesthood for sending special hierarchical priesthood authority. It gives the minister the possibility of grace to sanctify, to teach others, and lead them to salvation.

The Protestant Church, the term has another connotation, having the sense of the faithful honor a special ecclesial ministry always about teaching general priesthood of believers, focusing on the teaching side, having the right to teach others as the source of interpretation of Scripture.

So the responsibility is only one social, and teacher identified with its leading edge.

This classification terminological differences clarifies the issue of ordination of women, stating that the canonical point of view, this is completely different to the Protestant Church, with no theological or ecclesiological analogy in studying this problem.

Grounds patristic biblical interpretation, to which was added the weight gives you a traditional practice in the Orthodox Church talk about the "*true priesthood of the woman*" in the Church about its true ministry.

Arguments against ordination of women to find common treasure of all Christendom: Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition.

„ **The institution of deaconesses** " is presented on the basis of existing sources (Didascalia Apostolic Constitution and Testament of Jesus Christ Apostolic), trying a more objective analysis on this subject **in Section 5.6.1.**, Pg.264.

An enthusiasm born of love and service governed by certain rules, provided by women who felt the strength and desire to devote himself to Christ in the first century, turned into an institution rooted ecclesiastical law, singular, which coagulates throughout an entire glorious eras pastoral and liturgical life of the Church, the service of women religious vocation.

Thus, for centuries women's participation remains institutionalized in order to know this fascinating widespread in the Eastern Church, as attested literary and inscriptions: Syria, Palestine, Chaldees, Persia, Asia Minor area, Constantinople, Georgia, Armenia, and Western Church, according to documents in Gaul and Italy. But this institution comes to decade, based on sufficient motivation: to abandon adult baptism, consecrated virgins setting status monastic life, institutionalization and Romanization of the Church after Constantine the Great.

At the end of the first millennium begins its decline and women deaconess institution XI century gradually disappears, its place being taken by the monastic institution, lived in virginity

and holy God. Diaconeasa is reduced to hegumeness or abbess of a monastery where the liturgy to exercise management functions hours, proclaims the Gospel, read the homily and distributes the sacrament of the sick.

From the twelfth century, the office of deaconess definitely disappeared. But they never stopped serving the parish way in churches.

Parish committees supporting its smooth operation especially on the fidelity and woman altar on her ability and her spirit intuitive action, fin, through which deep down his fellow maintaining contact with the priest of his flock.

The office of deacon has a well defined substrate legally and liturgical in the fourth century. If at first it was an expression of love and generous dedication of women who dedicated themselves to serving the churches immediately during the day and at night, after the instituționalizându will enjoy the splendor little known women eager to be actively involved in Church ministry Nowadays.

As men deacons, deaconesses duties ranging centuries, but based on existing historical documents, can establish several different tasks depending on the churches to which they belong: catechetical preparation of the baptized, and charitable activities charity, caring for the poor, widows and supervision in certain regions of virgins.

So the woman was called in her position that it had withdrawn forward to actively participate in the life of the Church, in practical work and ministry of the Church, of the Christian community, acting with honesty and purity of mind the role of deaconesses and presbyters.

The Sacred Scripture and The Sacred Tradition give clear testimony that the Christian woman never had priestly function. If there was such a base then, Miriam the sister of Aaron, had played an important role; as well as Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist, but especially Mary, the choicest of women who were neither Apostol did not hand among those 70 or deacon, sticking to her vocation of Mother and Virgin, and patronizing of life .

Summing up the doctrine and tradition of the Church, we can mention that:

- Our Savior chose only men for the gospel ministry and sent them to preaching not giving another mission even to His mother;
- The practice of non-admission of women to the altar longer based on the categorical prohibition of the Apostle „ keep silence in the church "and do not teach “another one”;

- The Church History records only men as ministers of the sacraments, although her tradition reminds us that there are also deaconesses, but their service is limited to the social sphere;
- In Church woman had always her service as a mother, teacher, and those who felt a special calling, embraced monasticism, but never claiming priestly ministry;
- A decisive argument is that in the Orthodox Church women never claimed to want such a liability.

The claim of women's ordination and its application in the life of confessions, creates only disorientation, confusion and even separation, because such a question raised by feminist circles creates insurmountable obstacles in the way of consensus on Churches on the matter.

The role of women in the Church remains therefore equally important to the man, though not identical. Nothing can bring more benefits to the Church and to society - regarding devotion, enthusiasm, heroism and charities - than the woman by its natural characteristics, its specific.

„ *Mission of women in the Church. Practical aspects* "scriptural grounds, patristic and liturgical reject the acceptance of the ordination of women.

The **last chapter of the book (VI)** treats **”Contemporary challenges on woman from a missionary perspective”**, based on **“contemporary feminism”** in **Section 6.1.**, Pg.277, treating and analyzing the impact of its adverse consequences on postmodern society.

The Renaissance produced unfortunately a return to pagan patriarchal spirit, and a division of biblical Christian's truths. That's why women who lived in that era began again to appreciate the power at the expense of service, and separate again human nature into two irreconcilable entities.

The liberal and cultural feminism tried for a century to prove either the masculine and feminine traits identity or superiority of women.

The Socialist Feminism, existentialist and Freudian one attempted to give women the levers of social, philosophical, and psychological that could help them reach to an identification to man.

In this moment the feminism tends towards achieving an androgynous beings, in which men and women have common features, in order to solve once and for all the problem of the interpersonal and intersexual differences.

Since 1960, the feminist movement again take shape through a number of organizations that appear in this period.

Thus, in 1966, was founded in the United States The National Organization for Women- NOW- movement that will participate in particular to the outbreak of the “struggle for women's liberation.”

American feminists realize that the socialist struggle against capitalism will not have any direct impact on the condition of women radically and that's why we need a proper revolutionary current female liberation struggle.

The feminist movement now beginning to move away from political and philosophical theories which previously used such as specific principle of equality of the French Revolution, the fight against slavery and racial discrimination struggle against the capitalist system, and to formulate a specific theory liberation struggle women.

Anne Tristan in his liberation movements „ History of Women ", published in 1977, states that „ slavery of women is due to the patriarchal civilization."

Feminist organizations intensifies fight for the legalization of abortion this time, what will happen in France in 1974. And on the social role of women seems to grow increasingly more. It decreed acceptance of women in all public functions is prohibited drafting of gender discriminatory employment offers and also legalized divorce by mutual consent.

After the 1980 increase and studies anthropology, sociology, history, linguistics, philosophy and psychology which deal with women. In many universities in the world are made up special departments for feminist studies.

If the social victories of the feminist movement seem quite numerous and rewarding, family and interpersonal level, the fight feminist aims to achieve many other goals.

The right to contraception, abortion and divorce, and government programs that encourage the employment of women to achieve financial independence women have caused the change vision on the relationships within the family.

The campaigns of gays and lesbians in favor of same sex marriage also changes the classical family picture and offer women and men an alternative to traditional male-female relationship.

The provision of paternity leave, equitable sharing of household responsibilities and use in schools and scientific papers are all ne sexist language means „patriarchal social behavior modification".

However, women's movement can not ignore the adverse effects.

Colossal proportions proliferation of pornography and prostitution, creating the mass media image of women as sexual objects, and increased domestic violence are all feminists' social realities that we could not tackle. All these phenomena that appear to develop because of the feminist movement, before the issue demonstrates that women need healing man, victim of its own system of patriarchal thinking.

The emergence of these phenomena pushed even some representatives of radical feminism and desiring to imagine a world in which man is eliminated, or at least annihilated in its manifestations.

This challenge is due to the tragic observation that the very positive effects of the liberation struggle of women have been altered by the influence of male and converted into negative.

If in the classical patriarchal society, a married woman was the property of a single man, woman „released" of today is obliged by the strong media campaign, to please all men she is coming in contact with.

Not infrequently, a woman gets up the much needed social functions after satisfying the influential man due to government programs of positive discrimination of women.¹²

These „procedures" that allow the contemporary woman's economic survival is at least just as humiliating as forced marriages of previous centuries. And, „*universal opium*" of sexual liberation has tragic repercussions on the lives of millions of women of soul searching in vain stability of the marriage and fidelity, but not part only of periodic and traumatic relationship.

The acceptance of women in all sectors of activity, the sexual liberation, male and female uniformity, same-sex marriage, the institutionalization of education, the trend towards amalgamation of all concepts and currents of thought, the systematic removal of monotheistic religions, they all seem to be the result of feminist struggle for the liberation of women.

The second part of this chapter presents the current challenges of wounds of the **"contemporary secular society: Divorce and child abandonment"** (Subsection 6.5.1.1., Pg.303); **„Fornication-mortal wound of love"** (Subsection 6.5.2., Pg.310); **“Prostitution-degenerate behavior love and mercantile"** (Subsection 6.5.3., Pg.324); **„Pornography "** (Subsection 6.5.4., Pg.332) female homosexuality - Lesbianism (Subsection 6.5.5., Pg.354); „

¹² Kourany, Janet, *Feminist Philosophies*, Ed. Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1992, pg.143.

Abortion "(Subsection 6.5.6., Pg.362) and,, **contraception and voluntary sterility**" (Subsection 6.5.7., Pg.381), trying to present missionary solutions.

Women's desire for affirmation, involvement in the stressful occupations and activities, manipulated by so-called sex education in terms of its empowerment, promoting the release of her own sexuality and procreation that does not speak of profound risks that this entails, created upheavals and abnormalities in Women's behavior, and the price they paid for equal recognition in the professional, economic and social plan represents actually the loss of most authentic qualities of his nature: the power of sacrifice, profound love and maternal love.

The contemporary world, just like that of all times provides the material for the development of passions, cares and earthly pride. Over time it appears that unfortunately it remained the same sins from the same passions and appetites, is just that now their commission is seen through the increasing quality of the civilization.

The family is no longer regarded as a fundamental institution for individual survival and reproduction of society, its values are relativized in open conflict with the spirit world. Fornication, adultery, contraception, abortion, prostitution and divorce planning become in society not only unfortunate accidents but new concepts of life, death wounds of Christian love.

The indissoluble unit of marriage between a man and a woman, being a human unit plan is not only an organic unity, physiological, but a unity through love, a unity based on mutual love between the two of them.

This unity is based on love between two human existence that complement and fulfill the plan not only bodily but also spiritually.

Hence the need for the grace of the Sacrament of Matrimony for the civil marriage, to strengthen and complete the spiritual unity of the two that support their natural connection. But the spiritual unity is the work of the two of them.

The divorce breaks or marks the spiritual break of the unity between the two because love perished on holding the two in a dual unit.

After the Bible, adultery "destroys the very essence of the mystical marriage ". Love being the material for the Mystery, exchange of promises is only a symptomatic confession of the real presence of love.

Adultery proves that nothing remains from the mystery's material. Divorce is only finding the lack of love.

About this devastating passion the Saviour says: *"You heard what was said to the ones from the past: You shall not commit adultery. But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully her, has already committed adultery with her in his heart"* (Mt.5,27-28), showing the intrinsic connection between the mind and the inner immorality manifested in the physical body by his works, one can classify lewdness inner and an outer mind, the human body.

But at the roots of the bodily destruction stays fornication, the desolation and the disarrangement soul.

On this destructive passions of the human body and soul they have turned their attention to the Fathers of the Church and ecclesiastical writers, who according to the teaching of Jesus Christ and the Scripture, gave their vehement responses, showing that filavtia or bodily love itself is the cause of all the passions, of her being born the three lustful thoughts: belly greed, the love for money and vainglory that nourish and enhance it.

In a desecrated world where conception and healthy mentality volatilize and disappear and the last barriers of sexual disappear it id installed the demystified sex, sterilized, omnipresent. Our culture saturated in sexual atmosphere stimulates people to think about sex, encouraging them in this matter, highlighting immediate value and thus increasing sexual pleasure autoerotism guidance disorders, premarital and extramarital sexual activity, and sexual perversions.

The lack of a guidance education, psychological and spiritual of the aspects related to the sexual relationship between partners in marriage provides a base of the behavior that involves an ethic of convenience *"if you feel good, you only have to do it"* without thinking at the implications and long term consequences.

Prostitution is an immoral act, a sinful behavior, alternative and degenerate of family and Christian love. More seriously, this passion is presented as *"the oldest profession in the world"* by entering this degeneration among the legal professions and human concerns, the danger of this approach is very high because the mind of man can easily create confusion between legal and normal.

For all this, the Church cannot agree the institutionalization or legalization of prostitution, debauchery and fornication that would encourage, especially among young people, a real attempt to family life - Christian foundation of Romanian society.

Pornography is a demonic iconography that corrupts the mind with images that make us dirty, a perverse antithesis of authentic iconography, which is designed to give the mind and heart heavenly food, purity food, blessing and holiness.

Pornography incites sexual passion, with devastating consequences. It reduces a person to a mere object to satisfy the passions, and produces in ourselves degradation and moral corruption, obscuring and perverting the image of God, who is the image of communion, openness to the other and freedom.

Erotic movement of the soul is given by God for a specific purpose: to deepen love and longing for Him, through a personal and deep communication with another human being. Pornography distorts Eros that becomes erotic, shifting its focus solely on us. She supports and fosters deviant behaviors hurting and degrading those who describes and empty of any meaning of love, fidelity and responsibility, the most intimate human behavior.

The consumers can no longer love pornography, being possess by an alter ego, dark, born and nurtured by this passion, their conscience and their senses being saturated by the sexual excitation.

The excitation induced by the decoupled sex is an excitement with no finality, that being accompanied by the fantasy obsession created by the pornographic images, kidnap the mental and spiritual peace, inducing irritability and anxiety, depression, memory and attention problems, many organic disease, psychiatric and neurological disorders.

Homosexuality is an aberrant sexual behavior, quite adhensive by the consequences of hazardous for the partners, but also by many unpredictable and multiple consequences for the whole society:

Homosexuality should be assessed and treated within the sin that becomes the passion, being the second nature to human being.

Moreover this passion is attacking the human being's very being, threatening life and it's continuance on earth. Struggling to win their rights becomes a risk for the whole society and for the post-modern man's relationship with God.

Church puts this practice among blatant sins, being assimilated to killing and suicide showing that alters the human nature through his moral and physical dirt, therefore appointed the same penalties as for murderers, oppressors and exploiters.

Through all these canons and ban seeks not just the sanction of such moral and physical decay (physiological), but especially the awareness of the gravity of sin for avid man, moral and biological seriousness for his life in the flesh and the way of salvation for his soul, trying to offer an appropriate physical remedy and a spiritual treatment.

Lesbianism is a phenomenon that has proliferated in society alongside male homosexuality, inciting and creating controversy.

In the public sphere it triggered a strong conflict, especially with those who appear traditional values due to widening their claims (gays and lesbians) who want to impose their collective mind to behavior and is part of the normal sexual behavior being seen "*as a way of life and a viable alternative.*"

They want special legislation allowing them "*homosexual*" marriage, adoption allowed and unrestricted access to housing and employment. The chariot of the Church (Catholic and Protestant) struggles to let community members to share their worship service (Sacrament of Holy Orders).

The moral law, an expression of the will of God concerning man in his relationship with others is violated by abortion, because it means the destruction of life and scandalous comparison because by simplistic arguments, abortion is related to smoking and piracy.

The Church's Testimony that abortion is seen as a crime, since the beginning of human life from the moment of conception dates and is proven and bolstered by science, through the findings of the great medical personalities that are against this terrible scourge and the legalization of the practice.

In a secularized society, in which egocentric and selfish man declares himself autonomous, eliminating God with His creation, in the absence of genuine values of Christian moral life that speak little or nothing about the importance of the individual soul and body meaningless, we can meet mothers who abandon their children or suppress them even before they are born.

Preventing the birth of children, both by natural and artificial means is based on the same intent of sin, avoiding frauds against nature, but being a fraud against the true conscience, a perversion of moral conscience and a deep cooling of love which can only be in the service of life, which is why the Church condemns these practices.

Considering the discipline of the Church, but being in need of a good spiritual advice and a good reception too, the Christian should heed the advice of Professor Jean Meyendorff who says in his orthodox work, *Le mariages dans la perspective*:

„The problem of birth control and acceptable forms cannot be solved separately by every Christian couple. Spouses cannot take a right decision unless they accepted their Christian commitment with the utmost seriousness, whether they believe in the care of God, if reluctant to be very anxious about the safety of their material, if they take into account the fact that the infants are a joy and a gift from God, if their love is not selfish and interested, if you remember that love and sexual pleasure is not reduced to true love.”¹³.

Missionary perspectives

A first finding that emerges from this analysis is that the current crisis of moral life, it was because of ignorance and nepracticării, incompleteness, or ignoring the spiritual teachings of the faith systematically.

Linked if more mundane than heavenly fleeting life than promised future life and eternal carnal pleasures of tasting easier and ephemeral than would be offered happiness incarnate soul fulfillment of good deeds, man today is more willing to experiment in the world he lives in the flesh, the temptations that assail course gives more frequent and violent than Christian teachings, which seem outdated and increasingly difficult.

And all these moral laxity or decreases, strongly influenced his conception of life, placing first this world and its pleasures, the body and its desires and becoming secondary willingness to improve the spiritual thirst of salvation, the path to perfection.

All this led to a moral laxity and permissiveness range, and have given him a familiar with sin and are frightening passions and made him insensitive to the voice of faith and the Church.

Thus, we can rightly say that the situation reached the contemporary man is due precisely to ignoring these eternal truths, the only ones able to bring the real and eternal fulfillment. Therefore the way of moral reclamation and marriage and family raising to the rank of holy mystery, that I gave them Christ Redeemer: a return to issues of life and faith, cultivate virtues: faith, pure and sincere love, self-sacrifice, prayer, abstinence, fasting.

¹³ Meyendorff, Jean, *Le mariaje dans la perspective orthodoxe*, YMCA-PRESS/O.E.L., Paris, 1986, p.90.

Moreover, analysts of contemporary issues facing women and men, recommended precisely this: the rediscovery and return to old values that have the ability to give human meaning and fulfillment, motivation and desire to improve his life, and one of them is the family.

Paying high appreciation of family, faith develops a high and beautiful orthodox teaching on the vocation of human community, the need for dialogue and communion of the human person. It teaches that the family is divine institution and otherness are based on the human being, created in the two genders: male and female. God under His atotîntepeciunii known that human life in this world is as difficult and salvation „its highest goal is a work of great danger menaced body and soul. If natural life is difficult, the most difficult is the advance in the narrow way, rough and tears of salvation”. For this reason Heavenly Father gives man the helper suitable for him in the other person, husband or wife.

„This world, too masculine, where the woman's charisma plays no role in which women is marginalized, is increasingly a world without God, because that is without the Theotokos Mother and God cannot come here. It is symptomatic that in this environment children lewdness, incest and homosexuality “openly states” and, Giradou, in Sodom and Gomorrah, said: „ the time where woman knows no more how to love and give herself to others is the end of the world.”¹⁴

KEYWORDS: Women's mission, role of women, feminism, marriage, virginity, monasticism, maternity, education, plagues of Christian love: divorce, fornication, pornography, prostitution, abortion, contraception

¹⁴ Idem, *The woman and the salvation of the world*, trans. Gabriela Moldoveanu, Publisher Christiana, Bucharest, 1994, p.191.

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