

International Women's Day –8 March

Abstract

One hundred years passed since the decision to celebrate International Women's Day – 8 March in the world was made (Copenhagen, 1910) and almost the same number of years passed since this holiday was marked and celebrated in Serbia and Yugoslavia (it was celebrated since 1911). During the last decade of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty first century in Yugoslavia, that is, in Serbia, it was evident that this holiday is losing its significance which corresponds to the abandonment of the socialist system and acceptance of capitalist system and democratic changes and membership in the European Union.

The objective of this paper is to show that the significance of this holiday, the place it occupies in the society and its perception as the relict of the communist past, depends on the above mentioned social and political changes in Yugoslavia and Serbia. The analysis was conducted on the corpus of texts about 8 March in daily periodicals in Serbia from 1980 to 2009.

Corpus encompasses 449 texts published in the daily *Dnevnik* (Novi Sad, Vojvodina) during three decades: 1980 – 1989; 1990 – 1991; 2000 – 2009. All texts were written in Serbian. The basic unit of analysis is *text*. Quantitative data about the texts are: number, size and parts of texts: supertitle, title, subsidiary title, signature (authorship), photographs that accompany the texts.

Quantitative data show that during the three decades the number and size of the texts about the International Women's Day have diminished, that the authors became less visible, the number of photographs that accompany texts has also been decreasing, portraits are more dominant than group photos. These data show that celebration of the International Women's Day in Serbia has become less visible in the newspaper in question, thus less important in the whole society as well. This certainly can be related to the change of the socialistic to the capitalistic value system and political regime in the country: from one party system to plury parti system.

Qualitative analysis has been conducted in four texts and the method of critical discourse analysis was applied. Two voices are in the focus: the voice of the author of the text and voices of women. The voices in the primary events are given in the texts which are critically examined by intersecting socialist ideological perspective which is focused on the interest of collective and gender perspective in whose center is the interest of women.

The results of the qualitative analysis of the text show that within the imposed celebration of the holiday in socialism at the same time patriarchal pattern was operational in which the emancipation of women was viewed through the lens of class: woman's contribution to the functioning of the collective and her readiness to sacrifice herself for the others. The holiday was always in function of the realization of the Party's programme and during the last decade of the twentieth century it had the function to unify Serbian nation.

Key words: International Women's Day, gender equality, class perception of gender equality, critical discourse analysis.