

## Back to the patriarchy? In fact, it was always here

I'm going to consider the revival of patriarchy as the basis of the new Ukrainian identity. During the past 20 years, the Soviet gender contract between the state and the working mothers was abandoned, and women, together with their reproductive function, were left between the Scylla and Charibda of the liberal ideology of independent entrepreneurs fully responsible for her/his life, and the nationalist demand for nurturing The Child and The Nation.

The new establishment of patriarchy is inconspicuous, covered by human rights and democracy rhetoric (all rights are already reserved by law). The absence of a clear ideology of women's emancipation and the discursive rejection of feminism gave place for the reinforcement and aggravation of a multitude of everyday oppressions, worsening women's lives day by day. It is not just a "women's issue" - while women become slaves, men become masters, and both lose their humanity.

The neoliberal logic of exploitation goes well with the corrupted bureaucratic state machine managed by *bratki* from the '90s. Neoconservatism, manifesting itself in moral panics, artificial religious revivals, attempts to pass prohibiting laws on abortion, LGBT "propaganda" etc., is used by the ruling elites in order to cover the economic and spiritual exhaustion of the Ukrainian society. Actually, we are going to be *zhostkij pizdec* ("screwed").

My mystic vision of contemporary Ukraine gives me a picture of beautiful fields and hills covered by a thick layer of grease. The metaphor of old, hardened grease of a dirty kitchen is often used by women to describe incidents of oppression or harassment, when they have a feeling of being dominated but miss the symbolic tools to detect aggression and resist it. These traumatic experiences have been relegated to the unconscious level and restored only in feminist "consciousness raising" groups due to the creation of a proper discursive environment.

I spread this vision on Ukrainian identity in general. This is the identity of a person whose consciousness is confused by contradictory ideological messages and whose unconscious is stuffed with unvoiced traumas. Everyday I walk through crowds of unhappy good people and think about collective therapy - similar to what I'm doing in women's "consciousness raising" groups. The new discussion on ethics can help. Ethics that proposes principles for "how we should behave" towards each other, towards animals and nature, in opposition to the outdated morals prescribing "what we should be".

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