



WOMEN DOCUMENTED

Women and Public Life in Bosnia and Herzegovina
in the 20th Century



Women Documented
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in the 20th Century

Sarajevo, 2014

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Dedicated to all women who could not live a free life...
... a life by their own measure.

FOREWORD

Are the strategies of forgetting gendered? Forgetting is at times just an euphemism: it is about a more or less institutionalised censorship that can be directly linked to politics, various forms of powers of groups: an even clearer area of gender policies. In a culture bearing marks and scars of a totalitarian mentality, each construction of a collective memory deeply depends on the strategies of forgetting.
Svetlana Slapšak, Antropologist

The book you are holding attempts to represent the world of women in the times when life became extremely accelerated – ideologised, industrialised, psychoanalysed, technologised, mobilised, commercialised, relativised. Our book has many a limitation. Methodologically, its chapters are not fully harmonised; it lacks the analysis of the construction of *woman* in different ideologies. It was written quickly, but with passion, love and regret that not all archives, museums or libraries across Bosnia and Herzegovina and abroad were visited (a lot of the relevant material is not located in BiH). The driving force behind this endeavour of a group of people was the exclusion of women from the *main trends*, loss of continuity and their deletion from the cultural, scientific and all other memories. Therefore, this book primarily serves as the activist response to the systematic neglect of the contribution of women to BiH culture and it is an attempt to provide a foundation to the study of the history of women in BiH.

Oblivion, memory and women are the three main terms that determine this book and we need to explain these terms for the book to be read as we envisaged it. *Oblivion* is the pre-constructed refusal to remember what has happened, suppressing and deleting the traces of life. *Memory*, in terms of re-inscribing events in time and space, by writing, is one of the tactics of the resistance to the oblivion regime. *Women* are defined through the words of Gorana Mlinarević: *When I talk about women and women's political agency, I do refer to essentialist or biological terms, but the political agency that is potentially emancipatory in terms of resistance to the patriarchal system. When I talk about women, I talk about women as an analytical category.*¹

Materials and data were collected about the brave, interesting and successful women who did not consent to be obedient and who spited the rules of their environment and fought for better opportunities; we searched for individuals and associations who moved the boundaries of the usual by non-conformist and courageous action in their world. We tried to collect the basic knowledge also about those women who were successful in spite of all the forces working against them, about those who

1 A quote from a lecture by Gorana Mlinarević: *Feminist Criticism of Militarisation of Everyday Life* (17 June 2014), Sarajevo, Muzej književnosti i pozorišne umjetnosti BiH.

were the first to do certain things in history of BiH, those who risked or gave their lives for the ideas they believed in. We collected data about women, known and unknown, and gathered them in a single place.

We dealt with history, but not historical analyses. Not because these are not important, but because the idea was to create a non-academic and non-historical book on a more recent history of women. The fact that the historical aspect is missing – that we have no historian in our group – was unintentional and it grew into a methodological fact. Therefore, it is very important to have this work assessed by historians. The book is chronological in terms of its organisation, based on the social and political circumstances set by the *mainstream* culture.

Each chapter presents the broader social, ideological, legal, economic and cultural BiH political contexts, followed by an overview of segments of society from the perspective of women and women's issues. The book contains information on how women acquired / won their rights, on women's associations – humanitarian, educational, feminist, academic, political etc. - on the women's workers movement, AFŽ, contribution of women in art, science, education and culture, on the specter of women's roles in wars – fighters, diversionists, illegals, peacemakers, war criminals and many other. The eternal dilemma of peace feminists is the positioning towards women soldiers and other directly militarised women is not tackled on these pages. Biographical and bibliographical data of certain women are presented in the end of each chapter. In some places, women who are singled out were selected per set methodological measures, and in some places the selection got out of control and completely overrode the principle of the *more important experience*, that this book is constantly trying to problematise anyhow.

The book has two main goals, along with the most important one that refers to the activist-academic response to the problem of knowledge transfer and affirmation of women's work and existence. The first concerns the creation of a database that shall contain, in one place, new and the already existing and collected knowledge. The second goal relates to the mutual networking of people who are interested in dealing with women, be it in terms of space or time or ideology.

The book has its ancestors and it is definitely not the first attempt to present the lives of important women or the first attempt to resist oblivion and neglect of women's contributions over time. To mention a few we followed: *U građanskom ogledalu: Identiteti žena BiH građanske kulture 1878–1941* by Sarita Vujković; *Ženski prostor i muško vrijeme* by Sadmira Kotorić; *Zaboravljene dobročiniteljke – sarajevske vakife* by Selma Avdić Hajrović; *Žene u istoriji Semberije* by Tanja Lazić; *Život i stvaralaštvo žena Banjaluke* by Draga Daša Gajić; *Žene u vremenu Bratunac* by Mensura Mustafić; *Žene u politici Bosne i Hercegovine* by Amila Taljanović; *Sve bih zemlje za Sarajvo dala: žene pišu i čitaju grad* by Dragana Tomašević; *Žene u Bosni i Hercegovini: Dolje ti rijeka, dolje ti je pruga* by Saša Gavrić and Hana Stojić; *Ženski pokret u BiH: Artikulacija jedne kontrakture* by

Zlatiborka Popov Momčinović; *Sjaj ljudskosti – životne priče mirotvorki u Bosni i Hercegovini* by Zilka Spahić-Šiljak etc.

This work was also inspired by well-meaning persons, acquaintances, and friends who contacted us and kept bringing their texts and sharing their knowledge about women in the cultural history of BiH. All libraries opened their doors, and the most generous research center was Bošnjački institut (the Bosniak Institute). **Women Documented: Women and Public Life in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 20th Century** is the result of the work and cooperation of many people, Sarajevo Open Center, Heinrich Böll Foundation Office in BiH, CURE Foundation and the Swiss Embassy.

Finally, we need to mention that the translation of the book from Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian is not fully compatible with the original as it lacks a number of chapters which did not directly relate to the life of women in the 20th century. Although these chapters are missing, the names of their authors are provided, as well as their lists of references for further reading.

Jasmina Čaušević

INTRODUCTION

In 2010-2011 *Aspasia*, the leading academic journal devoted to women's and gender history of Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe, published a dossier on the state of the art of women's and gender studies in the post-Yugoslav countries. Besides the obvious differences, the contributions identify a series of common features running across the different national case studies: a clear delay in the development of women's and gender studies, especially in respect of Western Europe and the Atlantic world; a limited institutionalisation of gender-sensitive approaches in the historical studies; a limited presence of women in national academic spaces, and in particular in history, a discipline that remains an eminently men's club.² According to Gorana Mlinarević and Lamija Kosović, the authors of the *Aspasia's* text on Bosnia and Herzegovina, this country seem to play the role of Cinderella, adding to the already mentioned regional limits a few important specific bounds. During the socialist period, Sarajevo always occupied a peripheral position in the Yugoslav academic scenes, remaining at the margins of the methodological changes. Feminist movement, that from Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana gave impulse to the development of women's history, only marginally touched Bosnia and Herzegovina. Additionally, the Bosnian bloody transition to post-socialism not only produced a re-patriarchalisation of society – a circumstance that surely does not favour gender-sensitive approaches – but also had in scholarly research the *obsession* for ethnicity, that for years obscured other categories of analysis. Adding the local to the regional circumstances, the two authors conclude that the exploration of the history of women's movement and feminisms in Bosnia and Herzegovina was an endeavour only at its beginning.³

Conceived, written and published only four years later, *Women Documented* gives us a dynamic, and more optimistic picture of the development of women's and gender history in/of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thanks to the efforts of both academia and civil society organisations, new segments of Bosnian history are progressively explored, and women's and gender studies are gradually expanding. However, before reading a book like this, it seems legitimate to ask *why* women's and gender history of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a topic deserving to be studied. Filling a gap in the knowledge of a certain topic is not *per se* a reason enough good to justify the endeavour. What makes Bosnia and Herzegovina an

2 For the entire overview, see Daskalova, K.; Miroiu, M.; Graff, A.; Zhurzhenko, T.; Blagojević, M.; Acsády, J., (2011) *The Birth of a Field: Women's and Gender Studies in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe, Part I, Aspasia*, Volume 4 (2010) pp. 155-205 and Daskalova, K. (ed.) *The Birth of a Field: Women's and Gender Studies in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe, Part II*, *Aspasia*, Vol. 5, p. 128-203

3 Mlinarević, G. and Kosović, L. (2011) *Women's Movements and Gender Studies in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, *Aspasia*, Vol. 5, p. 128-38 (129)

heuristically interesting case study is connected to the impressive series of political breaks experienced by this region in approximately one century. Following the decision of the Congress of Berlin, in 1878 Bosnia and Herzegovina knew the end of the four-century Ottoman rule, and was occupied and later annexed by the Habsburg Empire. After having experienced the integration in these two imperial framework, Bosnia and Herzegovina took part in the construction of the first Yugoslavia, a (quasi-)national state marked by political instability and authoritarianism that even brought, in the Thirties, to the partition of its historical territory in different administrative and political entities. After the Second World War, Bosnia and Herzegovina became a socialist republic, taking part in the fabric of Socialist Yugoslavia for almost half of a century. Following the collapse of Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina resurrected a semi-independent, ethnocratic democracy, characterised by political instability and a perspective of European integration that remains uncertain. These political breaks, often accompanied by foreign occupation and war, brought with them the establishment of different gender regimes, i.e. different configurations of gender relations. Every gender regime offered to Bosnian women new possibilities, limits and opened the door to new forms of feminine and feminist movements. Competing ideas of femininity, proposed/imposed by State, religious and civil society actors, where incessantly tested and contested. Bosnia and Herzegovina is thus an ideal site for the study of the transformation of gender norms, and to size their capability to resist to major institutional changes. Finally, given ethno-confessional complexity of its society inherited by the age of the empires, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a privileged site to explore the interplay between gender and other categories, namely class, confession and nation. Taking in to account more than one century of Bosnian history, *Women Documented* represents an ambitious essay to explore and analyse the richness of women's and gender history in this part of Europe.

Written in a short period of time and by authors with very different background, this book can be conceived as an atlas. Firstly, an atlas of the different historiographical traditions that in the last century have dealt with women's and gender history of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the land and abroad. Every historiography has developed its own analytic tools, mobilised different categories, elected privileged interest and cultivated taboos. Secondly, the book is also an atlas in order to explore the work of scholars – coming from history, but also gender studies, art history, literature – that, often from the margins of the academic institutions, invested their energies in the explorations of these topics. As an author participating into this venture, I think it would be fruitful to cultivate some form of collective work also after the publishing of this book. Lastly, and probably most importantly, this book is an atlas to the people and processes that shaped the history of women in this part of Europe. At the contrary of the most scholarship produced in the last decades, Bosnian women here are not victims, but actors of their own lives. Page after page,

Women Documented explores institutional and individual trajectories and proposes them to the reader and researcher. If students and scholars in the next years will follow these trajectories, contributing to the expansion of women's and gender history of this part of Europe, the book will have accomplished its goal.

In European public space the legitimacy of gender has never been under attack as in the last years. Defined by Joan W. Scott as *a useful category of historical analysis*,⁴ in medias gender is more and more often downgraded by its opponents to *theory*, or *ideology*, in order to stress its alleged non-objectivity and mendacity. In several European countries gender studies are more and more often accused of being products of American cultural imperialism, or even a tool in the hands of supposed feminist and LGBT lobbies for the overturn of the organisation of human society. In such a conjunction, when this concept left the technicalities of the academic debates to be discussed in broader political arena, publishing a book like *Women Documented* seems to be even more important. Putting at the centre the political trajectories of Bosnian women, and how femininity and masculinity have been defined in relation to one another, this book convincingly reaffirm the need of gender in historical research: it allows us to formulate new insights into the various social, political and cultural communities we want to study and understand; it take out of the shadow power relations, and strategies of resistance, that would have remained invisible.

Fabio Giomi

4 Scott, J. W. (1986) *Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis* *The American Historical Review*, Volume 91, No. 5, p. 1053-1075

PART I: 1914–1941 WOMEN THROUGH THE EPOCHS

The women's question does exist. It was created by neither men - as some feminists thought - nor by women - as anti-feminists claim. It emerged as a result of the circumstances.⁵

This chapter will briefly present the period from the beginning of World War I to the beginning of World War II in Yugoslavia in 1941 in the context of women's activism. At the beginning it offers a brief overview of historical and social circumstances followed by an overview of women's association, the rights for which they advocated and the factors that trammelled or, to some extent, facilitated their activity. It also gives an overview of the economic, social, educational, civil, and other rights of women in this period, as well as the atmosphere in literature, theatre and the arts. Unfortunately, many of these women have been forgotten by history, remembered only in small circles and archives. In order to preserve their biographies and contributions from fading away over time, at the end of the chapter we offer brief information about their life and work, regretting in advance that even in the pages of this book, many of the women from this period will not find their place.

Historical and Social Context

Following the 1878 Berlin Congress, Bosnia and Herzegovina fell under Austro-Hungarian rule, which lasted until 1918, at the end of World War I. The Austro-Hungarian authorities - through their administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina - actively implemented infrastructural projects and developed production using local resources and labour force. Capitalist economy, characterised by the penetration of foreign capital attracted by the vast natural resources of this territory and an abundance of cheap labour force, started to develop, along with the inherited feudal relations, which the new occupiers did not alter.⁶ Coal-mining, forestry and construction industries were developing while poor peasants and failed artisans became pioneers of the emerging working class.⁷ The scale of public investment was

5 Šiljak, J. (1926), *Đulistan*, No. 2, p. 28

6 Kovačević, D. (1972), *Borbeni put žena Jugoslavije*, Leksikografski zavod Sveznanje, Beograd, p. 11

7 Bajić, N. (1962), *Pregled učesća žena u radničkom pokretu Bosne i Hercegovine do Obznane 1921. godine*, Glasnik arhiva i društva arhivista Bosne i Hercegovine, Godina II, Knjiga II,

colossal and often made for military purposes (construction of railways and road network), but they also had great significance for local life.⁸ Although the imperial power maintained all sorts of controls over local issues, as well as industrial development, a development of civic community and a rise of worker's awareness also took place. The population, which, until then was largely made up of farmers, began to work in factories. A large number of women joined the labour force but their wages were up to three times lower than the wages of male workers.⁹ Tobacco, textile and carpet industries largely employed women. A relatively modern administration was established but human rights were still controlled and there was constant presence from the army.¹⁰ Schools and cultural institutions were opened and there was active publishing. In 1878 a slow secularisation process began.¹¹ The public was engaged through all sorts of associations formed on the basis of national, cultural, faith and humanitarian grounds. The activities of these associations provided increasing class awareness, subsequently leading to the founding of unions, a social-democratic party and organised struggle against intolerable working conditions. Some of the first strikes were already organised by the 1890s. The imperialist "modernisation" thus gave rise to significant class changes. It generated social differences and an elite class susceptible to modern European ideas, though the ethos remained conservatively patriarchal in the new moral codes that regulated the issues of gender and class.¹² The doors opened to new ideas about women's status and women were active in the public arena – although still on a small scale – through the press, associations (not only humanitarian but also political) and education.¹³ Of course, in a patriarchally allowed framework this implied that family, children, marriage and husband come first.

The Sarajevo assassination on 28th June 1914, carried out by Gavrilo Princip, started the bloody First World War. After a relatively peaceful and prosperous 19th century in Europe, which allowed significant social progress and civilisation developments, the violent tendencies of military forces at the time prevailed over a large and progressive peace movement organising throughout Europe. The war, which lasted from 1914 to 1918, brought many changes to the everyday life of the population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1915 a military occupational regime was introduced and the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina was dissolved. Austro-Hungarian authorities started conscripting men to the Austro-Hungarian

Sarajevo, p. 14

8 Malcolm, N. (2002) *Bosnia – A Short History*, Pan Books, London, p. 141

9 Kovačević, D. (1972), p. 11

10 Seifija, I. (2008) *Povijesne predispozicije i aktuelni razvoj građanskih asocijacija u BiH*, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Sarajevo, p. 8. (<http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/sarajevo/06041.pdf> - 15 May 2014.)

11 Malcolm, N. (2002) p. 166

12 Vujković, S. (2010) *U građanskom ogledalu: identiteti žena bosanskohercegovačke građanske kulture 1878-1941.*, Muzej savremene umjetnosti Republike Srpske, Banja Luka

13 Ibid.

army, introducing levies on the population, persecuting the opponents of the regime, and imposing requisition of agricultural products.¹⁴ These processes caused severe poverty and hunger amongst the population, many of whom died as a result. Most factories were under the control of the military administration. Women were the main workforce because men were conscripted to the army. The length of the working day and the sum of wages obtained depended on the will of the employer.¹⁵ It was noted that in 1917 peasant women from the vicinity of Sarajevo rebelled against requisition. These women met on the market day at the Sarajevo Marketplace armed with stakes and sticks to prevent their cattle and food being taken away, and thereupon ten were arrested.¹⁶ The war was brutal and bloody and it affected all classes and categories of the population, especially women, who even before the war led difficult lives in a strict patriarchal society and harsh social and economic circumstances. Already in the twilight of the war, women in Bosnia and Herzegovina were expressing massive dissatisfaction and interest in restoring socialist organisations.¹⁷ World War I not only changed the state borders but it also destroyed the idealised world of the 19th century, bringing along a difficult economic situation which was marked by hunger, disease, poverty, unemployment, inflation, speculations and corruption, unresolved national issues and slow economic recovery.¹⁸ However, it also inevitably led to the empowerment of women, who based their later social engagement and activism largely on their war experiences.

Bosnian and Herzegovinian Women in the First Yugoslavia

In 1918 a state called the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was formed, which was in 1929 renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The integration of Bosnia-Herzegovina into the first Yugoslav state deeply affected the lives of Bosnian women. From 1919 women obtained the right to accede to high schools (*gimnazija*), an option that was not permitted in the Habsburg period. High schools gradually allowed Bosnian women to access university education, especially in the three main universities of the country - Belgrade, Zagreb and - since its establishment in the aftermath of World War I - Ljubljana. Moreover, in 1929 the Yugoslav government introduced compulsory education for both boys and girls under the age of 14, a measure that increased the number of educated citizens of the new state.¹⁹ Although Muslims remained the least likely confessional group to

14 Kovačević, D. (1972), p. 12

15 Ibid. p. 12

16 Ibid. p. 12

17 Kecman, J. (1978) *Žene Jugoslavije u radničkom pokretu i ženskim organizacijama 1918-1941*. Narodna knjiga, Institut za savremenu istoriju, Beograd, p. 19

18 Vujković, S. (2010)

19 Papić, M. (1984) *Školstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini 1918-1941*, Veselin Masleša, Sarajevo

send their children to school, there was a marked growth in the number of Muslim pupils attending state education: from 1918-1919, 10,000 pupils attended school in Bosnia-Herzegovina; by 1931-1932 there were almost 43,000 Muslim students across the same territory. The gap between the number of boys and girls attending school was also being bridged: after the Great War the ratio of male to female pupils was 1:10; ten years later it was 1:3. More specifically, in Sarajevo the number of Muslim boys attending elementary school between 1928 and 1937 grew five-fold (from 683 to 3655) while the number of Muslim girls grew ten-fold (from 163 to 1605).²⁰ These data suggest that, despite hostility from religious notables and a part of the population, the idea that boys and girls should be sent to school was gaining ground.

Cultural associations played an important role in supporting Muslim girls' access to high schools and university. The Muslim pro-Serbian cultural association *Gajret* (Zeal), that since its establishment in 1903 had granted scholarship²¹ to Muslim pupils, from 1920 started to support even secondary and university education for Muslim girls. From this point on, at least ten scholarships out of a possible 60-100 awarded by the association each year were granted to female pupils.²² *Narodna Uzdanica* (Popular Hope), a second association of that kind established in 1924, but of pro-Croatian orientation, also took on the mission of supporting secondary education, even though the number of scholarships it awarded never reached the same levels of *Gajret*.²³ Flicking through the association's yearbooks, it can be ascertained that in its twenty years of life *Narodna Uzdanica* supported 113 female students, 21 in its first ten years of activity and 92 between 1936 and 1942. *Narodna Uzdanica* managed to open a girls' dormitory in Zagreb in 1940 that hosted six students in the beginning of World War II.²⁴ But the association that played the biggest role in the promotion of university education for Muslim women was *Gajret*, which established its dormitory in Zagreb in 1926.²⁵ Thanks to Muslim cultural associations, in the beginning of World War II there were 600 university-educated Yugoslav Muslims, among them 20 women.²⁶

Making their way through the economic crisis, legal obstacles and the

20 Kujraković, N. (2008), *Žensko pitanje i socijalni položaj Bošnjakinje u BiH između dva svjetska rata*, MA thesis, Fakultet političkih nauka u Sarajevu, p.188

21 We did not find out whether *Napredak* and *Prosvjeta* provided scholarships.

22 Kemura, I. (1986) *Uloga „Gajreta“ u društvenom životu Muslimana Bosne i Hercegovine 1903-1941*, Veselin Mesleša, Sarajevo, p. 308

23 Kemura, I. (2002) *Značaj i uloga „Narodne Uzdanice“ u društvenom životu bošnjaka (1923. – 1945.)*, Bošnjački Institut, Fondacija Adila Zulfikarpašića and Institut za Istoriju u Sarajevu, Sarajevo p. 134-8

24 Kemura, (2002), p. 160-1

25 Alibegović, E. (1973), *Uloga beogradskog Gajreta Osman Đikić na univerzitetском obrazovanju muslimanske ženske omladine*, VSIVZ, p. 331-35

26 Alić, H. (1941), *Muslimani s fakultetskom spremom*, Kalendar Narodne uzdanice, p. 160-8 i

Alić, H. (1941), *Muslimani s fakultetskom spremom*, Kalendar Narodne uzdanice, p. 154-6

weight of both Muslim and Yugoslav patriarchal cultures, several dozen Muslim women did manage to find work after university. For the most part these women became secondary school teachers or civil servants in legal administration. Some of these women came from wealthy Bosnian families with a strong tradition in the liberal professions, like **Nadžida** and **Zineta Hadžić**, for example, who were the daughters of writer and politician Osman Nuri Hadžić. After studying at the University of Belgrade, they worked in Bosnia as a lay magistrate and a civil servant for the provincial courts respectively. Another woman from the Hadžić family, **Rabija**, became a secondary school teacher alongside some half dozen Muslim women. This job gave her the opportunity to work as a supply teacher in high schools for boys in various towns across the country, including Zemun, Bijeljina and Belgrade. In addition to economic independence, these women's lives were thus characterised by pronounced professional mobility, which was difficult to imagine for other Muslim women. The first two female doctors in Bosnia, **Ševala Iblizović-Zildžić** and **Hiba Šerbić**, were both beneficiaries from *Narodna Uzdanica* and *Gajret* study scholarships and both graduated at the beginning of the 1940s.

Another of Osman Nuri Hadžić's daughters, **Bahrija** started a professional career after finishing her studies. Born in Mostar, she moved to Belgrade in the 1920s to pursue her studies with the help of a *Gajret* study scholarship. After studying pianoforte in the Yugoslav capital, in 1923 Bahrija attended the Vienna Academy of Music where she specialised in opera. She worked for a time at the Opera of Bern in Switzerland and in 1931 became a member of the Opera of Belgrade, where she would work until the end of the 1930s. Known in the German press as *Eine Grösse aus Belgrad*, "the Greatness from Belgrade", **Bahrija Nuri Hadžić** had a very successful career for a decade or so, performing in some of the most important theatres in central Europe as well as in Switzerland and Turkey.²⁷

In the interwar period, the contact between Muslim women and associations was not limited to the financial support of their academic careers. In the aftermath of the First World War Muslim women for the first time enrolled in different kinds of associations, in Sarajevo and progressively in the minor centres of the province. Muslim women experienced three different kinds of voluntary association. The first one was that of philanthropic associations, like the exclusively feminine *Osvitanje* (Dawn), established in Sarajevo 1919, or the mixed *Merhamet*, established in the same city in 1914 and opened to Muslim women during the 1930s.²⁸ Inspired by Islamic values, these associations mostly took care of the Muslim poor living in urban spaces. A second model was that of cultural associations

27 Pavlović, M. (2001) *Bahrija Nuri-Hadžić, velika evropska primadona*, Most - Časopis za obrazovanje, nauku i kulturu, Year. XXVI, 140-1, p. 62-8

28 Kujraković, N. (2003) *Osvitanje. Prvo udruženje muslimanki u Bosni i Hercegovini*, Prilozi, 38, 2009, p. 145-164; Bavčić, U. (2003) *Merhamet (1913-2003)*, Muslimansko Dobrotvorno Društvo Merhamet, Sarajevo

such as *Gajret* and *Narodna Uzdanica*, whose main aim was to support schooling and nationalism among Muslim pupils, and where, since 1920, muslim women were organised in local female branches. A third model was that of associations such as *Ženski Pokret* (Women's Movement), a feminist organisation established in Belgrade and Sarajevo in 1919. This association assigned the greatest importance to the conquest of the female vote and to equality between men and women in Yugoslav society, building a transnational network with feminist activists in other countries²⁹. Despite the efforts of feminist activists to involve in their activities their – as they used to say – “sisters of Muslim faith”, Muslim women rarely enrolled in these associations, preferring philanthropic and cultural associations. Despite their different guiding principles, agenda and tools, these associations played a major role in the transformation of the position of Muslim women in Bosnian towns. Thanks to the different activities of these associations – collecting money for abandoned children, organising literacy classes or public lessons, organising *mevlud*, *teferič* or *zabave* etc. - Muslim women became visible in the public space, participated in the decision making of the association and experienced modern forms of sociability, such as dancing, singing in choirs, organising amatory theatre performances, participating in beauty contests, etc.³⁰

Women's Association and Activism

Although the post-war period was a time of misery and slow reconstruction, during this period there occurred an increased emergence of urban centres and spread of cultural and social activities and education. Female action gained momentum and drew clear contours of a women's movement. Women advocated for the right to vote as well as to humanitarian work and education that would allow them greater choice of profession.³¹ This women's emancipation movement developed in two directions: feminist and proletarian.³² Numerous civil, charity, faith-based and national organisations were regarded as feminist organisations. This was not a radical feminist action but rather a moderate action striving for improvement of the status of women within the existing matrix and promoting humanitarian work as women's activity. Proletarian organisations were closely associated with the labour movement and class struggle. History failed to record that the period of the first four decades of the

29 Emmert, T.A. (1993) *Ženski Pokret: The Feminist Movement in Serbia in the 1920s*, Ramet, S.P. (ed.) (1999) *Gender Politics in the Western Balkans*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park p. 33-50

30 Giomi, F. (forthcoming, 2015) “*Standing on our own legs*”: *Muslim women and associational culture in post-Ottoman Bosnia-Herzegovina (1878-1941)*, Budapest and New York, Central European University Press

31 Ibid.

32 Kecman, J. (1978) p. 5

20th century can be considered the golden age of women's engagement in this region,³³ and the clear beginning of the feminist action through all the above mentioned forms of association. However, only a handful of women are now remembered and considered a part of our cultural heritage today because World War II and the Communist ideology removed the last vestiges of their work.³⁴ In general, the formation of the new state did not change economic and social status of the population significantly.

Close to the end of the WW I there were already many associations and societies, some of which had existed before the war but resumed their activities only at the end of the war. There were 1256 registered associations in 258 settlements, most of them in Sarajevo (300), Banja Luka (248), Tuzla (222), Mostar (198), Travnik (181) and Bihać districts (107).³⁵ Separate women's associations³⁶ existed, but women were also organised around the existing national associations (Gajret, Prosvjeta, Napredak, Narodna uzdanica).³⁷ The data suggest that these female associations were diverse. There were 22 associations operating in Sarajevo, 5 in Banja Luka, 4 in Tuzla, 4 in Mostar, 3 in Doboj, etc.³⁸ Some of these were civil organisations, some leftist but there were also national and faith based associations.



May 1 celebration in Sarajevo, 1913

Bosnian women held their first public rally on March 8, 1913 – on International Women's Day. This demonstration turned into a protest rally at which they demanded the economic and political liberation of women. On this rally they publicly read a complimentary telegram sent by Klara Zetkin on behalf of the *International Organisation of Women Social Democrats*.³⁹ Again, in 1918, Sarajevo

33 Hawkesworth, C. (2000) *Voices in the Shadows, Women and Verbal Art in Serbia and Bosnia*, Budapest, Central European University Press, p. 123

34 Ibid. p. 123.

35 Seifja, I. (2008) p. 9, taken from Hadžibegović, I. /Kamberović, H. (1997) *Organizacije civilnog društva u BiH – porijeklo i kontekst*, Revija slobodne misli no. 9-10, Asocijacija nezavisnih intelektualaca, Krug 99, Sarajevo, p. 48

36 See Biletić, S. (2011) *Zbirka arhivske građe o kulturno-prosvjetnim, zanatlijskim i sportskim društvima i udruženjima (1919.-1941.)*, Grada Arhiva Bosne i Hercegovine, no. 3/2011, p. 97-136 (www.ceeol.com)

37 Kovačević, D. (1972), p. 14

38 Ibid. p. 14

39 Kecman, J. (1978) p. 15.

celebrated March 8 (Women's Day), which was attended by about 2,000 women, of whom 300-400 were Muslim women.⁴⁰

In the fall of 1919, the *Association for Women's Enlightenment and Protection of their Rights* was established in Sarajevo with the aim of dealing with the issues of women's education and their civil and political rights. This Association published a magazine *Ženski pokret [Women's Movement]* – the name which the Association later adopted.⁴¹ The association was led by feminists who fought for civil and political rights and equality in general. The starting point of this association was the recent war and all that women had shown themselves capable of doing during that time.⁴² Demands of the feminist movement referred to both personal and family rights, and the demand for the right to vote was clearly defined, not only in civil but also in social and communist organisations of women.⁴³ *Association for Women's Enlightenment* later changed its name to *Women's Movement*. They fought for the right to vote, the economic independence of married women, recognition of equal child custody of the father and the mother, support to mothers and children by law, change of inheritance law in favour of women, protection of women's labour force, introduction of female labour inspectors, right to job promotion in any occupation that women are engaged in and free access to political life.⁴⁴

In the interwar period the number of women who supported the labour movement and Communist Party was constantly growing.⁴⁵ Women were active in trade unions and labour parties. Their first demand was the liberation of the working class and then the equality of women, as the idea was that class liberation would come at the same time as the liberation of women. Even in 1917 there was an accelerated revival of labour organisations and *Socialist Party in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, and in March 1918 the *Women's Socialist Agitation Committee* was formed. Together with the *Women's Committee of Wives of Reservists* this Committee organised a celebration of March 8 in which many women participated, among them a substantial number of Muslim Women.⁴⁶ The celebration of International Women's Day, which was held on March 24 of the same year, attracted two thousand women who organised a meeting in *Radnički dom [Worker's Hall]* and passed a Resolution on their action.⁴⁷ *Secretariat of Women Socialists* was established in 1919 and by the end

40 Bajić, N. (1962), *Uloga žene u socijalističkom pokretu u BiH*

41 Čaušević, J. (2013) *Sufražetski pokret(i) u svijetu i BiH*, in Zborniku radova ženske političke akademije, Helsinški parlament građana Banja Luka, Banja Luka, p. 84

42 Hawkesworth, C. (2000), p. 186

43 Stojaković, G. (2011) *Rodna perspektiva novina Antifašističkog fronta žena (1945-1953)*, PhD Thesis, Univerzitet u Novom Sadu, Acimsi – Asocijacija centara za interdisciplinarne i multidisciplinarne studije: rodne studije, Novi Sad, p. 21

44 Čaušević, J. (2013), p. 87

45 Kovačević, D. (1972), p. 15

46 Ibid. p. 13

47 Kecman, J. (1978) p. 20

of 1920 it gathered communists. Translation of Klara Zetkin's book, *Women and Students*, was published in 1924. At the initiative of Serbian Women's Alliance [*Ženski savez*], the first congress took place in Belgrade in 1919 in which *the National Federation of Serb, Croat and Slovene Women* [Narodni ženski savez Sprkinja, Hrvatica i Slovenki] was established, bringing together about 200 different associations, including many from Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁴⁸ In 1929 the association was renamed *Yugoslavian Women's Union* [Jugoslovenski ženski savez], and from 1936 it started issuing its own journal. At the Second Congress of the Union in 1920 the associations with feminist agendas seceded from the Union and formed a feminist section focused on civil education of women and other topics such as education, courses, lectures, literature and hygiene.⁴⁹ The majority of associations from Bosnia and Herzegovina, although members to *the Yugoslavian Women's Union*, were disjointed, often a "factor of national division and antagonisms".⁵⁰ In 1921, the Communist Party was banned from working, so the majority of women joined *the Association for Women's Enlightenment*.⁵¹ *Alliance of Women's Societies in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes* [Alijansa ženskih društava u Kraljevini SHS] was established in 1923 and fought not only for the political rights of women but also for the work of housewives to be recognised, just as any other paid work, and for the equality of parental rights of men and women.⁵² In 1927, a group of women intellectuals founded a *Women's Party* [Ženska stranka], which actively and aggressively fought for women's suffrage. Their work was interrupted in 1929 however, when the dictatorship in Yugoslavia banned the work of political parties.⁵³ At the end of 1927 *the Association of Women with University Education* [Udruženje univerzitetski obrazovanih žena] was established, with a branch in Sarajevo, which protected the professional interests of women and sought reforms to civil law.⁵⁴ A youth section of the Women's Movement was established 1935, gathering young women and female students, and soon became the meeting point of anti-fascists.⁵⁵ It must be pointed out that women's organisations also organised anti-militarist and anti-fascist actions and advocated for the release of political prisoners, including communists.⁵⁶

48 Čaušević, J. (2013), p. 86

49 Ibid. p. 86-87

50 Kovačević, D. (1972), p. 14

51 Čaušević, J. (2013), p. 87

52 Stojaković, G. (2011) p. 21

53 Čaušević, J. (2013), p. 88

54 Ibid. p. 88

55 Ibid. p. 88

56 Popov-Momčinović, Z. (2013) *Ženski pokret u BiH, Artikulacija jedne kontrakulture*, Sarajevski otvoreni centar, Centar za empirijska istraživanja religije u Bosni i Hercegovini, Fondacija CURE, Sarajevo, p. 74

The Rights of Women and their Status in Society

The transition to the 20th century was a time of paradox for women because an increasing number were gaining education, however, at the same time the educational level of the vast majority of women in the region was dreadfully low.⁵⁷ Historically, the need for the education of girls emerged only in the mid-19th century, because until then only boys received education, mostly religious.⁵⁸ The Primary School of Staka Skenderova was established in 1858 in Sarajevo, and in 1869 Adelina Paulina Irby opened Miss Irby's College in Sarajevo. At the end of 19th century different schools for girls started to open, but they were mainly reduced to present (primary) education, teaching the girls "female" courses – sewing, handicrafts, home economics, housework, hygiene, etc. Somewhat later, the girls started being trained to be teachers.⁵⁹ The literacy rate was very low. According to data from 1910, 93.35% of women were illiterate, the majority of whom were Muslims, followed by Serbs and Croats respectively,⁶⁰ while figures from 1931 suggest that the literacy rate amongst women in Yugoslavia was 57.1%.⁶¹ Generally, women from urban areas and centres attended schools, while Muslim women were the least educated due to their conservative religious beliefs and the patriarchal circumstances in which they lived. Austro-Hungarian authorities passed a Law on Compulsory Education quite late, in 1911, but this law contained a provision exempting Muslim women from the obligation of attending school.⁶² Women's thought was not particularly welcome in the public arena, and their public engagement was often criticised and ridiculed, even when they themselves advocated traditional values or acted against emancipation.

In addition to economic poverty and difficult working conditions, Bosnian women were burdened by harsh laws and customs that subjugated women within society and the family.⁶³ According to records from 1926, women participated in with 14.6% of the total labour force involved in reconstruction of the nation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁶⁴ Patriarchal ideas about the role of women in the revival of the nation and preservation of tradition, supported by national and religious ideas, dominated in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although leftists advocated equality, the patriarchal system was not questioned, especially in rural areas. Many

57 Hawkesworth, C. (2000) p. 126

58 Islamović, E. (2004) *Neki aspekti razvoja obrazovanja žena u Bosni i Hercegovini za vrijeme Austrougarske okupacije*, *Ljudska prava – Časopis za sve pravno-političke probleme*, Year 5, no. 2-4, Sarajevo, p. 135

59 Islamović, E. (2004) p. 138

60 *Ibid.* p. 138

61 Hawkesworth, C. (2000) p. 162

62 Islamović, E. (2004) p. 137

63 Kovačević, D. (1972)

64 Kecman, J. (1978) p. 28

women's associations indeed acted in support of patriarchal ideology and supported national matrices. Marriage was - as it is today - an important obligation of women, which opened the doors to their accomplishment as mothers. The need to have many children gradually declined and women often underwent illegal abortions, which often had dreadful consequences for the health and sometimes even life of woman.⁶⁵ Throughout the interwar period abortion was banned. The Codes anticipated imprisonment for a person who performs an abortion (doctors, midwives), especially if carried out against a woman's will. On the other hand, a woman who has an abortion could be acquitted if the child was conceived out of wedlock or if abortion was medically justified (since 1930).⁶⁶ While abortion of an illegitimate child favours the patriarchal organisation of society through heterosexual marriages, one could argue that allowing abortion for medical reasons was a novelty, which favoured women's rights at the time. Interestingly, in this region there was –and remains – a practice according to which when a woman decides that she wants to get married, she elopes [*ukrade se*]. While this meant the transition from one patriarchal community to another, an important feature of the “elopement” practice was the fact that women, without parental “consent”, were marrying the person of their own choice.⁶⁷

Law on the protection of workers, adopted in 1922, contained provisions prohibiting night work for women, work during the two months prior and two months after childbirth (with guaranteed assistance and insurance), breaks during breastfeeding (without wage cutbacks, for both married and unmarried women) and obligations imposed on employers to organise child day-care centres near the workplace.⁶⁸ These provisions were generally violated in practice. Yugoslavia had no unified Civil Code and there was no legal consistency in the application of civil legislation in different parts of the country. In Bosnia and Herzegovina the obsolete Turkish Civil Code (1858) and Land Law (1867), and Austrian Civil Code (1811) and common law applied, which largely placed women in a disadvantaged position.⁶⁹ Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina were granted the right to vote only in 1945, in Yugoslavia. Although feminists and leftists in the interwar period fought for suffrage, they were often subjected to ridicule and derision, even among women themselves.⁷⁰ An interesting point that one could note when studying the texts from the interwar period is a

65 Popov-Momčinović, Z. (2013) p. 71

66 Drakić, G. (2011) *Prekid trudnoće prema Krivičnom zakoniku Kraljevine Jugoslavije i projektima koji su mu prethodili*, Zbornik radova Pravnog fakulteta, vol. 45, no. 3, Novi Sad, p. 533-542

67 Doubt, K. (2014) *Elopment and Ego-Identity in the Narratives of Bosnian Women* in Adamović, Mirjana et al.: *Young Women in Post-Yugoslav Societies: Research, Practice and Policy*, Institut za društvena istraživanja u Zagrebu, Zagreb, p. 289

68 Kecman, J. (1978) p. 46

69 Ibid. p. 59

70 Hawkesworth, C. (2000) p. 161

very frequent use of gender sensitive language in the press and published articles.⁷¹ The presently undesirable word “feminism” was actively used as an ideological and activist determinant.

Muslim women lived in particularly difficult circumstances. During Ottoman rule women were obliged to wear a veil in public, a practice which continued as *Sharia law* also applied in the Kingdom. Influence of *Sharia law* on family, marital and property relations additionally petrified the already disadvantaged position of Muslim women.⁷² Following the arrival of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, Christian and Jewish women took off their veils, and with the appointment of Džemaludin ef. Čaušević as Grand Mufti, in 1913, discussions were initiated about garments and emancipation of women in which reformist ideas clashed with conservative ones. Čaušević introduced *arebica* [the Perso-Arabic script used to write the Bosnian language] as a script to be used by Muslims instead of oriental languages through which men had earlier received education.⁷³ In fact, it was men, not women, who debated women’s rights. After the war, there was an evident gradual development of the debate on women’s issues in general with the focus on discovering the connection between the veil and illiteracy and regression of the Muslim community.⁷⁴ “When it comes to employment of women in factories, already during the WWI there were incidences of women taking off their veils, from which it can



be observed that abandonment of *zar* and *feredža* [long shawl covering women’s body and hair], was inevitable for Muslim women to be included in economic life.⁷⁵ Many newspapers wrote about women’s issues, such as *Nova žena* (1928), *Đulistan*, *Žena danas*, *Ženski pokret* (published with intermissions from 1920 until 1938), *Žena i svijet* 1934, *Jednakost* (wrote on Women’s Communist Movement in BiH), *Glasnik ženskog jugoslovenskog saveza* (1938),⁷⁶ and also *Gajret* - which published some very progressive views in its magazine (issued with intermissions from 1907 until 1941). *Đulistan*, the first Bosniak women’s magazine, focused

71 See Vince, Z. (1954/1955) *Drugarica direktor, gospođa profesor ili drugarica direktorica, gospođa profesorica*, Jezik, Zagreb, 3/4

72 Popov-Momčinović, Z. (2013) p. 71

73 Šeta, Đ. (2011) *Zašto marama? Bosanskohercegovačke muslimanke o životu i radu pod maromom*, Centar za napredne studije, Centar za interdisciplinarnu postdiplomske studije, Sarajevo, 2011. p. 87

74 Ibid. p. 83

75 Milišić, S. (1996) *Emancipacija muslimanske žene u Bosni i Hercegovini*, in Urbano biće Bosne i Hercegovine, Međunarodni centar za mir, Institut za istoriju, Sarajevo, 1996, p 138

76 Penava, S. (1981) *Izvori i literatura o problemima emancipacije muslimanske žene u Bosni i Hercegovini*, u Prilozi Instituta za istoriju, Sarajevo, 17/1981, sv. 18, p. 273-284

on raising “social and cultural awareness of Muslim women”, appeared in 1926 and published only three issues in the period from March to May 1926. The magazine focused on modernisation and the reform of the social status of Bosnian Muslim women and their cultural and educational transformation.⁷⁷ It promoted education and emancipation through religious and patriarchal frameworks. Ahmed Ljubunčić, editor in chief of the magazine, wrote the following, among other arguments, in the editorial of the very first issue of the magazine:

*Let's organise ourselves, Brothers! Let's disarm the hard-core conservatives to whom a woman is just an object, a thing. They must understand that a woman is right to seek, through science, the paths of utter human perfection (...) time has come to solve our most important issue – the issue of our woman.*⁷⁸

Osvitanje, the first association of Muslim women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, was established in 1919 and worked until 1930/31. It focused on education, morality and the productive and economic participation of women in society.⁷⁹ The *Women's sub-committee of Gajret* opened in 1920. Its main goal was to raise cultural awareness of Muslims. There is also a mention of *Muslim Women's Club* [Muslimanski ženski klub] in historical records, the statute of which was published in 1924 and the task of which was to foster sociability among its members and educate Muslim women in secular and religious terms.⁸⁰

Jewish women in Bosnia and Herzegovina were mainly Sephardic Jews who also lived in a very traditional context. Most of these women would marry young and remain at home. Jewish women started working only in the mid-twentieth century.⁸¹ Like other women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, they started receiving education in the twentieth century, but their top priorities remained family, children, marriage and procreation. However, as Jewish women had been actively involved in humanitarian work, many Jewish associations emerged. Already in the late nineteenth century there were many Jewish women's associations, for instance, *La Humanidad* in Sarajevo, which worked with poor children, mothers, orphans and providing education to girls, and *Societat de vižitar doljentas*, which took care of the elderly and infirm.⁸² Laura Papo Bohoreta provided a very detailed description of the everyday life, customs, activities and

77 Kujraković, N. (2010) *Đulistan, prvi bošnjački ženski časopis*, in Diwan, godina XIII, broj 29-30, JU Javna biblioteka Alija Isaković, p. 150-155

78 *Đulistan* (1926), number 1, p. 9

79 Grebović-Lendo, N. *Tragom ženskog aktivizma...* <http://nahla.ba/tekstovi10.aspx?tid=213> (May 20, 2014)

80 Selected articles on Muslims (1900-2010): http://www.nahla.ba/cms/tekstovi10/tekstovi_datoteke/131211072941_MALA_ANTOLOGIJA_BOSANSKE_ZENSKJE_MUSLIMANSKE_MISLI.pdf (April 9 2014)

81 Freidenreich, H. Yugoslavia. *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia, Jewish Women's Archive* <http://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/yugoslavia> (June 1 2014)

82 *Ibid.*

status of women in her piece of work titled *Sephardic Women in Bosnia* [Sefardska žena u Bosni] from 1932.

Many articles appeared in the press about women and their status. However, journalism as a profession was not easily accessible to women and by 1945 women journalists were a rarity.⁸³ *Nova žena* [A new woman]: moral, ethical and social quarterly (Sarajevo, 1928) was a magazine intended for women.⁸⁴ *Women's Movement* [Ženski pokret], which was also sold in Bosnia, was a feminist magazine, „the texts of which lead to a conclusion that feminists from all parts of the Kingdom (SCS) of Yugoslavia were gathered around the idea of feminism rather than around the ruling ideology of the new state.“⁸⁵ *The Women's Movement* also wrote about the rise of Fascism in Europe and anti-militarism as a key feature of feminism.⁸⁶ *Yugoslav Woman* [Jugoslovenska žena] aimed to gather feminists and deal with the issues of women's human rights.⁸⁷ Generally speaking, however, women in Bosnia and Herzegovina never advocated radical feminism⁸⁸, nor did they have a common platform of feminist action within Bosnia and Herzegovina due to the diversity of association and ideas they promoted.

Literature

Nafija Sarajlić (1893-1970), as the only Bosnian female author from the Austro-Hungarian period, corresponded to the literary trends of the time, though she remained in the literary world very briefly. Immediately before the outset of the WWI Sarajlić published a short story collection *Teme* [Themes], which was in fact officially published in the Yugoslav period, in 1986. In this historical period the literature itself was directly related to *Enlightenment* and it sought to *Europeanise* Bosnian-Herzegovinian culture and its people in accordance with the spirit of the new times, contrary to the already archetypal lifestyles. In an attempt to entertain and teach, the literature opted clearly for the pole to which it inclined and to which it was, at the same time, magnetically drawn to.⁸⁹ Non-Europeanised local discourse needed to be edified regarding the new values, which Sarajlić advocated, and which formed the main motif of her writing. Choosing the themes for their literary writing and giving these issues a serious Enlightening and pro-European treatment, a number of Bosnian authors – Nafija Sarajlić among them – became the

83 Ademović, F. (1998) *Bosanskohercegovačka štampa* (1918.-1941.), Nezavisna unija profesionalnih novinara BiH, Soros media centar, Sarajevo, p. 276

84 Stojaković, G. (2011) p. 22

85 Ibid. p. 22

86 Popov-Momčinović, Z. (2013) p. 73

87 Stojaković, G. (2011) p. 22

88 Vujković, S. (2010)

89 Avdagić, A. (2003) *Pripitomljeni diskurz in Patchwork*, 1, Sarajevo: Rodne studije, p. 123-135

instrument of a mechanism which sought to establish a universal value system. In Sarajlić's sketches one can depict two dominant determinants: *the strong and the weak ones*, and her great need to emphasise her belonging to the former as a result of fear of her own Otherness, says Avdagić. When observed within the post-colonial theories, her literary work appears to be articulated through the first phase, explains Fanon⁹⁰, that is, the *phase of adopting of the European models or Adopt phase* within which the culture has universal value and lends itself to no *third* solution to the problem. Her writing sketches tend to affect the readers, both male and female, educationally and nationally, interpellating them and influencing their national state of mind, thereby showing that a new culture and new view of the world is not to be built on the existing foundations but rather through Europeanisation and rejection of old cultural principles. The fact that the literature of the Austro-Hungarian period remembers the work of only one female author who appears to have had her own room, or at least a desk, speaks in favour of the thesis that writing was exclusively a male profession and that men, like the colonisers in the first example, decided on the value of literary work.⁹¹ In such circumstances, the literary poetics of Nafija Sarajlić as well as other female authors from the earlier period cannot be observed only through the text. Instead, one must also take into account the imperatives of the literary work within this political context. Thus, Sarajlić was consistent with the literary tendencies of the time and adjusted her writing to the colonising and the patriarchal discourses of her husband and teacher, Šemsudin Sarajlić, who was also a writer. In fact, she was a *shadow author*, which implied that she was imitating androtexts and patriarchal models, deeply convinced that they are canonised, inevitable and as such the only worthwhile. [...] Lulled into a patriarchal model of living, Nafija Sarajlić wrote from the shadow of her father's and husband's authorities.⁹² Her narrative style corresponds with principles of *women's* writing with the tendency of becoming *feminine writing*, because she was adjusting the structure of her writing to herself, her sensibility and her body. While this corporeity (writing) remains quite reduced, in line with the understanding of the female body at the time, which was seen through the lens of motherhood, or the view of a master and a man - as Avdagić noted - Sarajlić could be regarded as an author on the border between *the women's and the feminine*. The adjacency of her poetics makes her an author whose work and engagement cannot and must not be disregarded or forgotten because she represents an important element of the history of women's literary work in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Today, a primary school is named after Sarajlić.

The period after World War I was characterised by a rapid rise in

90 See Said, W. E. (1999) *Orijentalizam*, Zagreb: Konzor, and Lešić, Z. (2003) *Nova čitanja: poststrukturalistička čitanka*, Sarajevo: Buybook, p. 96-110

91 Avdagić, A. (2003) p. 123-135

92 *bid.*

women's literary work, manifested in their occupation of a literary space in which men were completely dominant, both as authors and narrative-setters. In this literary and historical period many female authors, particularly poets, emerged who marked the epoch, in terms of style and expression, as an one of questioning social themes, i.e. the poetics of expressionism referring to different stages of social engagement. Literary works by authors such as **Vladeta Popović, Džemila Hanumica Zekić, Danica Drča, Jelena Škerlić-Čorović, Ljubica Marković, Ajiša Filipović, Jelica Bernadžikowska, Irena Feketa, Jirina Karasova Milica Stojanović-Vlatković, Senija Dizdarević, Fikreta Pjanić, Milica Miron, Munevera Čalkić, Levi Bernardina Horvat, Jela Ostojić** represented the social context, about which women actively wrote. Nevertheless, their writings fell, almost completely, into oblivion, finding no place in the official chrestomathies and canonised anthologies.⁹³ The poetics and topoi they employed in their writings were in line with the literary trends of the time and the context in which they lay. In other words, their literature was as good as that of men, but their works could be additionally regarded as *feminine*, as defined by Grosz. Female authors of this literature epoch in Bosnia and Herzegovina were not anonymous, neither as authors nor promoters of writing and femininity.

Authors within this social context, in the interwar period, through their writings and other forms of social engagement, called for social change and activism. They participated in cultural and social life and published their works in relevant literary magazines such as *Behar*, thereby conquering the space of freedom. Thus, they wrote about the social aspirations of the Women's Movement, school education of young women, development of feminism, women's right to work, etc. However, critical review at the time, which turned a deaf ear to this period of women's literary writing, appears to be directly discriminatory and completely misogynistic. This period was characterised by changes in women's literary writing, which aspired to overcome the epic narratives and the Enlightening role of literature and open itself to the general experience of world literature and the creation of valuable literary and artistic narratives that would continue after World War II. The interwar period was also marked by the involvement of women in public discourse – debates and controversy over the emancipation of Muslim women (**Hatidža Basara, Hasnija Berberović, Samija Hodžić, Derviša Ljubović**) – where they imposed themselves as speakers and conquerors of the public dialogue arena, earlier denied to women.

Anka Topić (1882–1956) was the first woman in Bosnia and Herzegovina to publish a poetry collection, *A Lost Star* [Izgubljena zvijezda], in 1908. Topić was born in Žepče, but spent her childhood and youth in Sarajevo. She graduated from the Teacher Training College and later worked as a teacher and educatress [prosvjetiteljica] in several cities of

93 Canonised anthologies edited by Enes Duraković and published by Alef, Sarajevo: 1995

the country. She fought for the emancipation of women. Today, the prize for the first book of poetry by female authors in Bosnia and Herzegovina is named after Anka Topić.⁹⁴

Laura Papo Bohoreta (1891–1942) wrote poetry, short stories and scripts for theatre plays in Spanish Ladino language, which were performed and proved very popular among her compatriots. In 1932, Bohoreta wrote the piece *Sephardic Woman in Bosnia* [Sefardska žena u Bosni], portraying details of the life of Sephardic women from birth to death. Her works in Ladino language have great linguistic significance. The author's literary work and cultural engagement was indirectly inspired by Jelica Belović Bernadžikowska, who in 1916 published an article in German language, which Bohoreta perceived as an attack on Sephardic woman. She recorded the customs, periods, language and culture of Sephardic community, thereby making an invaluable contribution to present knowledge about this period. Bohoreta has long been forgotten with her piece *Sephardic Woman* only translated in 2005.⁹⁵

Jovanka Milošević (1878-1937) was an educated woman from Banja Luka who favoured art and literature. Milošević was President of the charitable association “*Srpkinja*” [Dobrotvorna zadruga “*Srpkinja*”], which was founded in 1901/02 and later renamed *the Circle of Serbian Sisters* [Kolo srpskih sestara].⁹⁶

Jelica Belović Bernadžikowska (1870-1946) was born in Osjek. She attended schools in Đakovo, Zagreb, Vienna and Paris. She spoke nine languages and worked in Zagreb, Ruma, Banja Luka, Sarajevo and Mostar. She was a correspondent of Mostar magazine *Zora* [Dawn]. Belović Bernadžikowska was a headmistress of the Girl's High School in Banja Luka, from which she was sent to an early retirement in 1909. She was later banned from publishing. However, she continued to publish under pseudonyms in several magazines and was an Editor in Chief in two such magazines: *Narodna snaga* and *Frauenwelt*. She wrote about the emancipation of women in a moderately feminist tone. She was more appreciated beyond the borders of the country in which she lived. Her most important work is *Cultural History of the South Slavs* [Kulturna historija Južnih Slavena], which was published in Dresden in 1927, in German language.⁹⁷

Vera Obrenović-Delibašić (1906-1992)⁹⁸ was born in Livno. She was

94 Article *Nagrada Anka Topić* at <http://primpo.wordpress.com/2011/08/28/knjizevna-nagrada-anka-topic/> i article *Dodijeljene nagrade Anka Topić* at: <http://www.postaja.ba/index.php/vijesti/epe/648-> (May 15, 2014)

95 Vujković, S. (2010) and Freidenreich, H.; Papo Bohoreta, L. (2005) *Sefardska žena u Bosni*, Connnectum, Sarajevo

96 See Gajić, D. *Život i stvaralaštvo žena Banjaluke*, source: <http://www.6yka.com/novost/47980/upoznajte-zene-iz-proslosti-koje-su-zaduzile-banjaluku->

97 See Gajić, D. *Život i stvaralaštvo žena Banjaluke*, source: <http://www.6yka.com/novost/47980/upoznajte-zene-iz-proslosti-koje-su-zaduzile-banjaluku-> (May 15, 2014); Vujković, S. (2010)

98 More details will be given in next chapter.

among the first female poets to make a reputation through the Muslim cultural journal *Gajret*. In 1927, she published a poetry collection *Nemiri mladosti* [Prime Restlessness].

Suada Muftić was among the first women who wrote for *Gajret*. In 1932, she wrote an article in which she calls for the *Gajret* to take part in the process of education of Muslim women. Her article clearly pointed out that there was a gap between women in rural and urban areas, and that this gap was even larger among the Muslim population.⁹⁹

Razija Handžić was an author from Sarajevo. She set the conceptual foundations for the Museum of Literature and the Performing Arts, and was later a director there.¹⁰⁰ In 1977, she published the poetry collection *Uspravno plamenje* [Standing Flames].

Hasnija Berberović was the first Muslim woman who had passed the state exam in 1909 and for the next 29 years she worked as a teacher. She collaborated with *Gajret* and was the founder and first president of the association *Osvitanje*. She actively worked for the emancipation of women.

Sefika Nesterin Bjelavac, Hatidža Đikić and P.K. Fatma were poets who published their works in *Gajret*.¹⁰¹ In addition to these poets, there were many other women poets and authors such as **Rikica Ovadija, Atifa Pandžina, Jelka Jela Ostojić, Nafija Zildžić, Zilkida Berberović, Asija Kavazović, Kajdafa Efica** (Mostar) and **Zejna Hodžić** (Mostar).

Theatre

Women's contribution to the hundred-year-old theatre activity was mainly reflected in the art of acting, where women and men actors were equally represented. Representation-wise, acting is the area of art in which women have been historically and remain most represented. However, they were denied access to other artistic activities that implied direct involvement in creation and decision-making, and which were socially and ideologically much more valued. Therefore, even today there are many more actresses than women directors, producers and screenwriters in theatres. Positions of directors were reserved for men, but some women directors and screen-writers - who are even today fewer than men directors and screen-writers - tried to win the positions that were historically and ideologically denied to women.

Lidija Mansvjetova, a directress and actress, was born in 1893 in Saint Petersburg. She studied piano and harmony at the Saint Petersburg State Conservatory. Her first employment was in 1911 in Odessa, where she quickly won the sympathies of both the audience and the critics for

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Tomić, M. *Muzej književnosti i pozorišne umjetnosti*:

http://www.katolicki-tjednik.com/vijest.asp?n_UID=1231 (May 15, 2014)

¹⁰¹ *Bošnjačka preporodna književnost*, February 25 2011: <http://knjizevnostikonji.blogspot.com/2011/02/bosnjacka-preporodna-knjizevnost.html> (May 15, 2014)

her parts in Chekhov's plays. She performed in Belgrade, Sarajevo, Split and Zagreb. In the period from 1931 to 1946 she worked in Sarajevo as a directress and actress. Her directing opus was very rich and extensive and it included Russian Classical and Modern drama, the works of the South Slavic and other world literature: Turgenev (*A Nest of Gentlefolk*), Gogol (*Dead Souls*), Dostoyevsky (*The Brothers Karamazov*), Chekhov (*Three Sisters*), Ostrovsky (*The Forest*), Shkvarkin (*Stranger's Child* and *Lira naprokat*), Capek (*White Disease*), Pirandello (*So It Is, If You Think So*), Ibsen (*The Wild Duck*), Krleža (*Leda*), Samokovlija (*Fusion, He Is Crazy*), Feldman (*Professor Žič, In The Background*). She also directed operas: Nedbal (*Polish Blood*), Lehár (*The Land of Smiles*), Strauss (*The Bat*), Kalman (*Silva*). She died in Split in 1966.¹⁰²

Ljubica Dada Jovanović (1885-1980) worked as an actress in the Banja Luka Theatre for a decade. She was awarded for her work and contribution as a nurse in the World War I.¹⁰³ **Milica – Carka Jovanović** (1896-1994) worked as an actress in the Banja Luka Theatre for eleven years. She starred in the feature film *Slavica* and had a successful acting career.¹⁰⁴ **Mara Zeljković – Pavlović** (1914-1979) was also an actress who actively performed in the Banja Luka Theatre since 1932.¹⁰⁵

Painting

Adela Ber Vukić (1888-1966) was born in Tuzla. She was the first trained female painter in Bosnia and Herzegovina. She graduated from a girls' school and then enrolled in the Teacher Training School. In 1908 she moved to Vienna to a private painting school and from 1910 until 1914 attended the Art School for Women. During her education in Vienna she experienced much hardship as, as a woman, she was unable to obtain scholarship. Nevertheless, she ultimately managed to get a free education at the Art School for Women in the city. After graduation, she returned to Sarajevo but the outbreak of the WWI prevented her from opening a painting school. Not until the end of the WWI, in 1919, did she manage to organise – though only with a great difficulty - her first solo exhibition in Sarajevo, and later, in 1939 another in Zagreb. In the inter-war period she participated a few times in collective exhibitions in Sarajevo, Zagreb and in Novi Sad. Vukić was also the first graphic artist in Bosnia, her career lasting nearly five decades. She was known for woodcuts – the technique in which she made her masterpieces that qualified her among the best graphics artists in Yugoslavia. It is interesting to note that she created these graphics in very difficult circumstances, without an adequate

102 Lešić, J. (1971) *Lada Mansvjetova in Ubavić*, Vljako: Narodno pozorište Sarajevo 1921-1971, Novi Sad, p. 316-317

103 See Gajić, D.

104 Ibid.

105 Ibid.

graphics press, and on small paper formats, often impressing both sides of the paper. Vukić was the first painter from Bosnia and Herzegovina whose complete works were linked to Bosnia. Her works comprised mainly portraits, still life or landscapes – in the literature usually characterised as intimate stories of women from the countryside, their homes, scantily dressed children, quietly-spoken evening conversations on the doorsteps in front of their houses.¹⁰⁶ The artistic work of Vukić, emerging from a poor and artistically underdeveloped environment, gives a clear and objective view of Bosnia at the time. After the WWII she applied on several occasions for membership of the Association of Painters of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but was never admitted. Vukić never had her own studio. Her retrospective was made only in 1977, in Tuzla.¹⁰⁷

Lujza Kuzmić Mijić (1889-1959) was born in Sarajevo to a wealthy family. She studied in Vienna together with Adela Ber Vukić. The three of her most important works – *A Child's Head*, *the Underpass* and *the Periphery* – are kept in the Art Gallery of Bosnia and Herzegovina. She abandoned her painting career in 1928, after she gave birth to a daughter and devoted herself to her family.¹⁰⁸ The Art Gallery of Bosnia and Herzegovina organised her retrospective in Sarajevo and Zagreb in 1983. Interestingly, neither Vukić nor Kuzmić Mijić could attend the Vienna Academy because they were women. Instead, they both studied at the Art School for Women - which was less conservative than the Academy - the significant influence of which can be seen in their works.¹⁰⁹

Iva Simonović Despić (1890-1961) was the first Bosnian-Herzegovinian sculptor who came to Sarajevo from Croatia. She was born in Zagreb. As the daughter of an Austro-Hungarian general she received a very good formal education in Munich and Paris, and thanks to her talent she displayed her works in prestigious galleries. Towards the end of WWI she met Aco Despić - the son of a wealthy Sarajevo family involved in art - in Zagreb. In 1920 she married Despić and moved to Sarajevo. Up to 1941 she intensively worked on sculptures and, in that period, worked as the court sculptor in Belgrade. She had two solo exhibitions, in London and Belgrade, in 1927.¹¹⁰ Simonović Despić was a free-minded sculptor who never really fit into her patriarchal family. In 1931, a mansion with a studio was built for her in Vasin Han near Sarajevo. She never had a solo exhibition in Sarajevo, but her works were displayed in solo and collective shows in London, Belgrade, Barcelona, Zagreb, Ljubljana, Prague, Brno, Bratislava. Her obsession was to make a monument dedicated to the mothers of the fallen soldiers. „Everywhere in the world there are Unknown Soldier monuments erected.

106 Vujković, S. (2010) p. 51-59

107 Begić, A. (2004) *Prve likovne umjetnice Bosne i Hercegovine*, PEN centar Bosne i Hercegovine, Bosanska knjiga, Sarajevo, april-septembar, p. 3-18

108 Ibid.

109 Vujković, S. (2010)

110 Begić, A. (2004) p. 3-18

Mothers of those heroes equally deserve such monuments“; she said. She even developed a design for the monument but it never materialised. After the liberation of Sarajevo, she was arrested and held in the remand prison of the National Court of Honor for being a supporter of the Royal Family. While in prison, she made a portrait of Ante Franjković, an actor who was detained in the same prison. After the war and following her release from prison Simonović Despić faced a very difficult period. With very few works commissioned, she focused more on painting and drawing and less on sculptures. She died in 1961 in her studio.¹¹¹

Rajka Merćep (1904-1961) was a Bosnian-Herzegovinian sculptor and ceramist. She was born in Bileća. After WWI she moved to Sarajevo. She studied at the Zagreb Academy in the class of Ivan Meštrović, but shortly after enrolment moved to Paris and never graduated from the Academy. She built her career abroad in the inter-war period. She regularly participated in the exhibitions of Yugoslav artists who put their shows on abroad.¹¹² She was active, furthermore, in many professional, women's and humanitarian organisations.¹¹³

Milena Šotra (1909-2003) was a painter, born in Pješevac near Stolac in Herzegovina. Soon after she married, she moved with her husband to America, where she engaged in promoting communist and revolutionary ideas. She could afford little time for art education as she was very active in the social and political arena.¹¹⁴

Journalism (editors, journalists, correspondents)

Milena Preindlsberger-Mrazović (1863–1927) was the first significant female journalist in Bosnia and Herzegovina. She came from Croatia and attended schools in Budapest. She first moved with her parents to Banja Luka in 1978, and a year later they moved to Sarajevo, where Milena stayed until 1919. She was one of the founders of the National museum in Sarajevo in 1888. In 1889, she became the first female member of the Vienna Anthropological Society. Her works were mainly written in German language. She published five books on Bosnian-Herzegovinian topics. From the establishment of the newspaper *Bosnische Post* in 1884 she worked as its associate, and in 1889 she was appointed its editor in chief and publisher. It was unusual at the time for a woman to work in the journalistic profession, thus she opened the way to journalism for many other women. She was very knowledgeable about Bosnia and Herzegovina, for she travelled widely and even wrote a travel guide to this country, which was published in Vienna in 1908. During the war she worked as a nurse. Sadly, only two stories (*The Gypsies and the Giants and Golden Children*)

111 Slobodna Bosna, September 17, 2009 p. 58-62

112 Vujković, S. (2010)

113 Begić, A. (2004) p. 3-18

114 Vujković, S. (2010)

were translated into our languages. After moving to Vienna in 1919 she actively studied and promoted Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹¹⁵

Vida Čubrilović Koprivica was an educated and active Sarajevo woman. In the materials reviewed for this publication there was a text written by Čubrilović Koprivica - *Muslimanke i škole za domaćice* [Muslim Women and Schools for Housewives] – in magazine *Gajret* from 1929. *Da li je to socijalna pravda?* [Is this Social Justice?] is another of her well-known articles in which she wrote about announced layoffs of clerks and married women, whereby women were completely prevented from doing any intellectual work.¹¹⁶

Jovanka Šiljak was an associate of newspapers *Đulistan* and an active member of the *Women's Movement* in Sarajevo. She advocated unveiling of women but in a moderate way. She was very socially engaged and fought against social injustice. She died in 1962 in Sarajevo. **Svjetlana Jergović** was another associate of the newspaper *Đulistan*. **Umija Vranić** was an intellectual from Sarajevo. She was one of the founders of the Association *Osvitanje* and a *Đulistan* correspondent. **Nira B. Filipović** was mentioned in the text of Nusret Kujraković as one of the correspondents of *Đulistan*.¹¹⁷

Katica Višević was editor of the youth magazine *Bosilje*, published by teacher interns of St. Joseph's School in Sarajevo in 1919/20. **Stela Zon** and **Hana Plej** were associates of *Revija đaka*, the magazine of the First Boy's High School in Sarajevo, which was banned soon after publishing. **Melika Kulenović** was editor in chief of *Đulistan*, which was issued for a short period of time in 1926. **Marica M. Vidović** was editor in chief of a weekly *Nova žena: moralno etička i socijalna revija* [A New Woman: Moral, Ethical and Social Journal] in 1928/29. She also edited a half-monthly magazine *Dobra djeca* [Good Children]. **Olga Majstorović** worked on the editorial board of *Kulturni kurir* [Cultural Courier], which was published by a group of young writers in 1936. **Jelena Ostojčić** from Zvornik was a member of the editorial board of *Srpska riječ* [Serbian Word] and a secretary to the *Women's Movement* of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Among other women who wrote and published were **Julka Popović-Srdić** (a teacher from Sanski Most), **Zorka Babić-Mitrović** from Mostar, **Mitra Moračina** (a teacher from Uvac), **Mara Ljubibratić**, etc.¹¹⁸

115 Šarić, S. (2004) *Dvije zaboravljene gospođe*, in Most, časopis za obrazovanje, nauku i kulturu, year XXIX, no. 173, Mostar, <http://www.most.ba/084/028.aspx> (May 17, 2014); Hamdija Kreševljaković (1927) Milena Mrazović in *Napredak*, year II, no. 6, p. 89-90, Sarajevo; Vujković, S. (2010)

116 Ibid.

117 The whole paragraph is based on: Kujraković, N. (2010) p. 150-155

118 The whole paragraph is based on: Ademović, F. (1998)

Women Doctors

Ševala Zildžić-Iblizović (1903-1978) was born in 1903 in Sarajevo. She refused to follow the “female” education path – leading to the teaching profession – but instead, in 1919, personally requested and eventually won the approval of the Grand Mufti Čaušević to enrol in the Boy’s Grammar School. After graduating from the high school she enrolled in the Medical School in Zagreb. She graduated from the Medical School in 1931 and became the first Muslim female doctor in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Upon her return to Sarajevo, she got a job but only after waiting for two years. She worked at the City Hospital, the Infectious Disease Department, and at the Health Institute. In 1962, she retired from the *Dr Mara Kurtović School Clinic* as a specialist gynaecologist and paediatrician. Later, together with her husband, she opened a modern private clinic.¹¹⁹

Maša Živanović was a Bosnian doctor who was very socially engaged on issues of women’s suffrage and emancipation. She was a member of the delegation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in the *International Alliance Congress for Women’s Suffrage* in Paris in 1926¹²⁰, and president of the *Women’s Movement* association in Sarajevo. Later, under the scope of activities of the Anti-Fascist Women’s Front (AFŽ), she worked on the issues of prostitution and reproduction, lobbying for the introduction of hygiene, biology and sexual education as subjects in schools.¹²¹

Teodora Krajewska (1854-1935) was a doctor from Poland who graduated from the Geneva Medical School. In 1893, she moved to Tuzla where she treated mainly Muslim women. Six years later she moved to Sarajevo where she stayed until 1928. In addition to regular doctor’s duties, she delivered courses of hygiene for girls and courses of Polish language for Polish children. She actively advocated the university education of women.¹²²

Bronislawa Prasek Calczynska (1887-1869) was a Polish paediatrician who moved to Sarajevo with her husband in 1915. They worked in Sarajevo until 1921, when they moved to Zagreb where Bronislawa eventually died. In the book *Memoirs of a Doctor* [Memoari jedne liječnice], which was published in Zagreb in 1997, she described her life and work in Bosnia.¹²³

Gizela Janučevska (1867-1943) from Banja Luka graduated from the Medical School in Zurich in 1898, when most women had no access to

119 Grebović-Lendo, N. Tragom ženskog aktivizma...

120 Kecman, J. (1978) p. 188

121 Stojaković, Gordana: *Reproductive Work and Maternity in Yugoslavia in time of AFŽ*, na <http://www.uzbuna.org/en/journal/becoming-mother-neoliberal-capitalism/reproductive-work-and-maternity-yugoslavia-time-afz> (April 18, 2014)

122 Zbigniew, D. (1970) *Teodora Krajewska* in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, tom XV

123 Interview with Ivan Lovrenović for Dani, April 18 2013: Knjige, pjesme, uspomene. Source: <http://ivanlovrenovic.com/2014/02/knjige-pjesme-uspomene/> (May 17, 2014)

university education. She had a successful medical career in Banja Luka.¹²⁴

Danica Perović (1907-1956) was born in Ljubija. She graduated from the Medical School in Belgrade. She practiced as a surgeon in Banja Luka and was a member of the National Liberation Movement [Narodnooslobodilački pokret].¹²⁵

Margita Hercl (1900-1942) studied medicine in Vienna and was a specialist in paediatrics. She taught courses for mothers in Banja Luka and was an active member of the *Women's Movement* and the *Red Cross*.¹²⁶

Music

Bahrija Nuri Hadžić (1904-1993) was born in Sarajevo and died in Belgrade. She attended a Muslim religious school and girls' school run by nuns. She learned to play the piano and violin. After WWI her family moved to Belgrade where she studied singing. She graduated from the Vienna Music Academy. For three years she worked at the Bern Opera. Upon return to Belgrade in 1931, she played a major role in the opera *Salome*, which won her fame and brought moral condemnation of the Church and the audience. Unfortunately, she subsequently quit singing during World War II. She was a true diva.¹²⁷

Julija Pejnović (1903-1987) was an opera singer and actress from Banja Luka. She taught piano at the Music School and left an important mark on the art scene in Banja Luka.

Sofka Nikolić (1907-1982) was born in the vicinity of Šabac, in Serbia. She started her singing career in Zvornik in 1918. She came from a family of musicians and her second husband was also a musician. With her husband she moved to Mostar, where she sang the famous song *Emina*, in a duet with Aleksa Šantić. Four years later she moved to Sarajevo to pursue her musical career. In the 1920s she moved to Belgrade where she was referred to as "a Queen of Skadarlija". By 1939 she had sung and recorded songs in many European cities with a 25-piece orchestra. She was the first woman to receive the title of best-selling female singer of Europe. She has made about 100 records



124 See Gajić, D.

125 Ibid.

126 Ibid.

127 Jergović, M. *Bahrija Nuri Hadžić*. Source: <http://www.jergovic.com/ajfelov-most/bahrija-nuri-hadzic/> (May 22, 2014)

with more than 200 songs. In 1939 she withdrew from public life because of the death of her daughter. She died in Bijeljina, where a street bears her name. She was one of the few Roma women whose name is recorded.¹²⁸

Teachers, activists, humanitarian workers, fighters

Natalija Jović (1900-1969) from Banja Luka was an activist of the *Women's Movement* in the 1930s, and later continued to act through the AFŽ. She contributed to the development of women's activism in Banja Luka. During World War II she was imprisoned several times. After the war, she returned to Banja Luka where she worked as a professor.¹²⁹

Ilka Böhm was president of the Jewish humanitarian association *La Humanidad* in Sarajevo. She was socially engaged and coordinated activities to help those in need, thereby contributing to the development and awareness raising of the community. She was one of the founders of the *Association of Jewish Women's Societies of Yugoslavia* [Asocijacije jevrejskih ženskih društava Jugoslavije], in 1924; Ten years later, this Association had 40 societies. Böhm was one of the vice-presidents of the *Association*.¹³⁰ Her grandmother, **Mirjam Hadžijina**, was a well-known midwife and folk doctor.

Ravijoja Jovetić (1904-1989) from Banja Luka was the owner of the most prestigious tailoring salon in the city. She was particularly well known for her ball dresses.¹³¹

The following women from Bosnia and Herzegovina were engaged in the activities of the *Kolo srpskih sestara* and photographed for the magazine *Žena i svet* during 1925: **Mara A. Pavlović** (Sarajevo), **Kosara Lazarević** (Srebrenica, the founder) and **Mara Pribičević** (Bosanski Novi, President).

According to information from the paper of Nusret Kujraković, the association *Osvitanje* was founded by intellectuals from Sarajevo - **Hasnija Berberović**, **Rasema Bisić**, **Almasa Iblizović**, **Šefika Bjelevac**, **Umija Vranić** and **Asifa Širbegović**.¹³² **Regina Atijas** (1901-1982) from Bihać, was among the first Sephardic women in Bosnia and Herzegovina to attend a classical high school.¹³³

Mubina Dozić (1926-1998/99) from Bratunac was the first Muslim woman in Bratunac to receive primary education. Being a daughter of a

128 Gajić, D. *Buran život Sofke Nikolić*. Source: <http://www.novosti.rs/vesti/naslovna/aktuel-no.293.html:362953-Buran-zivot-Sofke-Nikolic>; također vidi web stranicu Muzej Sofke Nikolić na: <http://muzej-sofke-nikolic.blogspot.com/> (May 20, 2014)

129 Ibid.

130 Freidenreich, H.

131 See Gajić, D.

132 Grebović-Lendo, N. *Tragom ženskog aktivizma...*

133 Freidenreich, H.

Muslim *imam*, through her example she opened the doors to education to all Muslim women. She was active in the National Liberation War and paved the way for the social involvement of many women.¹³⁴

Margita Čondrić (born in 1915) was born in Tuzla, but lived and worked in the area of Srebrenica and Bratunac. She was the first woman in this part of Bosnia to complete a midwifery course and actively worked on providing medical assistance to the population and spreading literacy. She was president of the *Anti-Fascist Women's Front* in this part of Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹³⁵

General notes relating to the period of WWI and the inter-war period

Bosnia and Herzegovina was a diverse region, as were the activities that took place on its soil. Due to the fact that data is often unavailable and events went unrecorded or historically suppressed and forgotten, we are aware that a lot will be inevitably left out. History, in general, failed to record women's contributions, and the turbulent 20th century scattered around the surviving archives and materials, a detailed research of which would require several years. In the books, articles, newspapers and archives used for this paper two notable ideological matrices stand out from which this period was analysed and observed. One is socialist and the other national, often in conjunction with religious. According to the materials used, one can conclude that associations and women at the time operated in a rather similar fashion. On the one hand, there was an active association of the working class around socialist ideas and class struggle, while on the other, civil associations promoted the ideas of moderate feminism and emancipation of women through education and humanitarian work. Religious and national women's associations operated in a similar fashion, but without bringing into question the primacy of faith and nation. Another aggravating factor for the analysis of Bosnia and Herzegovina in this period was the fact that data and sources were intertwined with those from other parts of the former Kingdom. Namely, it was very difficult to determine which events were specific to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and which were part of a broader geographic circumstances.

In addition to this complexity, women's action was multi-layered. The activity varied significantly in the different periods of time analysed (WWI, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, different models of state establishment, dictatorship, growth of fascism, etc.). Women acted in accordance with circumstances, political and economic decisions and social trends at the time. Diversity of activism was present among older, traditional women and young anti-fascist

134 Mustafić, M. (2010) (ed.) *Žene u vremenu*, Bratunac, Forum žena Bratunac, Bratunac

135 Ibid.

activists and leftists, who became particularly vocal with the rise of fascism in Europe. However, their activities were far-reaching, as evidenced by numerous memberships in the international women's associations. This overview can be used as a basis for further feminist work of documenting the life stories of the women who preceded us.

A Note about Mica Todorović

Mica Todorović was the most authentic and most distinctive figure among the artists of Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹³⁶ She was born in 1900 in Sarajevo to a wealthy family. In 1926 she graduated from the College of Arts and Crafts in Zagreb. She returned to Sarajevo in 1932 and immediately started challenging, uncompromisingly, through her work all the sacrosanct values of civil society, male-female relationships, family, mysticism, religion, charity, hyper-intellectuals, capital as a source of power, etc.¹³⁷ At the beginning of World War II she helped her friends, Svetozar Vukmanović-Tempo and other young Communists, by hiding them in her home in Avda Hume Street. During World War II she was taken to the detention camp in Jasenovac and from there to different camps in Germany. She survived these camps and after the liberation returned to Sarajevo and started teaching in the School of Fine Arts, where she worked until retirement. In 1945 she helped in the founding of the BiH Association of Visual Artists and the School of Applied Arts, where she worked as a professor until retirement. She was the first person who had the courage to display a female nude in 1949. She was a full member of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1980 an art historian, Azra Begić, organised a large Mica Todorović retrospective in the Art Gallery of Sarajevo. This exhibition was the symbolic zenith of the career of this artist who was at the time highly appreciated and rewarded. She died in 1981 in Sarajevo and was buried in the Bare cemetery.¹³⁸

136 Begić, A. (2004) p. 3-18

137 Ibid.

138 Sources: Slobodna Bosna (April 16, 2009) p. 58-61 and: http://bs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mica_Todorovi%C4%8 (May 31, 2014)

PART II: 1941-1945 THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND EXPERIENCES OF BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINIAN WOMEN

...Under a special conspiracy regime, with great efforts.

This part of the book deals with the position and activities of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina during World War II. This period is marked by women's inclusion in various activities under the national liberation struggle (NOB) for freedom, which gave rise to the development of different social values, including the idea of gender equality in all social segments. Soon-to-come social changes were not of purely declarative or formally legal nature, but seriously put in question traditional prejudices and stereotypes about women's place and role in society. The new socio-cultural context also enabled the creation of organisations of the Anti-Fascist Women's Front (AFŽ). Although the question of whether and to what extent this form of women's organisation can carry a feminist prefix remains open, the role it played in processes of women's emancipation is unquestionable. In addition to numerous tasks, women gathered around the unique AFŽ organisation particularly stood out with their cultural and educational work. With the removal of formal and legal obstacles for women's inclusion in various forms of social activities in the spirit of communist ideology, tarnishing the traditional picture of women's place and social role and their mass inclusion in NOB and establishment of AFŽ as a unified women's organisation - which, among other things, implemented different women's education programmes - key preconditions were created for women's entry into the public sphere and their participation in making important political decisions. However, this transition never materialised, confirmed by various analyses of women's (non)participation in ZAVNOBiH (The State Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Bosnia and Herzegovina) and AVNOJ (Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia) that are reviewed in the final part of this paper.

Religious and National Antagonisms

Following creation of NDH (Independent State of Croatia) on 10 April 1941, BiH automatically became its part. Administrative restructuring of BiH was followed by a complex socio-political climate, built in the light of ideas about the Croatian origin of Muslims in BiH and extinction of Serbs and Jews while, at the same time, the organisation of the Communist Party

of Yugoslavia (KPJ) in BiH was preparing¹³⁹ for an armed liberation battle. The preparations were intensified after the May counselling of KPJ.¹⁴⁰ In the first half of May 1941, the Military Committee was established within KPJ Provincial Committee (PK) for BiH, followed by the establishment of military committees within regional and lower-level managements of the Party that organised the collection of weapons, armed detachments and intelligence service, medical courses and the like.¹⁴¹ Initiation of armed battle and establishment of partisan detachments in the circumstances of complex inter-ethnic and inter-religious relations would soon assume the features of a mass national uprising. At the very beginning of the uprising, due to poor connections with senior command levels, activities took different forms of military organisation (guerrilla squads, companies, national armies, battalions, brigades, regiments and divisions).¹⁴² On the other hand, there were also spontaneous rebel movements of the Serb population, imposing individuals with nationalist viewpoints who promoted revengeful actions against Muslim and Serb populations. The NDH agreement of 26 August 1942 would also impose the issue of relationship with the Italian occupier.¹⁴³ In the dominant climate of religious and national antagonisms, BiH reality following NDH creation was marked by deportations, physical extinctions, arrests and persecutions, raping of women, plunders and robberies, and burned villages.¹⁴⁴ In such circumstances, women and children became a particularly threatened and vulnerable category of the population.

One of the first tasks assumed by the communist revolutionary forces was to stop mutual ethnic fighting in Yugoslavia. In a declaration of the Provincial Committee of Bosnia and Herzegovina that was issued immediately after the occupation, the Communist Party, among other things, calls on all nations to stop the mutual fights, hatred and bloodshed.¹⁴⁵

In its programme commitment, the Communist Party viewed BiH's salvation in the unity of its peoples and their joint battle, which will be quickly accepted among women, especially those in Drvar, Podgrmeč and Kozara.¹⁴⁶ Following a counselling of Yugoslav commanders of national liberation forces held in Stolice on 26 September 1941, the KPJ created

139 More on the preparations in: Leksikografski zavod Sveznanje, (1971), Beograd; *Oslobodilački rat naroda Jugoslavije* (1941. – 1945.) – *Od sloma stare Jugoslavije do drugog zajedanja AVNOJ-a*, Book I, (1957) Vojni institut JNA, Beograd, p. 40-44

140 Filipović, M. and Benac, A. (1983) *Socijalistička republika Bosna i Hercegovina – Separat iz II izdanja Enciklopedije Bosne i Hercegovine*, Jugoslavenski leksikografski zavod, Zagreb, p. 118

141 Ibid.

142 Ibid. p. 120

143 Ibid.

144 Kovačević, D. (1972); *Oslobodilački rat naroda Jugoslavije (1941. – 1945.) – Od sloma stare Jugoslavije do drugog zajedanja AVNOJ-a* p. 34-35

145 From: Kovačević, D. (1972)

146 See: Kovačević, D. (1972)

partisan detachments and NOOs (national liberation committees), while ten partisan detachments with two to five battalions each were formed in the territory of BiH.¹⁴⁷ At that time, the Party put intensified efforts into the creation of mass youth and women's political organisations.¹⁴⁸

Women's Inclusion in the National Liberation Struggle

From the very beginning, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia kept in mind the importance of women's inclusion in various revolutionary activities. As early as during preparations for the Fifth Pan-Country Conference of KPJ, when provincial Party conferences were taking place, the issue of labour among women and special requests of women was raised, and their preparation for joining the Party was viewed as an important issue of Party's policy in the given situation.¹⁴⁹

The Fifth Pan-Country Conference of KPJ analysed the complexity of the women's issue and defined the following four groups of primary requests to be included in its programme: 1) maternity protection and abolishment of all differences between legitimate and illegitimate children; 2) abatement of dual morality in public and private life and introduction of civil marriage and right to divorce; 3) right to work, equal pay for equal work, protection of women at work, protective legislation, women's access to all professions that match their level of competency and ability; 4) recognition of all political rights, primarily the right to vote.¹⁵⁰

Resolution of the KPJ Party conference for Bosnia and Herzegovina held on 27 and 28 July 1940 among other things reads that work among women must be approached much more seriously, that it is necessary to include women in all sections, leading a tireless battle for achievement of the equal pay for equal work principle, and always include special women's requests as well, and to continuously implement actions supporting general women's rights (right to vote, quality before the law, etc.).¹⁵¹

In view of experiences of feminist movements around the world in this time period, one must observe that different KPJ's calls on women to join the national liberation struggle and the documents of partisan authorities from the beginning of the war in general, that constantly emphasised the issue of women's equality, create an impression of an extremely revolutionary and liberal spirit, which builds a positive climate for further

147 Filipović, M. and Benac, A. (1983) p. 120

148 Ibid. p. 121

149 Čirić-Bogetić, Lj. (1972) Odluke Pete zemaljske konferencije KPJ o radu među ženama i njihova realizacija u periodu 1940-1941. in: Čepo, Z. and Jelić, I.: Peta zemaljska konferencija KPJ, Institut za historiju radničkog pokreta Hrvatske/Školska knjiga, Zagreb, p. 76

150 Ibid. p. 78

151 From: Mitrašević, N. *Formiranje inicijativnih odbora AFŽ-a i njihov rad na Kozari u prvoj polovini 1943. godine* p. 289; source: http://www.znaci.net/00001/165_34.pdf (May 20, 2014)

emancipation of women. We can also interpret these documents in the wider context of communist ideology about equality of women and men and/or the need for mobilisation and support from the general public. Originally, it was not foreseen that women would be drafted into combat units. Their inclusion was envisaged through undercover work in occupied areas. Women were drafted into combat units as they were in need for staff in medical services, which is an activity that was traditionally deemed convenient for women.¹⁵² However, women started voluntarily joining partisan detachments as fighters in large numbers.

There is no precise data about women's overall participation in the National Liberation Army (NOV). The estimated number is 100,000 women, usually with eight to ten percent of women per unit.¹⁵³ Of approximately 100,000 women who fought in NOV, around 25,000 are estimated to have been killed¹⁵⁴. Of around 1,700,000 Yugoslav men and women who died during World War II, there were approximately 620,000 women, and more than 282,000 were killed in camps only.¹⁵⁵ When it comes to women who participated in battles, those in the background who gave enormous contribution should also be taken into consideration. It is assumed that, from 1941 to 1945, around half a million women of Bosnia and Herzegovina took part in various activities of the National Liberation Movement (NOP).¹⁵⁶

Women's inclusion in combat units also marked the beginning of the fight against traditional prejudices about women's place and role in their families and units they joined. Stories about partisan women point to a conclusion that many of them were also in charge of „women's“ jobs, according to patriarchal definition, such as cooking and sewing, in their units. However, at the same time, they also did the „men's“ jobs, and they often volunteered for the most difficult tasks. In this way, they broke traditional prejudices and stereotypes about women's place and role in society.

Analyses of women's position in BiH during World War II are focused on roles of female fighters, nurses and undercover activists. These were certainly the decisive roles for emancipation of women in BiH, and for the transition (formal at least) from a patriarchal society to a society of equality between men and women. However, one should not forget the contributions of women who stayed at home. The experience of these women is a common feature in all wars: men go to the battlefield, and the jobs they

152 Wiesinger, B. N. (2009) *Rat partizanki – Žene u oružanom otporu u Jugoslaviji*, in: *Historijska traganja*, no. 4, p. 208

153 *Ibid.*

154 Milinović, D. and Petakov, Z. (2010) *Partizanke: Žene u narodnooslobodilačkoj borbi*, Cenzura, Novi Sad, p. 9

155 *Ibid.*

156 Biser-Taso, N. (2008) *Žene Bosne i Hercegovine i narodnooslobodilačke borbe*, in: *Žena u ratu 1992-1995*. Collection of papers presented at the round table „Žena u ratu 1992-1995.“ (held on June 26, 2008 in Sarajevo), Udruženje za zaštitu tekovina borbe za Bosnu i Hercegovinu, Kantonalni odbor Sarajevo, p. 15

did until that point are taken over by women. However, their burden was not to ensure the survival of own family, but also the survival of the community and NOV, with the rear as its significant strength.

They needed to sow, farm and reap agricultural crops and keep the livestock because, without it, there would be no partisan army that needed food, footwear and clothes. Women from villages accommodated, nursed and carried the wounded, provided food for partisan hospitals, and during offensives they hid the wounded and sick in shelters and dugouts. [...] Also, women mostly took care about food transportation for the army and knocking down communications and facilities of importance for the enemy.¹⁵⁷

After World War II, stories were told and songs were sung about caring female nurses and brave female fighters who sacrificed their lives for freedom. However, as Barbara Wiesinger noticed, “such stereotypical heroisation hides problems and conflicts related to the armed resistance of women, but also the true motives, experiences and interpretations of women veterans”.¹⁵⁸ Searching for motives behind women’s participation in the NOB, one should not forget that the fight for gender equality was one of the segments of a wider national liberation struggle for freedom.

Women in the rear proved to be fearless during many enemy offensives. When asked by the enemy: ‘Where is your husband?’, one of them sighed and said: ‘Ah, when will the freedom come?’ He told her: ‘But you are free.’ She responded: ‘No, my freedom is behind the mountains, when it comes, I will then be free.’¹⁵⁹

Lydia Sklevicky views emancipation from patriarchal culture as one of the main goals of the cultural change that started during the NOB and regards AFŽ as its most significant factor. However, the question is to what extent the issue of women’s emancipation was indeed a motivating factor for women to join the NOB. In her paper titled, Anti-Fascist Women’s Movement within NOB, which she presented at the First Pan-Country Conference of AFŽ, Mitra Mitrović wrote that women did not join the fight with a request for equality:

It didn’t have its place at that time, it was not the most important issue and it could not mobilise a large number of women. And equality was there, faster than anyone would expect. It came, it was obtained in the only way possible, through joint fight with people, for joint freedom.¹⁶⁰

157 Ibid. p. 12

158 Wiesinger p. 221

159 Speech of Danica Perović at the Second ZAVNOBiH session, in: Dokumenti 1943-1944., Veselin Masleša, Sarajevo, 1968., p. 200

160 Mitrović, M., a paper presented at the First AFŽ Conference, quoted from: Sklevicky, L. (1996) *Konji, žene, ratovi*, Ženska infoteka, Zagreb, p. 28

At the beginning of World War II, there was no organised feminist movement in BiH with clearly defined social reform objectives based on requests for certain rights and freedoms. On the other hand, communist ideology offered a different socio-cultural context, giving rise to new social values, including the idea of gender equality in all social segments. In such a new and different socio-cultural context, the individual efforts of women who joined NOB acquired new meanings and brought results that eventually enabled transition from individual activities to organised activities of women, profiled through the Anti-Fascist Women's Front.

Women Fighters

Following offensives in Serbia in the autumn of 1941, Germany moved the focus of its actions against the uprising in its interest zone in Yugoslavia to Bosnia, and launched an offensive against the uprising in eastern Bosnia from 15 January to 23 February 1942 (the second enemy offensive), and then again from early April to mid June 1942, the third enemy offensive in eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina, and an offensive on Kozara in June and July¹⁶¹.

Women participated in the aforementioned battles, primarily as fighters and nurses. During the Second Enemy Offensive, the majority of the First Proletarian Brigade walked 100 kilometres from Jahorina to Foča, via Sarajevsko Polje and Igman Mountain. The march of more than 700 female and male fighters, including 50 wounded and sick, lasted around 18 hours, through deep snow, under 32 degrees below zero. In late August 1942, the First Proletarian Brigade had 1,099 male and female fighters: 1,027 men and 72 women¹⁶². With every new staffing of the brigade, a number of women arrived - first young women from Foča and surrounding areas and from youth battalions from Montenegro, then from Dalmatia and Bosanska Krajina.¹⁶³ According to estimates, 710 women partisans were in the brigade at some point, of which 59 were killed as nurses, and 34 as fighters.¹⁶⁴ Two of them were proclaimed national heroines – **Olga Jovičić** and **Danica Milosavljević**.

The Battle of Kozara as a part of the Third Enemy Offensive was fought in June and July 1942 and it mobilised the entire population of this area. This battle was marked with particularly cruel treatment of civilians. Orders and instructions that were issued by Germans and the NDH read that all persons found in the battle were to be executed, and the entire population was to be arrested and taken to collection centres: men aged

161 Filipović, M. and Benac, A. (1983) p. 122

162 Vuksanović, M. (1987) Prva proleterska brigada, Narodna knjiga – Beograd, Institut za Savremenu istoriju – Beograd, Pobjeda – Titograd, p. 133

163 Ibid, p. 431

164 Ibid.

14 and above were to be sent to concentration camps, young women and girls were to be transported to labour in Germany, and elderly women and children were to be displaced or sent to Jasenovac.¹⁶⁵

In battles that followed, women made an immeasurable contribution. For instance, sixteen proletarian and assault brigades from different parts of Yugoslavia took part in the Battle of Sutjeska, and of the entire group of 22,148 people, 2,883 (13.02%) were women.¹⁶⁶ During the one-month battle, 7,543 were killed, including 597 women, of which 352 were nurses.¹⁶⁷ During the war, 137 female doctors volunteered in the NVO, as well as around 10,000 trained nurses.¹⁶⁸

National Heroines

Many women received the Order of the “National Hero” for their participation in the struggle. According to data from the publication “Heroes of the National Liberation Struggle”, this Order was awarded to 1,322 people, of which 1,231 men and 91 women. Of the 91 women who received the order of national heroine, 71 were killed, mostly from torturing or executions in prisons and camps.¹⁶⁹ According to available literature, of 91 women who were proclaimed national heroines, 10 were from Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, analysed sources do not provide a specific list of the 10 female fighters. In a comparison of different publications dealing with women partisans from the territory of BiH and former Yugoslavia, the following female fighters were singled out:

Danica Materić¹⁷⁰ (1921-1943) was born in the village of Trnića Brijeg near Drvar. She was NOB participant and member of the Union of Yugoslav Communist Youth (SKOJ) since 1941, and she joined KPJ in 1942. She was a member of the Municipal and County Committee of KPJ, member of the Municipal and County Committee of AFŽ, and deputy political commissary at the Third Company of Fourth Battalion of Tenth Krajiška Brigade. In April 1943, she was captured, tortured and killed in Knin. She was proclaimed national heroine on 27 November 1953.

Lepa Radić¹⁷¹ (1925-1943) was born in the village of Gašnici near Bosanska Gradiška. She completed the elementary school in the

165 Lukić, D. (1984) *Rat i djeca Kozare*, Narodna knjiga, Beograd, source: <http://www.znaci.net/00001/106.htm> (May 1, 2014)

166 Kučan, V. (1996) *Borci Sutjeske*, Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, Beograd, p. 39

167 Ibid.

168 Gavrilović, V. (1976) *Žene lekari u ratovima 1876. – 1845*. Na tlu Jugoslavije, Beograd, source: Wiesinger p. 209

169 Despotović, Lj., Šljukić, S., Gavrilović, D., Perica, V. and Velikonja, M. *Mitovi epohe socijalizma*, Centar za istoriju, demokratiju i pomirenje – Novi Sad, Centar za evropske pravno-političke studije/Sremska Kamenica, p. 111

170 Source: Beoković, M. (1967) *Žene heroji*, Svjetlost, Sarajevo, p. 231-232

171 Ibid. p. 339-340



Hanging off Lepa Radić, Prijedor, 1943

neighbouring Bistrica and attended the first grade of Women's School of Crafts in Bosanska Krupa. She completed the remaining grades in Bosanska Gradiška. Her biography reads that, as a pupil, she stood out for her hard work and seriousness, and already read advanced literature. She participated in preparations for the uprising, i.e. she worked on hiding weapons. In November 1941, she was arrested with other family members. With the assistance of undercover partisan collaborators, she left prison on 23 December 1941. Upon release from prison with her sister Dara, Radić joined the 7th partisan company of the 2nd Krajiški Detachment as a fighter. She was a nurse for a short while, and she then attended a youth

course in the village of Lamovita under Kozara Mountain and was a SKOJ field activist in the area of Prijedor. In late May 1942, she was sent to the area of Pogrmec as a political worker, where she was prominent in her work with youth and took part in almost all activities in the area.

Radić was caught on 8 February 1943, together with a refuge she led, with 150 women and children she took care of. Germans sentenced her to death by hanging, and the sentence was publicly enforced in Bosanska Krupa. Smiljka Čosić-Rašeta was killed with Radić. She was 17 at the time. She was proclaimed national heroine on 20 December 1951.

Marija Bursac¹⁷² (1920-1943) was born in the village of Kamenici near Drvar. In 1939, she completed a household course and was engaged in household science in her village. She joined NOB on 27 July 1941 and became a SKOJ member in the same year. She was admitted to KPJ in late summer 1942. Initially as a member of a fund committee and a labour team in the village, then as a chair of the village committee of the United League of Anti-Fascist Youth of Yugoslavia (USAOJ) and AFŽ committee member, and then as a commissary of a labour team and member of the AFŽ municipal and county committees, she actively contributed to NOP in the autumn of 1941 and throughout 1943. In the beginning of February 1942, upon personal request, she joined the 10th Krajiška assault brigade, where she first served as a nurse at the 2nd company of the first battalion, and then as a fighter-bomber of the First and then the Third Companies of the 3rd Battalion, until she was wounded in battles on Prkosim in the night between 17 and 18 September 1943, while she was saving her wounded

¹⁷² Ibid. p. 11-12

comrade. The story about Marija Bursać states that, despite the pain, as they carried her on a stretcher, she was singing national songs. She died of wounds on 23 September 1943. Some authors feel that Marija Bursać was the one who broke the stereotype of a “partisan nurse” with her heroic death a direct fight against the enemy.¹⁷³ She was proclaimed national heroine on 15 October 1945.

Milka Bosnić¹⁷⁴ (1928-1944) was born in the village of Vrtoče near Drvar. Just before the war, she attended the first grade of civil school. Although still a child, she joined the activities of Drvar youth. She participated in gathering of food and clothes for partisans, cleaning the city, she tended the wounded and worked on drafting and posting slogans. She joined SKOJ just before the raid on Drvar. She was a courier at the local command post. She was killed at only 16 and proclaimed national heroine on 17 May 1974.

Analyses of the age structure show that half of national heroes/heroines joined the war when they were under 25, and only 325 of these heroes/heroines were above 30. Of the total number of killed and deceased national heroes, three were less than 17 years old. Milka Bosnić was only 16 when she died after her well-known bravery — removing a blanket from a partisan tank during the raid on Drvar in May 1944.

Rada Vranješević¹⁷⁵ (1918-1944) was born in the village of Rakavice near Banja Luka in a priest's family. She completed elementary school in the village of Glogovac near Prnjavor, and lower grammar school in Derвента and Banja Luka. Rada then enrolled in the Primary School Teacher Training College in Banja Luka, which expelled her in 1932 because of her political positions. Vranješević continued her education at the Academy of Commerce in Skopje, which also expelled her because of her political work. At the age of 20, she joined SKOJ. Early in 1939, she managed to get permanent employment with the Union of Procurement Cooperatives of Civil Servants in Belgrade. In late 1940, after a strike she had organised at the Union of Civil Servants Cooperatives, she was arrested and dismissed from service. She joined NOP in 1941. During the summer of this year, she was engaged in undercover work in a Party organisation of Banja Luka, In September, following a KPJ's order, she went to the liberated territory of Podgrmeč to join the first KPJ District Committee and become a secretary of the SKOJ District Committee. At the beginning of November 1942, she became a member of the KPJ Regional Committee for Bosanska krajina. She was chair of the AFŽ Regional Committee, a member of the AFŽ Central Committee and a member of ZAVNOBiH. Vranješević was captured by German parachutists during the raid on Drvar on 25 May 1944, and killed while trying to

173 Despotović, Lj. et al. *Mitovi epohe socijalizma*, p. 111

174 Source: *Heroji jugosavenske narodnooslobodilačke borbe 1941. – 1945*, <http://www.tito-manija.com.ba/e-knjige/Narodni%20heroji%20Jugoslavije.pdf> (May 20, 2014)

175 Source: Beoković, M. (1967) p. 365-366

escape. She was proclaimed national heroine on 27 July 1951. During her short life, she remained loyal to herself and her ideals, continuing to be brave, persistent and devoted.¹⁷⁶



Radojka Lakić¹⁷⁷ (1917-1941) was born in Skender-Vakuf. Her father was a teacher, and as a child, she visited many places in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as her family was constantly moving from one place to another. While she was still attending grammar school in Bijeljina, she joined the revolutionary youth movement, and in 1935 became a member of the League of Yugoslav Communist Youth. In Belgrade, she first enrolled in the Faculty of Technology,

and then she moved to the Faculty of Philosophy. She joined SKOJ in 1935 and KPJ in 1937. Since then, she was committed to undercover work within the student's movement and its associations in Belgrade, and in Bijeljina and Sarajevo during the summer. She joined NOP in 1941 and worked undercover in the occupied city of Sarajevo as secretary of a Party cell in Baščaršija, until her arrest in September that year. Having refused to disclose her undercover connections, she was sentenced to death for "high treason of NDH" and executed by a firing squad on 28 September at Vraca in Sarajevo. She was proclaimed national heroine on 8 June 1945.

Ravijojla Janković Rava¹⁷⁸ (1919-1944) was born in the village of Osijek near Sarajevo. Due to the poverty of her family, she only completed two grades of the Civil School in Sarajevo, and then moved to a household science school *The Circle of Serbian Sisters*. In the first days of the Uprising in 1941, she joined the Semizovac company of NOP detachment Zvijezda in Vlakovo, and in November of the same year she went to Okruglica in Visočka company of Vareški battalion within the same detachment. In March 1942, she voluntarily joined the 1st Eastern-Bosnian Assault Proletarian Battalion, which joined a group of Bosnian assault battalions in May 1942. On 2 August, they together formed the 6th Eastern-Bosnian Assault Brigade in the village of Šekovići. Ravijojla Rava Janković walked along the entire battle path of those units with a rifle, as a bomber, nurse, member of medical corps. She was killed on 3 November 1944 near Crvene Stijene at the top of Romanija as a lieutenant. She was proclaimed national heroine on 20 December 1951.

Vahida Maglajlić¹⁷⁹ (1907-1943) was born in Banja Luka. From child-

176 Source: <http://www.6yka.com/novost/47980/upoznajte-zene-iz-proslosti-koje-su-zaduzile-banjaluku> (May 20, 2014)

177 Ibid, p. 105-106

178 Ibid, p. 57-58

179 Ibid, p. 183-184

hood, Vahida displayed a decisive spirit and spite against all social norms and expectations of a patriarchal environment. She was a secretary, and later president of the *Women's Movement*. She fought for emancipation and rights of women.¹⁸⁰

According to her biography, she got acquainted with the workers' movement through her brothers, who were advanced intellectuals, and was engaged in various actions (workers' manifestations, outings, organising lectures etc.) She was also engaged in women's emancipation, first as a secretary, and then as a president of the *Women's Movement*. After the occupation, she immediately joined NOP, and in May 1941 she formally became a KPJ member. As an excellent organiser, Maglajlić established outspread networks of undercover connections, checkpoints and "bases" of accommodation in Banja Luka, and mutually connected undercover workers, hid them from the police, provided them with clothes, personal documents, etc. She was arrested in October 1941, but managed to escape and join partisan detachments. Since then, she worked on the liberated territories of Kozara, Podgrmeč and Bihać, mostly with women. She gathered them in NOB and was particularly successful in organising Muslim women in Cazinska Krajina. At the First Pan-Country Conference of AFŽ, she was appointed as member of AFŽ Central Committee. She was killed on 1 April 1943 in the village of Velika Ruiška and proclaimed national heroine on 20 December 1951.

Dragica Pravica¹⁸¹ was born in the village of Bjelača near Trebinje in a wealthy rural family. Upon completion of a grammar school in Dubrovnik, she joined the advanced youth movement. During her studies at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, she took part in political actions of advanced student youth and SKOJ. Following capitulation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, she participated in preparations for armed combat: she collected weapons, formed the first partisan units, and actively participated in armed actions. She joined the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in the summer of 1940, and then returned to her native region. She managed political work dealing with youth and women in Trebinje, and performed several functions in NOB, such as the function of secretary of the SKOJ County Committee for Trebinje and AFŽ committee member. She was arrested late in 1942. Despite torturing, she refused to disclose information that was requested from her, and she was executed by a firing squad on 27 June 1942 in the village of Ljubomir. She was proclaimed national heroine on 8 June 1945.

Apart from the aforementioned heroines, **Đorđina-Đina Vrbica**¹⁸² (1913 – 1943) should also be mentioned. She was born in Podgorica, Montenegro, but she spent a part of her life in BiH, where she was

180 Source: <http://www.6yka.com/novosti/47980/upoznajte-zene-iz-proslosti-koje-su-zaduzile-banjaluku> (July 1, 2014)

181 Ibid, p. 266-267

182 Ibid, p. 433-434

eventually killed. She joined SKOJ in 1932, and got accepted by KPJ in 1934. She completed the Academy of Commerce in 1932 in Podgorica, but as a politically compromised person, she only got a job three years later at the Finance Directorate in Sarajevo, where she worked solely for ten months. She was arrested at the beginning of March 1936, and spent five and a half months in prison. She returned to Podgorica, and then enrolled at the High Economic Commercial School in Zagreb. She was involved in undercover Party work there as well, and was arrested for the second time when she was distributing leaflets on 11 May 1937. After the trial, she went to Belgrade and continued her political work and education at the Faculty of Economics, and was arrested again. In March 1941, she returned to Montenegro and joined preparations for the uprising. In the spring of 1942, during the Third Enemy Offensive, she retreated with Montenegrin partisan units to Bosanska Krajina. From July 1942 to May 1943, she worked in Glamočki country as a member of SK KPJ (KPJ League of Communists) in charge of agitation, propaganda and work with women. At the First Pan-Country Conference of AFŽ, she was appointed to the Central Committee. In May 1943, upon personal request, she went to central Bosnia with the Second Krajiška Brigade as a member of the political section, in order to establish connections with Montenegrin units. She was killed on this trip by a mortar grenade on 29 May 1943 on the river of Blatnica near Teslić. She was proclaimed national heroine on 24 July 1953.

Apart from individual awards of the Order of the National Hero, it was also awarded to groups, i.e. military and social-political organisations. The SKOJ District Committee for Drvar thus collectively received the Order. The Committee was killed during the Seventh Enemy Offensive on 25 May 1944. It was comprised of the following members: Duško Bursać, Duško Bajić, Raza Omanović, Savica Solomun, Ljubo Bosnić and Zora Zeljković.

Work on the Occupied Territory

A new female figure was created in World War II: a woman-fighter who politically grew and matured during the struggle, and broke loose to lead and decide on all issues in the struggle and people's life.¹⁸³ This new figure would later be reduced to a predominant image of a nurse – a partisan woman.

A large number of women also joined undercover work in occupied cities, which, among other things, implied: the collection of data and notifications about military and political intentions of the enemy, the collection of weapons and medicines for the army, organising actions against the unaffordability of basic necessities, hunger, black market, terror and

¹⁸³ Speech of Danica Perović at the Second ZAVNOBiH session, p. 200

illegal arrests, helping families whose members were imprisoned or joined partisans and sending food and other aid to prisoners¹⁸⁴. Thousands of women who engaged in undercover work were arrested, tortured, placed before court-martial, executed by firing squads and publicly hanged. But, despite all of this, numerous records confirm that most of these women never disclosed information about the communist movement.

Women of Banja Luka, Bijeljina, Mostar, Sarajevo and other cities of Bosnia and Herzegovina often used traditional Muslim clothing for dissemination and distribution of propaganda materials, carrying and delivering the materials to various checkpoints under the protection of veil and niqab¹⁸⁵. Also, many undercover activists performed courier tasks and successfully conveyed important messages from the free territory to undercover activists or to the leadership of partisan units from occupied cities.¹⁸⁶ Overall data about results of many undercover activities is often missing, but literature often evaluates that such activities occurred on a mass scale and covered a large part of the population in occupied cities. Workshops functioned in many occupied cities and produced footwear and clothing for partisans, and various materials were often collected, such as medical supplies, that were sent to partisan units on free territories.

In the early days of the uprising, collection of materials and equipment for the first rebel armed forces started, such as various devices, radio-stations, binoculars, measuring devices, medical materials, equipment for propaganda technique, typewriters, cyclostyle, hectographs, paper etc. When the uprising began, the materials were transported outside of the city via special channels and connections.¹⁸⁷ In addition, medical aid courses were organised in several locations in the city, and were attended by mostly women who acquired knowledge about first aid provision. As specified in the publication *Sarajevo In a Revolution*, these courses were attended, among others, by **Radojka Lakić, Olga Nakić, Ankica Pavlović-Albahari, Hanika Altarac, Milja Lonco, Zlata Kabiljo, Donkica Perera, Slavica Miličević, Branka Blažek, Slavica Kujundžić, Emica Kapri, Minja Pravica, Ranka Drašković, Lepa Čarkić**, as well as **Dužanka Teofanović, Lujza Pajić and Senija Pilavdžić**. Indeed, some of the courses were organised in their apartments.¹⁸⁸ Many of these women joined partisan units at the beginning of the war.

As Emily Greble Balić observes in her research, it is often overlooked that many parts of BiH were not exclusively marked by struggle, resistance and anarchy, but had functional local authorities with active social and

184 Kovačević, D. (1972)

185 Vukčević, S. (1985) *Borbe i otpori u okupiranim gradovima Jugoslavije*, Vojnoistorijski institut, Beograd, p. 32 and 148

186 Ibid. p. 147

187 Nisim, A. (1977) *Od aprilsnog rata do ustanka*, in: Sarajevo u revoluciji: Komunistička parija Jugoslavije u pripremama i organizaciji ustanka, Book II, Sarajevo, p. 50

188 Ibid.

cultural institutions, such as Sarajevo, which was the most important city in inland NDH. In this military, administrative and cultural centre, citizens and social leaders adjusted schools,¹⁸⁹ theatres, coffee shops, marketplaces, newspapers, museums and clubs to difficult wartime conditions. Numerous associations were also active, particularly the Muslim charity association *Merhamet*, Croat charity association *Napredak* and Croat-Muslim cultural association *Narodna uzdanica*. On the one hand, these associations maintained the life of the city, as Emily Greble Balić notes, especially in the final year of the war, gradually assuming different public functions – organising schools, lectures and exams, working on procurement and further food distribution, building and maintaining refugee camps and children’s homes. On the other hand, these associations were loyal guardians of traditional national and religious values. With their activities, these associations brought some forms of political conservatism (e.g. anti-democracy and anti-communism), traditionalism (e.g. women in private spheres) and nationalism (Croat or Muslim) and religious values (sanctity of marriage, separation of men and women in public, women under veil and niqab etc.), to perfection.¹⁹⁰ Given very rigid and conservative viewpoints, these associations were particularly concerned about political activities of young women who were active in anti-fascist circles.

The struggle of these associations to maintain traditional and religious values also included work with young women. It was known that small groups of women – Muslims, Catholics and Orthodox – secretly gathered and worked in anti-fascist circles. Social leaders recognised that mass anti-war mood led to resistance and pro-liberal positions that were in contradiction with religious and national values that the associations fought for. Some girls ended up in prison for wood theft. Others were caught exchanging sexual favours for food and fuel. Muslim associations were also concerned because of reports about women refugees who concluded illegal (non-religious) marriages.¹⁹¹

Women’s departments of *Merhamet* and *Hurijet* tried to fight the downfall of religious values in 1945 by encouraging young women to get involved in humanitarian work, hoping that such an alternative to political activity would direct young women towards the traditional women’s role in society.¹⁹²

189 Greble Balić, E. *Posljednji mjeseci ratnog perioda: Sarajevska iskustva*, in: Kamberović, H. (2006) 60 godina od završetka Drugog svjetskog rata: kako se sjećati 1945. godine, Institut za istoriju, Sarajevo, p. 131-133

190 Ibid. p. 140-141

191 Ibid. p. 141

192 Ibid. p. 133

Preconditions for Creation of an Independent Women's Organisation

Women contributed to the partisan war, thus creating a basis for their new social role. The new role was recognised through the so-called Foča regulations that were issued by the Supreme Headquarters in February 1942, with operating instructions to national liberation committees as bodies of new revolutionary government. This document defines basic principles of the new revolutionary government, including the gender equality principle and voting rights of all individuals over 18.

Development of the uprising in eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina in late 1942 indicated the start of the take-off of a new NOP. Mass combat organisations of youth and women played an important role in strengthening the unity of people and activating them on the NOB's platform.¹⁹³ Stronger NOP development resulted in the founding assembly of AVNOJ (Bihać, 26 and 27 November 1942), the First Pan-Country Conference of AFŽ Yugoslavia (Bosanski Petrovac, 6, 7 and 8 December 1942) and founding congress of USAOJ (27, 28 and 29 December 1942).¹⁹⁴

The First Pan-Country Conference of AFŽ was held at the end of 1942, but the very creation of AFŽ started earlier. Pre-history of AFŽ can be found in a strategy of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. Between the two world wars, the strategy among other things focused on women's inclusion in different organisations of the workers' movement. However, work on the establishment of an independent organisation only started during World War II. Such organisation followed the bottom-up approach, and the *aktivi* and committees were the first forms of women's organisations. Along with youth organisations, they performed a range of important tasks, such as farming, collecting food and hiding it from the enemies, care for the wounded and children, courier duties, etc.¹⁹⁵ Compared to earlier periods of women's association, women's social and political organisation during World War II is specific for its mass-scale nature, inclusion of a large number of women from the countryside, women from various social layers and of different ethnic background. For example, following the liberation of the area of Sanička valley near Ključ in the summer of 1942, the First Working Brigade was established. The brigade worked on harvests, grain threshing and gathering fruit and vegetables, and included a large number of women¹⁹⁶. Women's labour teams were organised where necessary. Thus, for instance, in the winter of 1942, eight hundred women from Kozara, organised in labour teams, headed to Lijeve polje, over 30 kilometres away, to take crops from a village occupied by the enemy. Upon successful completion of the task, they returned

193 Filipović, M. and Benac, A. (1983) p. 123

194 Ibid.

195 Biser-Taso, N. (2008) p. 13

196 Kovačević, D. (1972)

only to find their villages in flames.¹⁹⁷

During ceasefires, women visited villages and organised women's events, where they talked about NOB's objectives and the need for women to join the battle in order to end the war as quickly as possible.¹⁹⁸ Therefore, although one of the main tasks of women's gatherings was to further mobilise women and include them in the fight, the analysis of this association shows that it was imbued with the ethics of care. The war was perceived as a battle for peace. The publication *Combat Path of the Women of Yugoslavia* reads that the following signs were posted in halls where women gathered: For the lives of our children, for the peace of our homes, to stop slaughters and killing – we have united. The Resolution from the women's gathering at the territory of Rujiška reads that only battle will bring salvation to the tormented people, but also poses a request on the National Liberation Army to never taint its honour with the *blood of brothers from a different religion who did no harm* and not to allow the National Liberation Army to be cursed by thousands of wretched mothers from other religions over graves of their feeble children.¹⁹⁹

On 21 August 1941, the Assembly of women from Drvar and the surrounding area was held in Drvar. The Assembly discussed women's tasks with regard to their participation in NOB, providing assistance to partisan units and organising women on a territorial principle.²⁰⁰ In the spring of 1942, upon the initiative of the Supreme Headquarters, a conference of the women of eastern Bosnia was held in Foča with the participation of a large number of Muslim women.²⁰¹

Efforts to organise women intensified in 1942. Thus, for example, a women's county committee was established in March 1942 for Drvar county, and in April, women's organisations already existed in all villages in Drvar area; by mid 1942, women's organisations were established in all 72 villages that existed at the time in the area of Podgrmeč; by the end of 1942, there were 25 village committees in the area of Ključ and Mrkonjić Grad; during 1942, AFŽ organisations included over 40,000 women at the liberated territory of western Bosnia.²⁰²

The First Pan-Country Conference of AFŽ

AFŽ organisations gained great importance, because they were channels through which women articulated their requests for equality with men

197 Ibid.

198 Biser-Taso, N. (2008) p. 14

199 From: Kovačević, D. (1972)

200 Ščapec, S. (2013) *Partizanke Hrvatske u Narodnooslobodilačkoj borbi, Savez antifašističkih boraca i antifašista Hrvatske*

201 Biser-Taso, N. (2008) p. 14

202 Kovačević, D. (1972)

*in all segments of society.*²⁰³ Zlatiborka Popov Momčinović feels that AFŽ was the most important form of organised women's participation in the revolutionary struggle and building of society.²⁰⁴

The First Pan-Country Conference of the Anti-Fascist Women's Front of Yugoslavia was held from 6 to 8 December 1942 in Bosanski Petrovac. It brought together 166 women delegates from all parts of Yugoslavia, and Josip Broz Tito even addressed the participants. The entirety of Tito's speech was published for the first time in the first issue of *Žena danas* magazine, with excerpts published in issue no. 30 of *Borba* magazine from December 1942. It was later multiplied in all parts of the country using various "techniques", along with the main materials from the First Pan-Country Conference of AFŽ.

*Your today's Assembly is of a great historical importance. Anti-Fascist women's movement has existed in Yugoslavia for a long time, but never in its full organisational form as is the case nowadays. [...] Maybe somebody from aside dreams that Yugoslavia will go back to the old lifestyle after the war: that women will stay in the kitchen and not participate in decision-making. But comrades, women passed the maturity exam; they proved to be able not only to work in a household, but also to fight carrying a rifle, to rule and hold the power in their hands. This Assembly also proves that our women take the people's fate and their own fate seriously. The Anti-Fascist Women's Front that managed to unite women for great goals of our battle, for the final victory against the occupier and its forces, aims to lead women to the final liberation and winning of their civil and social equality.*²⁰⁵

The AFŽ Conference heard presentations from women intellectuals and workers, as well as delegates from villages.²⁰⁶ AFŽ's Resolution shows that women's inclusion in NOB was the key historical moment in women's emancipation and gender equality process:

As members of the national liberation army and at the liberated territories, women gained full equality in the army and occupied political and army positions based on ability and merits; at the liberated territory, they were given the right to elect and to be elected, and they

203 Stojčić, M. (2009) *Proleterci svih zemalja – Ko vam pere čarape? Feministički pokret u Jugoslaviji 1978-1989.*, in: Tomić, Đ. and Atanacković, P.: *Novi društveni pokreti u Jugoslaviji od 1968. do danas*, Cenzura, Novi Sad, p. 110

204 Popov-Momčinović, Z. (2013) p. 77

205 From the speech of Comrade Tito on December 6, 1942 at the First Pan-Country Conference of AFŽ.

206 Sklevicky, L. (1984) *Organizirana djelatnost žena Hrvatske za vrijeme narodooslobodilačke borbe 1941-1945.*, Historical Contributions, Vol 3./No. 3.

*became members of national liberation committees and of the Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia.*²⁰⁷

During the preparations for the Conference, AFŽ tasks were defined and then further specified during the Conference. According to Lidija Sklevicky, these tasks can be divided to two large groups: a) tasks of providing assistance to the army and organising the rear and b) tasks arising from women's specific position (the political and cultural emancipation of women).²⁰⁸

The Conference also defined the most important tasks to be implemented by the AFŽ Central Committee, including the following: organising AFŽ committees; organisational strengthening and independence of AFŽ organisations; more intense engagement of women in building people's power and in assisting AVNOJ; planned and systematic work on political and cultural-educational advancement of women and inclusion of illiterate women in courses for illiterate people; launch of *Žena danas* magazine, etc.²⁰⁹ Central Committee of AFŽ was selected at the Conference, with **Kata Pejnović**, AFŽ president of Lika as the Committee chair. Initially, the Committee had 29 members, and at a plenum held on 25 and 26 October 1943, the number reached 38 members.²¹⁰ Social composition of the Committee confirms that the goal of this organisation was to gather women from all social layers. Namely, the Committee was comprised of 14 intellectuals, 9 peasants, 8 workers, 5 clerks and 2 housewives.²¹¹ However, in the opinion of some female authors, the strategy for homogenisation of a unified women's organisation, which was implemented through insistence on inclusion of women from different social layers, often bordered on a lack of confidence in women from "higher" layers and women from religious organisations.²¹²

The Central Committee of AFŽ was tasked with coordinating the AFŽ's work, assisting lower-level committees and working towards their independence. On the other hand, lower-level committees (village, local, municipal, county, district, regional and provincial) had the task of regularly informing the Central Committee about the status of the organisation.²¹³ Work on the newly-liberated territories was foreseen to take place through a large number of mass-scale activities, and occupied territories had to search for new ways to tie women in with the organisation. In cities, it was necessary to establish undercover committees in streets, factories, workshops and similar places that would gather large numbers of women and include them in different forms of the struggle (sabotages, boycott

207 First Pan-Country Conference of AFŽ Resolution; Source: Sklevicky, L. (1984)

208 Sklevicky, L. (1984) p. 106

209 Sklevicky, L. (1984)

210 Ibid. p. 93 and 105

211 Ibid. p. 105

212 Ibid. p. 93 and 105

213 See: Sklevicky, L. (1984) p. 100-101

against the market, mobilisation for NVO and such like). This organisational scheme was transformed in 1944, when the AFŽ was reorganised.²¹⁴ This reorganisation strongly shook the autonomy and independence of AFŽ, particularly in view of the fact that, following the reorganisation, AFŽ committees reported to the structures of people's power, and AFŽ's existing activists were integrated in those structures.²¹⁵

Wartime Organisation of AFŽ

Lydia Sklevicky differentiates two wartime stages of AFŽ organisations. The first stage (1942-1943) is characterised by AFŽ's autonomy within the national liberation movement, while the second stage (1944-1945) is a stage of direct submission and transmission.²¹⁶ Independence of AFŽ organisations that marked the first stage of the organisation was further emphasised in a Directive Letter from KPJ Central Committee about AFŽ's tasks, dated 2 November 1942, which specified that the AFŽ was under the Party's influence and that Party organisations were to help AFŽ, while leaving it with full independence and initiative in its work. However, as early as 1944, despite all activities that AFŽ organisations implemented, many started to question whether a separate women's organisation was still necessary.²¹⁷

At the Conference that continued the process of turning the AFŽ into a unified organisation of all women in Yugoslavia, as it was realised that AFŽ was not strongly implemented in all areas, delegates were assigned with establishing steering committees upon return to their areas that would be active for two to three months and preparing for the establishment of standing committees.²¹⁸

Given, as many female and male authors observe, that women took their assignments seriously and responsibly, intense work on organisational development of AFŽ continued throughout 1943, with the establishment of local, village, district and provincial committees both on liberated and occupied territories. Thus, for example, illegal AFŽ city committees were organised in Sarajevo, Tuzla, Mostar, Prijedor, Bosanska Dubica, Banja Luka and other places.²¹⁹ The organisation was popularised very quickly.

Activists themselves agitated for spreading of the organisation as a part of their daily work – during gatherings in mills, where they met

214 Sklevicky, L. (1984)

215 Ibid. p. 101 and 108

216 Sklevicky, L. (1996) p. 86

217 Stojaković, G. (2012) *Antifašistički front žena Jugoslavije (AFŽ) 1946 – 1953: pogled kroz AFŽ štampu*, in: Vasiljević, L.: Rod i levica, Ženski informacioni trening centar, Beograd, p. 16

218 Mitrašević, N. p. 289.

219 Kovačević, D. (1972)

women from other villages who were not included in the organisation, while helping in construction of burned-down houses and farming fields. They reported about any such agitation or action in committee sessions [...]. In many places, AFŽ members assumed numerous other obligations, especially in villages without a male population. In the village of Gunjevcı, women constituted the main labour force for implementing tasks of the movement. Storage of crops was one of the very important tasks. For this purpose, as early as spring 1943, youth labour teams were formed. Apart from young girls, they also included women who were often much more numerous. Harvested crops were carried for dozens of kilometres to Kozara and partisan warehouses. Women and their organisation were almost always in charge of providing care for the wounded. Food, clothing and other supplies were carried in an organised way to partisan hospitals in Kozara in certain time intervals, 15 days or shorter, depending on the quantity of collected food or the military situation. The women's organisation also helped national liberation committees in providing food to partisan units in the field. All these tasks were performed by women, in addition to their home and family obligations.²²⁰

Apart from numerous tasks, women gathered around the united AFŽ organisation stood out for their cultural and educational work. Furthermore, among many different women's activities during the initial 18 war months specified in the AFŽ Resolution that was adopted at the First Pan-Country Conference of AFŽ, apart from direct and indirect participation in battles, the Resolution also emphasised the cultural and educational work through launching and organising courses for illiterate people, various other courses and women's press²²¹. Magazine *Front slobode*, in its issue dated 7 November 1943, describes the cultural and educational work after the First Pan-country Conference of AFŽ in the following way: *Cultural groups started working, practicing sketches, recitals, poems etc., as well as readers' groups for reading radio-news and partisan press, courses for illiterates etc.*²²²

Assuming that education is a precondition for any women's intellectual and political activities, in view of AFŽ's cultural and educational work, we can conclude beyond doubt that this organisation was the key factor in women's emancipation. In this context, it is particularly important to mention the general NOP policy, which was focused on teaching illiterate people and providing general education to the population, which was accepted through concrete activities that were implemented via AFŽ

220 Mitrašević, N. p. 465

221 First Pan-Country Conference of AFŽ Resolution; Source: Sklevicky, L. (1984)

222 *Žene u narodno-oslobodilačkoj borbi*, *Front slobode*, November 7, 1943, p. 11

organisations.

Namely, at the time of World War II school tradition in BiH was poor, which is confirmed by data about the number and network of elementary and secondary schools, the number of children included in the elementary education, and the number and percentage of illiterate citizens that reached up to 75%.²²³ NOP put huge efforts into cultural and educational work, primarily reflected in mass-scale teaching of the illiterate population, initially through individual, and then through mass-scale and organised courses for illiterate citizens in the free territory. In his analysis of NOP's educational policy, Azem Kožar explains that three types of elementary schools were launched in the free territory: courses for the illiterate population, national elementary school and National University. Courses for illiterate people were envisaged as small schools where, apart from learning letters and mathematics, participants acquired knowledge about national history, social science and basic elements of economics. Persons aged 6 to 14 enrolled in national elementary school, while courses for illiterate people were attended by those aged between 14 and 40, and the National University was intended to provide general and vocational knowledge to educated staff²²⁴. They also organised *various activities within cultural and educational work: lectures for the people, conferences, verbal newspapers, culture houses were opened, choirs were formed, as well as amateur and musical study groups, and reading rooms and libraries were opened.*²²⁵ AFŽ assumed a large part in these activities.

Lydia Sklevicky views AFŽ's educational activities through three levels.²²⁶ The main level includes courses for illiterate people that AFŽ organised even before its official establishment in the free territory. Sklevicky concludes that *AFŽ deserves credit for the fact that illiterate mothers started learning with their children, and courses were promoted, e.g. with posters carrying a photograph from a course and the slogan: Death to illiteracy – education is a weapon against the enemy.*²²⁷ The second level of educational activities was comprised of political education courses that, as Sklevicky explains, had the task of informing women about NOB goals - meaning of NOO and women's equality - and to train women for further independent work. The third level was writing for women's press and promoting its reading.

Equal education is a prerequisite of a society that nourishes equality. Women's education in different social contexts proved to be the first, if not the only, condition for women to show their abilities, become independent and to participate, on equal terms with men, in different forms of

223 Kožar, A. (2006) *O nekim aspektima obrazovno-odgojne politike naroodnosolobodilačkog pokreta na području Bosne i Hercegovine (1941.-1945.)*, in: Kamberović, H. (2006) p. 239-240

224 Ibid. p. 231-233

225 Ibid. 238

226 Sklevicky, L. (1996) p. 30

227 Ibid.

social activity, including political. If we observe education in this way, as many feminists do (for instance Mary Wollstonecraft), we can conclude that AFŽ's cultural and educational activities influenced further women's inclusion in the public sphere, both in war and post-war periods.

Women's Non/Participation in ZAVNOBiH and AVNOJ

In the first half of 1943, BiH was the battlefield of fourth and fifth offensives that resulted in the liberation of almost the entire territory of BiH (except for Sarajevo and several city centres and strongholds along significant communications).²²⁸ This was the time of a strong rise of NOP and, in the opinion of many authors, AFŽ and USAOJ organisations constituted a strong anchor of people's power in gathering and activating people on an NOP platform and performing complex tasks of the army, as well as managing the economy, education, healthcare and other areas of social life.²²⁹

In September 1943, preparations began for the Founding Assembly of ZAVNOBiH, which was established as the highest political body of BOP in BiH at the first session in Mrkonjić Grad (25 and 26 November 1943). On behalf of AFŽ, Rada Vranješić, member of the AFŽ Central Committee, greeted the participants at this session and emphasised that, by taking significant part in NOB, women had become an important backbone of NOP.²³⁰ However, major narratives about the new women's role as equal political subjects were not accompanied by adequate presence of women in processes of important political decision making. For example, analysing and comparing data about high representation of women in the army and negligible representation of women councillors in the work of AVNOJ and ZAVNOBiH, Vera Katz concludes that, *given their numerous obligations in the army and civil life, women's participation in political bodies did not adequately follow the degree of their engagement*.²³¹

Of 247 councillors at the First ZAVNOBiH session, only four were women (0.6%): **Mevla Jakupović** (worker from Tuzla), **Zora Nikolić** (worker from Sarajevo), **Danica Perović** (captain from Banja Luka, hospital manager of 11th division) and **Rada Vranješević** (student, member of the Central Committee of AFŽ).²³² At the same session, a list of AVNOJ councillors from Bosnia and Herzegovina was developed. Of 103 councillors, not a single woman was on the list. On the other hand, ZAVNOBiH Declaration of the rights of male and female citizens of BiH insists on the equality of women and men in the country's political life and all areas of

228 Filipović, M. and Benac, A. (1983) p. 124

229 Ibid. p. 125

230 ZAVNOBiH, Dokumenti 1943-1944, Veselin Masleša, Sarajevo, 1968, p. 32

231 Katz, V. (2011) *O društvenom položaju žena u Bosni i Hercegovini 1942-1953*, Prilozi, 40, Sarajevo, p. 139

232 ZAVNOBiH, Dokumenti 1943. – 1944., Veselin Masleša, Sarajevo, 1968., p. 59. – 69.

social life. The Declaration reads that the electoral right in the democratic BiH will be exercised through secret voting based on general, equal and direct voting rights, and that all citizens over the age of 18 have active and passive electoral rights.²³³

For many, however, even this modest presence of women's voices in the public sphere was a portent, or at least an indicator, of gender equality. This was manifested through new women's roles that implied their participation in the political life of the (future) state. This is exactly what **Danica Perović** warned about in her speech at the Second Session of ZAVNOBiH:

*At the 2nd AVNOJ session, an important decision was made about equality of women and men and women's participation in political life of our future state. This decision has already come to life. Today, we can also see women at the assembly of political representatives of our Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is a novelty in the political life of our peoples.*²³⁴

In her presentation, she reminded participants that every area in BiH followed heroic braveries of women and that it was impossible to specify all the names of *countless heroines of the front line and the background*.²³⁵ She mentioned examples of **Zora Kovačević**, **Nena Bokanova** and **Mira Cikota**, reminded participants how women of Drvar fought bare-handed and destroyed the enemy, and about numerous nurses who were *saving wounded comrades from the firing squad under a rain of bullets, and then took care of them under the hardest circumstances and conditions*, and drew attention to the fact that women were couriers from the early days of the uprising.²³⁶

At the second AVNOJ session, there were seven women (6.54%) among 107 present councillors, and of 23 nominated councillors, three were women.²³⁷ The third ZAVNOBiH session, which was held from 26 to 28 April 1945 in Sarajevo, was attended by ten women, or 6.45% of 155 present councillors, as follows: **Sonja Čopić** (chair of the AFŽ Regional Committee for Bosanska Krajina), **Mevla Jakupović** (Tuzla), **Dužanka Kovačević** (Banja Luka), **Danica Likar** (Bosanski Novi), **Olga Marasović** (Bijeljina), **Zehra Muidović**, **Zora Nikolić** (Sarajevo), **Ruža Oljača**, **Lepa Perović** (Banja Luka) and **Danica Perović**.²³⁸ However, not a single woman was appointed to any position in the First Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina.²³⁹

233 Ibid. p. 234

234 Dokumenti 1943-1944, Veselin Masleša, Sarajevo, 1968, p. 199

235 Ibid.

236 Ibid. p. 199-200

237 Ibid. 174

238 Katz, V. (2011) p. 141

239 Ibid.

Zehra Muidović (after whom the maternity clinic in Jezero, Sarajevo was named) was an anti-fascist, AFŽ member, member of the undercover Resistance Movement in Sarajevo. Muidović hid Radojka Lakić in her apartment. A military intelligence course in operating radio-stations was also organised in Muidović's apartment.

*As early as in June 1941, the Party Committee was preparing staff to be trained in operating a radio-station. Activists were selected for this purpose, including Radojka Lakić, Mira Kurilić, Nihad Kulenović and Zehra Muidović. The training was to take place in Zehra Muidović's apartment. Radojka Lakić lived there under a false name. In the apartment at Veliki Alifakovac, the first training course was taking place under a special conspiracy regime, with great efforts. Exercises lasted the whole day, starting early in the morning until the curfew. Nobody could enter the house during that time. Zehra herself ensured this. The course began in mid July and lasted for approximately forty consecutive days.*²⁴⁰

When Gestapo intensified persecutions, Muidović and many others left the city and joined the Fifth Krajiška division, which included Nijaz Resulović, **Mira Vokšal**, **Gina Krečak**, Miro Štefančić and many other less-known heroes.

It is interesting that **Jovanka Čović-Žuta** was a secretary of the Banja Luka local committee of KPJ, and that until August 1941 this body was almost entirely comprised of women. Apart from Žuta, **Zaga Umičević-Mala**, as a SKOJ secretary, is also mentioned.²⁴¹

General Remarks about the World War II Period

Gender equality was a very important segment of the communist ideology. It had an unquestionable *de facto* importance when it comes to women's inclusion in the national revolution. However, when we analyse women's participation in places where political and military decisions were made, we can conclude that outspoken gender equality was primarily of declarative nature. Nevertheless, we cannot deny that significant changes occurred in this gap between the actual and the declarative that

240 Albahari, N. (1981) *Sarajevo u revoluciji*, Istorijski arhiv Sarajevo: <http://znaci.net/00003/478.pdf> (May 20, 2014)

241 Hoare, M. A. *Bosanski muslimani u Drugom svjetskom ratu*: Istorija, source: http://books.google.ba/books?id=TfQEAQAQAQBAJ&pg=PA79&lpq=PA79&dq=Jovanka+%C4%8Covi%C4%87&source=bl&ots=vJYJ5Axwe1&sig=NAmlQiludOeXVJG1hApT9XRDEmQ&hl=en&sa=X&ei=4QC9U_qOKYUq4gTc_IC4BQ&ved=0CCQQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=Jovanka%20%C4%8Covi%C4%87&f=false

opened a new chapter in the story about women's position in BiH and the organised women's movement.

Mass-scale inclusion of women in NOB knocked down the patriarchal image of the passive women's role and launched their emancipation. A society characterised by complete elimination of women from public life transitioned into a society of *de jure* women's equality in all segments of political, economic and social life. Cultural changes took place as well. The standpoint about women's inferiority was suppressed by admiration for braveries of partisan women whose stories became an inspiration for many movies and poems, although still often dressed in patriarchal robes. Social barriers imposed by the patriarchal tradition did not vanish over night, but changes did take place, mostly impacting education.

When we talk about not only women's position in World War II, but about the history of women's/feminist organisation in BiH in general, the most important moment was certainly the establishment of AFŽ. The role of this organisation is interpreted and evaluated in the literature in different ways. Arguments behind the minorisation of AFŽ's role are most frequently based on the reasons for its subsequent (self-) abolishment. However, if we observe the very establishment of AFŽ organisations and their activities during World War II, and the way in which they articulated *women's* issues in their work - particularly their cultural and educational work - we can conclude that this organisation was the most important moment in the history of the feminist movement in BiH. Many objections can be posed against such a conclusion, including those pertaining to the (non)existence of a feminist movement in BiH. However, further discussion of these issues presumes repeated contemplation of the meaning of the terms emancipation and feminism, free of subsequently attributed ideological connotations. Only then, will it be possible to reopen a debate about the incompleteness of both the emancipation process and of the feminist movement in BiH.

Note about Vera Obrenović-Delibašić

Women's literary creation during World War II and NDH establishment at the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina was marked by the revolutionary writer and poet Vera Obrenović-Delibašić, whose legacy and engagement were literally erased from all official overviews of Yugoslav and Bosnia-Herzegovinian literature after the end of the war conflict, with the intention to present that revolutionary and engaged literature was men's job, and that women's figures were unsuitable in the revolution and resistance movements against Nazi and fascist aspirations for European territories. Vera Obrenović-Delibašić was a teacher at the Higher School of Pedagogy and played the first violin at the Sarajevo

Philharmonic Orchestra.²⁴² During her life in Sarajevo, she published three books of poetry, and later during the war she left the city and went to Serbia. Immediately after the war, she wrote an extensive novel about the national liberation struggle *Kroz ničiju zemlju* [Through No-Man's Land], which was published in two volumes in 1948 and 1950. It provides a chronology of the war, revolution and national liberation struggle in border villages between western Serbia and eastern Bosnia. In 1955, she published a book of stories *Zore nad mahalama* [Dawns above Mahalas] about women during and after World War II. Her second novel *Višnja iz ničije zemlje* [Višnja from No-Man's Land] was published in 1971.²⁴³ She was pro-Soviet, and her work was therefore first censored, and then forgotten. Or, as Svetlane Slapšak says:

*Manipulations with censorship as a motive of the strategy of oblivion: A good example of such treatment is Vera Obrenović-Delibašić, who wrote an extensive and from many aspects an extraordinary novel Kroz ničiju zemlju based on requirements of socialist realism. Predictably, she was one of the victims of the Information Bureau. However, while many former representatives of socialist realism successfully survived, some of them by immediately offering services with success, some after long years of silence and suffering, often faced with new difficulties, Vera Obrenović-Delibašić was never given a second chance.*²⁴⁴

242 Source: <http://www.politika.rs/rubrike/Kulturni-dodatak/Umetnicka-zica-oficira-Ozne.lt.html> (May 20, 2014)

243 Hawkesworth, C. (2000) and <http://www.graduzice.org/userfiles/files/prozaod-1945do1997.pdf>

244 Source: http://www.danas.rs/danasrs/kultura/strategije_zaborava_i_rod.11.html?news_id=103463 (July 7, 2014)

PART III: 1945-1990

WOMEN IN SOCIALISM – FROM ACCELERATED EMANCIPATION TO ACCELERATED RE-PATRIARCHALISATION

... You abolished our “afīža” ...

This chapter provides a contextual overview of social, economic, political and cultural circumstances and daily life in the Socialist Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (SRBiH), as part of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ), upon completion of World War II until the end of the 1980s, with a special emphasis on women's issues and the position of women. Attention will be paid to early socialist efforts and legislative measures aimed at ensuring gender equality and women's emancipation, and to overall social progress during the socialist era. Positive and negative implications of this progress will be analysed from a feminist perspective: what did women yearn for, what did they strive for, hope for and fight for?; did they manage to achieve equality with men during the period of *brotherhood and unity*? – these are some of the issues that will receive special attention. As the issue of women's education was of particular importance in this period, special attention will be paid to this topic and to women's contribution to science. An overview of conditions in culture and art, particularly literature, painting, theatre and film, will be provided by presenting some women's works in these fields. This chapter mentions only some of the women who were distinguished for their work, efforts and achievements during the socialist period in BiH.

Accelerated Emancipation

After the victory of anti-fascism and the Partisan Movement, the post-war period in SRBiH and the entire SFRJ was marked by the beginning of mass-scale and significant social, political and economic changes. The changes pertained to eradication of the legacy of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia – in political, ideological and social segments – but also to urbanisation and emancipation of rural Yugoslav areas and population, industrialisation, building a socialist society and the war-devastated country in general. As a single-party system, the socialist system largely relied on the inheritance and myth of the Partisan Struggle against the Fascist Occupation 1941-45, but also on three supporting pillars - self-governance, the Non-Aligned Movement and brotherhood and unity.

Self-governance meant a free, workers' self-sustainable and progressive system; the Non-Aligned Movement placed Yugoslavia between the SSSR and America and joined it together with other countries from the movement; brotherhood and unity represented the policy of promoting harmony between ethnic groups and Yugoslav republics.²⁴⁵

Changes that occurred after World War II largely pertained to women and their position and rights in the country. New rights that women of Yugoslavia obtained during the socialist era were actually won by women, primarily through equal participation in the National Liberation Struggle (NOB). After the war, the newly-won rights were incorporated in the legislation, which was a formal state stimulus and encouragement for women's emancipation and equality with men. This chapter deals with the question of whether, beyond theory, Yugoslav women, including BiH women, enjoyed equality with men in practice; or whether socialism failed to resolve the issue of the women of Yugoslavia.

As explained in the previous chapter, women's participation in NOB was very important. Courage and decisiveness of women participants in NOB, both partisan women and those who contributed in various other ways, by being nurses, couriers, illegal activists etc., contributed significantly to the struggle against fascism and fight for a better world for they and their children. Women's equality was certainly part of the communist ideology, as Lenin also emphasised: *there can be no socialist movement without broad participation of a large number of women workers ... We need equality of women workers with male workers, not only before the law, but in real life as well. This is why women workers need to increasingly take part in company management and government of the country.*²⁴⁶ Support and compliments for women also came from the highest political and military level, from Josip Broz Tito, who emphasised the achievements of women of Yugoslavia and noted that women's position in the country had to change:

*(...) women of Yugoslavia, who sacrificed so much in this struggle with such dedication, those who persistently stand in front lines of the National Liberation Struggle, here and today, have the right to establish one fact once and for all: this struggle must yield fruits for women of Yugoslavia as well, and nobody will ever pull away the expensively paid fruits from their hands!...*²⁴⁷

The Anti-Fascist Women's Front (AFŽ) is an organisation that made a significant contribution to the emancipation of Yugoslav women. It

245 Ramet, S. P. (1999) In Tito's Time, in: Ramet, S. P. Gender Politics in the Western Balkans, University Park, Pennsylvania: the Pennsylvania State University Press, p. 91

246 In Kožul, F. (1973) Samoupravni i radni status žene u Jugoslaviji (rezultati istraživanja). Univerzitet u Sarajevu. Fakultet političkih nauka. Sarajevo, p. 23

247 Ibid. p. 33



Anti-fascist women of Bihać – a letter to Tito

in all segments of life and work.²⁴⁸ After the war, in June 1945, the First Congress of AFŽ Yugoslavia was organised in Belgrade, identifying the main goals of this organisation. The identified goals primarily included reconstruction and humanitarian activities, but tasks regarding education and the spread of literacy among the female population were also defined. Of course, AFŽ played a large role in emancipation in the post-war period. As specified in Ivana Pantelić's book *Partizanke kao građanke* [Partisan Women as Citizens], AFŽ played three important emancipation roles: mobilising women on reconstruction; spreading literacy and education of women; stimulus for building kindergartens, which gave women opportunity to find employment and thus obtain significant economic independence.²⁴⁹ AFŽ was the main organisation which joined many women together and actively worked for women's inclusion in social and political life and encouraging and motivating them to leave the existing matrices that were typical for traditional patriarchal environments.

Former partisan women were appointed to a large number of important positions in AFŽ. In the post-war period, those women were role models for the emancipation of other women, especially those from rural areas. AFŽ's policy was to encourage, motivate and enable women to work independently and be independent, and to encourage them to change their attitudes towards labour. AFŽ emphasised that marriage was not the only meaning of a woman's life.²⁵⁰ These quotations clearly show the emancipation and feminist postulates that the AFŽ followed.

AFŽ had its own press, which was a strong weapon for spreading the ideological plan of the socialist Yugoslavia.

In the wartime period 1942-1944, thirty magazines were printed in

248 Stojaković, G. *Antifašistički front žena Vojvodine 1942-1953*.

249 Pantelić, I. (2011) *Partizanke kao građanke*, Beograd, Institut za savremenu istoriju; Evoluta; p. 56

250 Dijanić, D., Merunka-Golubić, M., Niemčić, I., Stanić, D. *Ženski biografski leksikon*. p. 307

the territories where the National Liberation Movement existed.... Of those magazines, the following were for Bosnia and Herzegovina: Žena kroz borbu (AFŽ OK KPJ (KPJ District Committee) for eastern Bosnia), Žena na putu slobode (OK KPJ for Herzegovina), Nova žena (AFŽ Bosnia and Herzegovina), Front slobode (AFŽ for eastern Bosnia), Hercegovka (AFŽ for Herzegovina), Hercegovka (OO AFŽ for Herzegovina). After the liberation, a clear and firm AFŽ structure was established in Yugoslavia on local, regional, provincial and federal levels, and magazines published by AFŽ were printed in republic centres and Vojvodina. The aim was to convey political messages to women, keeping in mind cultural differences and specificities of each republic of the socialist Yugoslavia. The following was printed for BiH: Nova žena (AFŽ Bosnia and Herzegovina Sarajevo, 1941-1977)...251

The first Constitution of the Federative National Republic of Yugoslavia (FNRJ) formally granted women voting rights in 1946. Article 24 reads that *all citizens who turned 18, regardless of their sex, nationality, race, religion, level of education and place of living, shall have the right to elect and be elected to all bodies of the state government...*²⁵² Nevertheless, women of Yugoslavia, including BiH women, enjoyed voting rights even before the 1946 Constitution of the Federative National Republic of Yugoslavia. *Namely, a document entitled Tasks and Structure of National Liberation Committees confirmed women's active and passive voting rights which they used as early as 1941, during elections for national committees.*²⁵³

It is important to note that this can be deemed early, compared to some more progressive and modern European countries that passed this law much later. As Gordana Stojaković specifies, following the enactment of Article 24 of the FNRJ Constitution, a legal system was established that introduced all of these rights from personal, family and political aspects. This was an important argument in the agitation for increased women's participation in the country's political and economic life. In the early years of the establishment of the socialist

251 Stojaković, G. (2012) p. 38-39

252 Source: http://www.arhivyu.gov.rs/active/en/home/glavna_navigacija/leksikon_jugoslavije/konstitutivni_akti_jugoslavije/ustav_fnrj.html (March 31, 2014)

253 Taljanović, A. (2010) *Žena u politici Bosne i Hercegovine*, Sarajevo, p. 51

state of Yugoslavia, women were headed towards the position of stakeholders, on the one hand, facing the need to formulate their own interests and fight for them and, on the other, becoming an interest sphere because it was clear that a country could not be reconstructed and built and a new socialist society introduced without serious active participation of women. Beyond doubt, this is where the AFŽ played an important role. Women in socialism fought and won a space for their active participation in the creation of a new relationship between the sexes within the new ideology, the introduction of equality, and AFŽ organised mechanisms that could include the majority of women.²⁵⁴

In addition to voting rights, women in socialism were given several other important legal capacities. The Law on Marriage (1946) equalised the position of men and women in marriage, family laws from 1947 introduced equal rights of marital and extramarital children, the law on social insurance introduced insurance against all risks, which included paid maternity leave and the right to a pension under equal terms for men and women, although women retired earlier. The right to abortion was introduced with the 1951 law, and the 1974 Constitution guaranteed women full rights to free childbirth. Since 1977, abortion up to ten weeks of pregnancy was allowed without restrictions. Yugoslav legislation at the time incorporated all international conventions pertaining to women's position.²⁵⁵ In 1979, SFRJ signed the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which was adopted at the UN General Assembly and came into force in 1981. Following the breakup of Yugoslavia, it was automatically transferred to the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The role of the new government after World War II also included facing the previously introduced social practices and transformation of society. Special attention was paid to discontinuation of rural life practices and modernisation of society. They had to work on improvement of public hygiene practices, eradication of infectious diseases - that had taken their toll - and the education of society. Such practices mostly posed a threat to more rural republics and those with poorer living standards, such as Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Metohija, but also Bosnia and Herzegovina. Urbanisation of society and intense movement from rural areas to cities led to movement of old habits and traditional life practices to cities and urban areas as well. The AFŽ team that conducted a health-education campaign in 1952 in Zenica organised a large action of cleaning the city, houses and yards, because the 'poor living standard in many workers' families proved to be the result of ignorance among men and women'. Similar actions were also organised in Jajce, Bosanski Novi, Mrkonjić Grad, Bugojno and Dobož.²⁵⁶

254 Source: *Ekonomija njege i brige izgradila je zemlju*, <http://maz.hr/index.php/tekstovi/clanci/15-ekonomija-nege-i-brige-izgradila-je-zemlju> (May 24, 2014)

255 Stojičić, M. *Ibid* p. 112

256 See Dobrivojević, I. (2011) *Od Ruralnog ka Urbanom. Modernizacija Republike Bosne i*



*Muslim women taking of their veils
at a woman's meeting, Sarajevo, 1947*

discussed at the Second AFŽ Congress in Sarajevo in 1947, when a resolution was issued on the movement of Muslim women for taking off the veil and niqab. The action was initiated by the AFŽ, under the directive of the Communist Party, aimed at enabling Muslim women to organise themselves and promote taking off the veil and niqab. It was important to do this publicly and thus encourage other women to do the same. The action brought results and, by publicly taking off the veil and niqab, some women indeed encouraged others to do the same. However, according to some women, there was some resistance towards this action, particularly among male family members.

After the Second World War and the socialist revolution in Yugoslavia, the issue of traditional Muslim women's clothing was raised. The clothing was described as an obstacle for emancipation of Muslim women and its abolishment was requested. The action for removal of such clothing in BiH was initiated by the Anti-Fascist Women's Front (AFŽ) in 1947. At the Second AFŽ Congress on 13 and 14 July in Sarajevo, a resolution on the movement of Muslim women for removal of the veil was issued.²⁵⁷

In order to prevent prohibitions within families, a law was passed in 1950 prohibiting wearing, forcing or persuading women to wear a veil or niqab or covering their faces in another way. Headscarves were not prohibited by law, but they nevertheless gradually disappeared, first in urban, and then in rural areas as well. The following reasons were specified for

Hercegovine u FNRJ 1945-1955, Institut za istoriju u Sarajevu. Sarajevo p. 10

257 Source: <http://www.oslobodjenje.ba/vijesti/bih/kako-su-zar-i-feredza-zabranjeni-u-jugoslaviji>

the prohibition of the veil and niqab: *to eliminate the centuries-old sign of subordination and cultural backwardness of Muslim women, to facilitate full access of Muslim women to the rights won in the National Liberation Struggle and socialist construction of the country, and to ensure their full equality and broader participation in the social, cultural and economic life of the country.*²⁵⁸ Therefore, the veil and niqab were viewed as an act of subordination. Imprisonment of up to three months or a fine of up to 20,000 dinars was stipulated for violations of this law. For forcing women to wear such clothing or any propaganda activities in that regard, arrest and forced labour for up to two years or a fine up to 50,000 dinars was stipulated. AFŽ played an important role in the implementation of this law. Its members conducted propaganda activities and visited rural areas in SR BiH 30 days before the entry into force of the law, influencing women to uncover their faces.

Breakup with the SSSR and De-Stalinisation

From 1945 to 1948, FNR Yugoslavia was on the path of development, like other western countries, but it was also the strongest Eastern European country at the time. However, the Yugoslav government came into a conflict with the Information Bureau (IB) in 1948²⁵⁹, due to its intention to gather the Balkan and Eastern European countries into a single federation and assume leadership over a part of the global communist movement, which roused suspicions in Stalin and those around him. For this reason, there occurred a break-up between the socialist Yugoslavia and the entire Eastern Bloc in 1948.²⁶⁰ At this time, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (KPJ) was shaken by internal disruptions and, as Ivana Pantelić notes, the conflict with the Information Bureau produced large consequences on women's emancipation in the socialist Yugoslavia. The crisis that followed caused cutting of funds for women's organisations, such as the AFŽ and their magazines and newspapers. As early as 1951, the format of the magazines was changed and they became ordinary women's magazines. Stalin's supporters were proclaimed enemies of the Party and of the state and persecuted. They were tried before courts of national honour, which also implied the loss of voting rights, other civil rights and hard physical labour.²⁶¹

Women, primarily former partisan women, were also persecuted

258 Source: <http://www.nahla.ba/tekstovi10.aspx?tid=250&naslov=Osvrt%20s%20tribine%20Zabrana%20zara%20u%20BiH>

259 See Petranović, B. (1981) p. 477 in Stojaković, G. (2012) p. 34

260 Petranović, B. (1980) *Istorija Jugoslavije (1918-1978)*, Beograd; Cvetković, S. (2006) *Između srpa i čekića: Represija u Srbiji 1944-1953*, Beograd, in: Pantelić, I. (2011) p. 91-93

261 Katz, V. (2006) *Komunizam i represija: Sud narodne časti u Bosni i Hercegovini*, in: Kamberović, H. (2006)

during this large disruption, primarily within the Party, but also the society. The conflict with the Information Bureau led to a kind of unusual emancipation, as this was the first time for women, particularly the politically active ones, to be imprisoned in peace and later ostracised from the society.²⁶²

Attachment to Russians implied multiple sanctions, including *expulsion from apartments, loss of jobs, beating, forced divorce, movement, change of profession, arrests and long-term imprisonment in camps established in isolated and cruel areas, following the role model of the Soviet Gulag System.*²⁶³ Allegations were often bizarre, unproven and false, and many convicts were never tried. As Jelena Vujić states, in the majority of cases, only senior Party officials were tried.²⁶⁴ As for persecution and imprisonment of women, Vujić points out that women who supported IB never served their sentences with men. They were first placed in Ramski rit near Požarevac, and from 1950 they were transferred to a camp on Sveti Grgur island, and then to Goli Otok. As for living conditions after imprisonment, Ivana Pantelić points out:

*Women who were imprisoned during the crisis with EB countries were facing huge difficulties with social reintegration after leaving the camp. They lost all their political and civil rights. There was no way for them to be reinstated to their old jobs or find employment in any civil service. Like other prisoners, they had difficulties in re-establishing communication with the environment. Everybody was scared, and many people did not want anything to do with former prisoners.*²⁶⁵

Although around 16,000 people are deemed to have been arrested in Yugoslavia (5% of total Party membership) with 413 victims, Goli Otok is still not viewed as a death camp.²⁶⁶ Goli Otok functioned from 1948 to 1956. Three years after Stalin's death in 1953, relations with the SSSR improved and Goli Otok was closed, although it has been stated that some prisoners were only released in 1959.

*The break-up with Stalin led to rejection of some elements of Stalinist socialism in SFRJ, such as the Soviet method of company management, formal censorship and, after 1964, anathemisation of nationalism.*²⁶⁷

262 Ibid. p. 92-93

263 Cvetković, S. (2011) in Pantelić, I. p. 92

264 Vujić, J., *Sve po spisku: o Golom Otoku (ekskluzivni spiskovi žrtava)*, Source: <http://noviplamen.net/2013/11/25/sve-po-spisku-istina-o-golom-otoku-ekskluzivni-spiskovi-zrtava/> (May 31, 2014)

265 Pantelić, I. (2011) p. 99

266 Vujić, J., *Sve po spisku: o Golom Otoku*

267 Ramet, S. P. (1999) p. 90

Urbanisation and Industrialisation

Women as Labour Force

In the hard post-war time, which required the immediate and efficient recovery of society from the war devastation, due to shortfalls of the pre-war state, there was a need for extensive labour force.

Looking up to the Soviet experience and practice, the Yugoslav regime developed the First Five-Year Plan, defining the development of heavy industry as alpha and omega of any economic development and progress... In five years only, the national product was to be increased almost 2.5 times.²⁶⁸

Due to unrealistic goals and lack of a professional and competent labour force, more money was spent on industrialisation than necessary. Large investments in a dominantly rural country brought problems with the labour force.

During 1948 and 1949, factories and mines sent dramatic warnings about a lack of labour force from all parts of the country... It was not simple to talk farmers into becoming industrial workers... and authorities particularly insisted on women's inclusion in industry, viewing peasant women and housewives as the largest labour force reserves.²⁶⁹

The most dramatic increase was recorded in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the number of employed women grew 2.5 times.²⁷⁰

In the time period 1948-1950, AFŽ members supported the Five-Year Plan with their work. The main tasks included reconstruction of the country, industrialisation and "women's introduction to economy". Women provided mass-scale support to the position of Tito and KPJ leadership against the IB.²⁷¹

Also, large numbers of women were included in labour actions, building factories, railroads, roads etc. ... They volunteered in the efforts to reconstruct the country, educate the population and provide for war orphans. Joyful about the opportunity to go out into the public and make themselves and their work visible and respected for the first time, women never raised the issue of receiving payment for their work, and therefore they appear to have been the favourite labour force of the new, "post-war" socialist system.²⁷²

268 Dobrivojević, I. (2011) p.16-17

269 Ibid. p. 17-19

270 Ibid.

271 Stojaković, G. (2012) p. 34

272 Ženski biografski leksikon p. 318

*Woman as a worker and “self-governing society member” is a popular phrase that defines the woman’s “political” role, primarily at the workplace within the economic and political democracy, but also as an activist in the social and political work in the community.*²⁷³

In order to somewhat facilitate the daily obligations of working women - primarily their family and home obligations and raising children, which was exclusively the woman’s duty - the socialist government also passed several provisions regulating the issues of children and maternity and enabling women to remain dedicated to activities in the public sphere even after they started a family, but also making physically demanding jobs easier for women. For example, the *Decree on women’s labour during pregnancy or menstruation* exempted women from work that required extended standing (for instance, they should not work as conductors in trams, trains, buses, or drive a tractor, and longer maternity leave was proposed for women who had given birth twice).²⁷⁴ Also, there was the *Decree on opening nursery schools in companies*.²⁷⁵ Although these decrees aimed at facilitating women’s working life, we must observe that they still kept them chained by the biological framework and that care for children was exclusively left to women.

When it comes to the rights of women workers, it is important to note that ... *women were successful and competent at work and they never felt that they were ... prevented from advancing their careers*. Reasons behind such viewpoints can be found in their hard won right to work, their feelings towards the new system, and also in their (patriarchal) raising of and influence on their families. *The new socialist order nominally levelled salaries of working men and women, but it still supported a division between so-called male and female professions*.²⁷⁶ As Ramet points out, two problems were recognised in the working practice of a socialist woman: women were concentrated around certain professions (for example, in the textile industry) and there were only a few women in leadership positions. A study from 1980 shows that almost 80% of employees in social services were women, and that medical servants were almost 75% women. Women constituted the majority among workers in the hotel industry, tourism, leather industry and primary schools, while there were only a few women among journalists, professors and judges. As to the reasons for this professional distinction of “female professions”, Ramet states that Yugoslav researchers emphasised a risk that hiring women for certain jobs would have led to the dismissal of the male labour force, which would

273 Bakšić-Muhtić, J. (2012) in: Spahić-Šiljak, Z., *Propitivanje ženskih, feminističkih i muslimanskih identiteta. Postsocijalistički konteksti u Bosni i Hercegovini i na Kosovu*, Centar za interdisciplinarne postdiplomske studije, Univerzitet u Sarajevu, p. 97

274 *Hrvatski državni arhiv, fond Konferencije za društvenu aktivnost žena*. Inv. Br. 525. in Dijanić, D. et al. (2012) p. 319

275 *Ibid.* p. 322

276 *Ibid.*

produce family conflicts.²⁷⁷ This claim again points to patriarchal family standpoints, where the man is the primary provider for the family. A different system of providing for the family – where the woman would have a job and the husband would do the housework – was expected to cause dissatisfaction and conflict in the family.

Suzana Đurić and Gordana Dragičević note that education and employment of young rural women was obstructed by their fathers and husbands who felt that their primary role was that of housewife. The deeply rooted traditional patriarchal principles and orders continued restricting women's emancipation during the socialist era.²⁷⁸ An additional problem of a working woman was her double workload – at work and at home. Despite the advanced legal solutions and establishment of kindergartens, the woman's role as a mother, primary child carer and the one who takes care of the house and housework was actually never questioned. *The presentation of a Yugoslav woman as liberated and westernised actually depicts the experience of women from middle and higher middle class in urban areas.*²⁷⁹

As Irene Stiver specified: ... *Women themselves feel that a successful woman alienates her from both women and men and that a woman's success at work jeopardises her private life.*²⁸⁰ Therefore, as mentioned in *Ženski biografski leksikon*, one can conclude that men's understanding of priorities set a standard that verifies woman's value and right to enjoy equality. The socialist era in Yugoslavia was therefore also marked by a discrepancy between the ideology and the proclaimed equality of women and men. As mentioned in some documents, the socialist society did not support women, but only viewed them as a replacement for the best male labour force that was included in political and public life, which is evident from their representation in government following the first post-war elections.²⁸¹

During the 1950s, after the establishment of the self-governance system and the norm of companies stating positive economic results, the existing state system project became expensive. The state continued financing a part of the social standard, but a large part of that responsibility was left to families. The demand for labour force declined, especially demand for less qualified workers, most of whom were women. The decree on high child allowances and the closing of a number of kindergartens and nursery schools forced a number of women go back to their homes. Stojaković mentions that the introduction of self-governance and a profitable economy under the circumstances of an underdeveloped production led to a reduction in state subsidies for childcare institutions and social

277 Ramet, S. P. (1999) p. 97

278 Ibid. 98

279 Stojčić, M. (2009) p. 113

280 Stiver, I. (1991) in Dijanić, D. et al. (2012) p. 322

281 Ibid. 319

standard institutions, which meant that a number of employed women lost affordable and safe child day-care. After the introduction of children's allowance in 1951, many women quit their jobs.²⁸²

Divorce

Following the overview above of women workers under socialism, the acquired right to divorce will thus be examined, as another factor that indicates the level of equality between women and men. After the World War II, *equality of men and women, beyond doubt a huge attainment of the Revolution, becomes one of the main principles of the Constitution, marriage law and other laws. Old patriarchal attitudes about the subordinated position of women that piled up through centuries and remained in people's minds were to be changed. Establishing new relations between people is a lengthy and cumbersome process. Regardless of law declarations, they cannot come spontaneously with changes of the social structure.*²⁸³ Therefore, data from research conducted in 1965 measuring equality of women and men based on divorce litigations is understandable. Although the law granted women the right to apply for divorce, this option was still more availed of by men. As Nermina Traljić says: *in the territory covered by the court in Sarajevo in 1946, husbands applied for divorce in 322 and wives in 270 cases.*²⁸⁴ Reasons behind larger number of divorce applications filed by husbands can be found in the economic circumstances of women, inability to support children without their husband's financial assistance, fear of losing custody over their children, and the deeply rooted patriarchal view that divorce is shameful for women. Other legitimate reasons behind men's divorce applications include infertility, which was exclusively blamed on women, and situations where a woman did not marry as a virgin. The conclusions of this research thus confirm that a modern family, including the divorce issue, was still not based on full equality. Women remained in an unacceptable and humiliating position, underappreciated and neglected.

Having reviewed divorce cases before the courts in SR BiH in 1946, 1953 and 1963, Dr Alija Silajdžić presented similar results.²⁸⁵ The results used by this author show that men took marital fidelity lightly, that women in many cases were exposed to domestic violence by their husbands and even by his close relatives, that women did not have the right to choose a partner, but that their parents often chose a husband or partner for them. The findings also demonstrate that women were economically dependent

282 Stojaković, G. (2012) p. 38

283 Ibid. p. 143

284 Ibid.

285 Silajdžić, A. (1971) *Borba žene za ravnopravnost jedan od uzroka razvoda braka*: Godišnjak pravnog fakulteta u Sarajevu XIX. Univerzitet u Sarajevu

on their husbands, which is why they got married, hoping that marriage would save them from poverty. The research furthermore indicates that women struggled more than men to start and preserve their marriage and that, in most cases, they were prepared to carry the heaviest burden imposed on them by marriage and family life, and to put up with insults from their husbands and their husbands' relatives. However, Silajdžić concludes that women in socialism increasingly fought for equality with men and exercised their right to divorce when the marriage situation became unbearable for them.²⁸⁶

Women in Politics, Women in the Party

Statistical data about participation of a socialist woman in politics and KPJ also represented a contradiction between theory and practice. Namely, in 1948, when problems with Stalin were present, KPJ confirmed its policy of equality between women and men at its Fifth Congress. Paying attention to the gender equality policy during the crisis caused by De-Stalinisation at least declaratively confirmed KPJ's commitment to keep gender equality issues on top of the political agenda.²⁸⁷ Women's participation in politics and their membership with KPJ were followed from year to year, noting the problem of women's underrepresentation in politics. In the same year of 1948, only 19.9% of Party members accounted for women, and only 9.7% of women were representatives at the Fifth Congress. In 1952, at the Sixth Congress of KPJ in Zagreb, only 6 women were in the Central Committee, and their representation in local committees declined since 1948. At the Seventh Congress of KPJ in 1958, while the country's economy was flourishing and the system bragged about self-governance successes, the issue of women's participation in politics and the Party was raised again. In 1960, only 16% of women were in the Party. At the Eleventh Congress in 1978, the last one attended by Tito, women's participation in the Party rose to 23.3%, but the increase was marked as insignificant. Tito proclaimed the problem of gender inequality a class issue, but other delegates thought that the problem was more caused by primitivism and backward religious practices.²⁸⁸ It turned out later that enthusiasm and ideological mobilisation for achieving gender quality weakened with time, and they were reduced to reiteration of ideological and empty phrases that were not able to animate anyone any longer.²⁸⁹

286 Ibid.

287 See: Vojvodić, N. (2012) *Gender Analysis in Ethnic Conflict: Causes and Consequences in the case of Yugoslavia*, School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies. University College London, p. 5

288 Ramet, S. P. (1999) p. 101

289 Popov-Momčinović, Z. (2013) p. 100

Neda Božinović points out that the problem of small number of women in politics became increasingly visible only before elections and that women's participation in assemblies tended to decline by 1974. In 1974, a delegate system and a new assembly organisation were introduced, and women were elected by majority votes to associated labour councils, social-political councils, and the least to councils of municipalities and local communities. After 1990, when the multi-party system was introduced, fewer women were elected to Republic Assemblies than in 1958.²⁹⁰

In her analysis *Rodna perspektiva u novinama Antifašističkog fronta žena* [Gender Perspective in Newspapers of the Anti-Fascist Women's Front] (1945-1953), Gordana Stojaković emphasises that the AFŽ shutdown started in 1950 and ended in 1953, following unclear directives from the Third Congress held in 1950, when the issues of women's activism and workload were raised. Lidija Sklevicky concludes that the Third Congress defined the unprofessional character of the organisation as activities within the organisation soon became voluntary and previously employed members were either transferred or dismissed.²⁹¹

Apart from the transformation of the organisation, the most important topics of the Fourth AFŽ Congress held in 1953 included women's position in villages and political passivity of women. Milovan Đilas observed at the Fourth Congress that *a genuine women's equality was far away, but he emphasised that with the strengthening of democracy and women's equality in Yugoslavia, any separate political activity of women became an obstacle to achieving women's equality and activeness.*²⁹² **Vida Tomšić** also tackled the issue of AFŽ's abolishment at the Fourth Congress, explaining that AFŽ monopolised the social and political activities of women and that, as such, it became inappropriate. She viewed existing women's associations that would directly deal with women's position in society as the successors of AFŽ.²⁹³

Neda Božinović, who was a KPJ official, a fighter, and later a judge at the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Serbia testified about women's disapproval of AFŽ's abolishment. Following a visit to a village in BiH, she said: *... There was chaos, women were furious and sad when the AFŽ was abolished. They told her: You abolished our "afiža". Our men can go everywhere, to hunting or bars, and this was the only place where we could go and they could not forbid us that. And now you abolished it!*²⁹⁴

What was specific about AFŽ was that men could not, or did not, dare

290 Božinović, N. (1996) *Žensko pitanje u Srbiji u XIX i XX veku*. Devedesetčetvrta i Žene u crnom. Beograd, p. 234

291 Sklevicky, L. (1984) p. 138

292 Pantelić, I. (2011) in *Jugoslovenski feminizmi*. Petrović, J. and Arsenijević, D., Profemina, Fond B92. Beograd, p. 94

293 Ibid. 94

294 Ekonomija njege i brige izgradila je zemlju, source: <http://maz.hr/index.php/tekstovi/clanci/15-ekonomija-nege-i-brige-izgradila-je-zemlju> (May 24, 2014)

to forbid their wives to attend meetings in AFŽ, because AFŽ was defined by the statute as a part of the National Front. For this reason, many women attended its sessions, where they felt safe, exchanged ideas and opinions, educated and emancipated themselves, and were politically active.

The abolishment of AFŽ was certainly a great loss for women of Yugoslavia, while the importance and role of this organisation gradually faded and acquired various connotations. As specified by Lydia Sklevicky in the book *Žene Hrvatske u NOB-i*, [Women of Croatia in NOB] ... *some forty years after the event ... the concept of afežežjka, vague like sifražetkinja, has connotations of an eccentric relic – a type of a woman activist who is comical and a misfit.*²⁹⁵ Thus, with time, the patriarchal society diminished AFŽ's achievements and systematically changed the attainments and success of this organisation. Lidija Sklevicky also points out that, with time, AFŽ became only *a sector of the Party's work, a sector of the work at the Front.*²⁹⁶ The fact that the organisation was closing down for almost three years, leading to its final shutdown in 1953, testifies to its strength and mass-scale character.

*Immediately following liberation, in a difficult political and economic time for Yugoslavia, when people needed to survive and rebuild the country, women were the reconstruction force in several key post-war years, when the political oligarchy was not established yet. AFŽ was indeed an organisation that took care about the establishment of new life for women in the emerging socialist society.*²⁹⁷

The Union of Women's Association replaced the abolished AFŽ and, exposed to pressures from 1959 to 1961, grew into the Conference for Women's Social Activity. The Resolution on establishment of the Union of Women's Association *emphasised that the issue of women's equality was a common social issue... of all forces of mass socialist education... and that women should not form separate political organisations.*²⁹⁸ Therefore, any political associations of large numbers of women were practically impossible.

The Seventies and Second Wave of Feminism

The 1970s were important for the women's issue and feminist organisation in SFRJ. From the time of the AFŽ abolishment up to the seventies, no particular importance or attention was paid to the women's issue.

295 Sklevicky, L. (2000) *Žene Hrvatske u NOB*, in Hawkesworth, C. (2000)

296 Sklevicky, L. (1996) p. 132

297 Marčetić, I.: <http://www.kulturpunkt.hr/content/ekonomija-njege-i-brige-izgradila-je-zemlju>. (June 30, 2013)

298 Pantelić, I. (2011) *Jugoslovenski feminizmi* p. 95

However, in the mid-seventies, the second wave of feminism was slowly reaching Yugoslavia, encouraged by students' demonstrations in 1968.

*Generations of young and educated women from urban centres ... constituted the core of the new feminist movement in the early seventies ... These women had access to education and employment, but they also experienced differences between the proclaimed equality of women and men and real life.*²⁹⁹

The year 1978 was particularly important for women and the women's issue in SFRJ, because the international event *Drug-ca Žensko pitanje Novi pristup?* was organised at the Students' Cultural Centre (SKC) in Belgrade. It was the first stormy entry of feminists to the public scene in a socialist country and the first international conference on women's position in Yugoslavia. Focus on the women's issue and gender-based division of labour were underlined by a witty and sound conference slogan: *Proletarians of all countries – who washes your socks?*

Nada Ler Sofronić from Sarajevo, **Žarana Papić** who was born in Sarajevo and **Dunja Blažević** who currently lives and works in Sarajevo organised the conference. The event brought together educated and affirmed women and feminists from Zagreb, Sarajevo, Ljubljana and Belgrade, and those from Italy, France and England. The conference uncovered the hypocrisy of the regime that claimed that the "women's issue" was resolved in socialism and that women and men were equal, and that any issue of specific women's interests was proclaimed to be either bourgeois feminism or of the new leftist movement, or both at the same time.

Self-governing women were, like nowadays, beaten within four walls; they worked on less-valued positions and, like nowadays, they were squeezed out from genuine decision-making roles and, like nowadays, they were mere decoration in important governing bodies and, like nowadays, it was more or less openly suggested that the kitchen and childbirth were their main tasks.³⁰⁰

*In the seventies, Yugoslavia was the only socialist, single-party state with open borders and relatively free access to foreign magazines and programs of international academic exchange.*³⁰¹

Therefore, it was not a surprise that such a conference was organised in this socialist country. The importance of the conference lies in the fact that it dealt with women's issues and problems that nobody else in the country tackled. The new feminism of the late seventies was developing *in opposition to the state (official) feminism that denied any need for*

299 Stojičić, M. (2009) p. 113

300 Ler Sofronić, N. (2011) in Dugandžić Živanović, D. *Fragments of women's memories 1978. and today.* ProFemina. Časopis za žensku književnost i kulturu. Beograd. 2nd special edition, p. 127

301 Dević, A. *Redefining the Public-private boundary: Nationalism and Women's Activism in Former Yugoslavia*, in: *The Anthropology of East Europe Review*, vol. 15. no. 2

*autonomous women's organisations, feeling that the solution to the class issue would at the same time be a solution to the "women's issue".*³⁰² Special importance was added to the conference by *feminists from the well-developed West who told an almost identical story about the West that boasted so much about its democracy, but it was a democracy without women.*³⁰³

The conference discussed patriarchy, feminism and Marxism, feminism and psychoanalysis, identity, sexuality, language, women's invisibility in culture and science, but also women's daily life, discrimination against them in public and private spheres, the double burden imposed on women, violence against women, survival of traditional patriarchal roles despite normative solutions that guaranteed equality. This was the first publicly presented critical review of resolving the women's issue in Yugoslavia. The criticism was feminist, but not anti-socialist.³⁰⁴

It is interesting to note that a significant number of men attended the conference, which was one of the reasons for disagreements between Yugoslav and western feminists. Besides, Yugoslav feminists thought that western feminists were not sufficiently informed about the situation in Yugoslavia, while the western feminists thought that Yugoslav women were not sufficiently radical. It is even more important to mention that, owing to its advanced legislation, Yugoslavia did not attribute much importance to many issues that were important in Europe (abortion or divorce).³⁰⁵ These facts indicate that Yugoslav women enjoyed some advanced segments during the socialist era, even compared to the West, which was always deemed the most advanced and central in terms of equality for women.

As Stojičić notes, from today's perspective, the conference was of historical importance, as it brought feminism back to the public space and presented the first critical review of the "women's issue" in Yugoslavia at the time, but also due to its influence on participants and its further development of feminism. The conference was properly covered in the media and it served for association of women and creation of feminist movements in large urban centres of Yugoslavia – Zagreb, Ljubljana and Belgrade - and mutual cooperation of feminists from these centres.³⁰⁶ SOS *telephone line for women and children – violence victims* was established in Zagreb in 1988, in Ljubljana in 1989 and in Belgrade in 1990. The First Yugoslav Feminist Gathering was held in 1987 in Ljubljana, and three followed in Zagreb and Belgrade. The last one was organised in 1991 in Ljubljana. The women's movement in the wartime period was closely linked with anti-war movements, and criticism of the socialist system

302 Ibid. p. 111

303 Ibid.

304 Klaić, D. p. 116

305 Stojičić, M. (2009) p. 117

306 Ibid.

continued by criticising nationalist states.³⁰⁷ Still, it should be noted that all feminists were not anti-nationalists.³⁰⁸

Expedited Re-Patriarchalisation

As many theoreticians say, the economic crisis and decades-long failed socialist modernisation processes were the main causes of growing ethno-nationalism and nationalism, and eventually of the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the downfall of socialism. These processes had retrograde consequences for women of Yugoslavia by bringing them back into the framework of their biological role of mothers, but also to the private space – the home.

With the rise of ethno-nationalism, women lost their political importance and, with the strengthening of ethno-nationalist rhetoric, they became a mere instrument in the clutches of ethno politics, given that men – warriors – were put on a pedestal as fighters for the survival of the nation.³⁰⁹ In addition, the economic crisis and political turmoil led to mass-scale unemployment that affected men and women differently. ... men's unemployment was perceived as a source of instability that had to be changed, while women's unemployment became increasingly acceptable and justified by the nationalist leaders that would soon come in power.³¹⁰

Re-patriarchalisation that started in the late eighties continued even after the breakup of SFRJ and through armed conflicts during the nineties. Emancipation and advocacy for equality of men and women were replaced by political and social advocacy for sending women back to the private space and reaffirming their role as mothers in the reproduction of ethnic group members. As Čaušević, Hrelja and Gashi say, *with the rising nationalism, women were identified as biologically responsible for continuation of a nation/ethnic group, which resulted in initiatives for restriction of the right to planning the family and abortion.*³¹¹ Also, as Ana Dević observes in her paper *Redefining the Public-Private Boundary: Nationalism and Women's Activism in Former Yugoslavia*:

During socialism, the sphere of the private was regarded as a safe arena of anti-regime gatherings by both male and female dissidents. The

307 Ibid. p. 119

308 See the doctoral dissertation of Ana Miškovska Kajevska (2006) *Communists, Feminists and Nationalists; A Journey into the Former Yugoslavia (1941-1944)*. Master's Thesis University of Amsterdam. Faculty of Social and Bihevioural Sciences. Amsterdam

309 Popov-Momčinović, Z. (2013)

310 Vojvodić, N. (2012) p. 5-6

311 Čaušević, J., Gashi, A., Hrelja-Hasečić, DŽ, in Spahić-Šiljak, Zilka (2012) p. 95-96

celebration of women as guardians of that safe 'oppositional' space incidentally, at one point, started corresponding with the nationalist regimes' depiction of women as 'natural' links between the family and the (ethnic) nation (seen as a 'big family').³¹²

However, Yugoslav women were conquered and defeated from two sides, ... *on the one hand, they were defeated by their own nation, and ruling men took all the power from them; on the other hand, women were viewed as ultimate enemies by other ethnic groups due to their "reproduction" ability, which put them at risk of direct violence.³¹³ Nationalist ideologies in Yugoslavia shaped the nation to resemble a patriarchal family, where men had to defend the nation, and women were put aside to perform their reproduction duties.³¹⁴ Thus, as Vojvodić noticed, the position of an 'emancipated' Yugoslav woman in the nineties was put back to levels that were even lower than during the communist era.³¹⁵ The woman's role followed a retrograde path back to the role that is dominant in patriarchal societies, and equalities that were won and acquired by socialist women were quickly forgotten and annulled. The image of a working woman was quickly replaced with images of a mother or a whore and, in most cases, of a weak, passive victim.*

Women and Scientific Work in SR BIH

The University in Sarajevo developed a very broad scientific work, which had previously almost exclusively rested on the work of the National Museum and the Institute for Balkan Studies. In addition to individual faculties, scientific institutes were founded that functioned as organisational units involved in scientific work in specific areas. This scientific work expanded to other larger centres as well (Mostar, Tuzla, Banja Luka and Zenica). The "Scientific Association of BiH" (NDBiH) was established in 1951, aiming at improvement of the scientific staff and expanding the scientific work. The *BiH Academy of Science and Arts* (ANUBiH) was established on NDBiH's foundations in 1966, tasked with taking care of overall development of science and art, organising scientific research and artistic events, and publishing the works of its members and collaborators of the Academy. Interestingly, there were no women among the ANUBiH presidents. Also, not a single university in Bosnia and Herzegovina appointed women as rectors. Although their work was not sufficiently visible, numerous internationally recognised female scientists and university professors made significant contributions to science and education.

Vera Šnajder (1904-1974) was an excellent mathematician and

312 Dević, A. p. 58

313 Papić, Ž. in Vojvodić, N. (2012) p. 8

314 Lilly&Irvine in Vojvodić, N. (2012) p. 4

315 Vojvodić, N. (2012) p. 5

scientist. During her professional development at the Henri Poincaré Institute in Paris, Vera Šnajder published her first scientific work in *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des sciences*. This is also the first scientific work in the field of mathematics, published by an author born in BiH. She took part in the establishment of the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo, and especially in organising the Mathematics Course, later to become the Mathematics Department, which she led for many years. Vera Šnajder entered history as the first woman Dean in SFRJ. In the school years of 1951/52 and 1958/59, she was appointed Dean, and in 1952/53, 1957/58 and 1959/60 Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy. She was also a president of the BiH Association of Mathematicians, Physicians and Astronomers and organiser of the 4th Congress of Mathematicians, Physicians and Astronomers of Yugoslavia, held in 1965 in Sarajevo. She also published a course book for rational mechanics, which she taught for years.

Mirjana Vuković (1948) holds a PhD in mathematical science. She is the author of over one hundred expert and scientific papers, including books, collections of mathematical problems, scripts and a monograph. Vuković is the head of the Mathematics Section at the BiH Association of Mathematicians, Physicians and Astronomers, Deputy Dean for scientific and research work and education at the Faculty of Science in Sarajevo and Deputy Rector for science, research work and education of the University in Sarajevo. She received numerous awards and recognitions, including the highest-level Republic reward Veselin Masleša for her scientific work in mathematics (1987).

Smilja Mučibabić (1912-2006) was an anti-fascist, activist, scientist and author of rewarded course books for higher and secondary schools. She obtained a PhD in biological science at Cambridge University. She was one of the founders and the first Dean of the Faculty of Science in Sarajevo (1960). She was appointed Deputy Rector of the Sarajevo University between 1963 and 1965. She published articles in prominent international environmental and biological magazines. Professor Mučibabić is beyond doubt one of the pioneers of experimental and theoretical ecology.

Jelena Đorđević (1929-1988) was a full time professor of radiology at the Faculty of Medical Science in Sarajevo, a founder of the Radiotherapy Ward of the Koševo Clinical Hospital and leader of numerous scientific research projects at the Institute for Radiology and Oncology. She attended professional trainings in radiology in Japan, France, USA, England, Russia, Hungary and Romania. She is the author of more than 200 expert and scientific papers in radiology, *Lymphography* and *Radiotherapy* books, and a co-author of the course book *General Radiology*.

Zulejka Popović (1930-1991) was a full time professor of paediatrics at the Faculty of Medical Science in Sarajevo, Director of the Children's Clinic and Polyclinic *Prof. dr. Milivoje Sarvan*, Head of the Paediatrics Department at the Faculty of Medical Science in Sarajevo, President of the Paediatrics Section of the BiH Association of Doctors, a founder of the

Service for Child Allergology and Immunology in BiH and organiser of several professional and scientific events in paediatrics. She is the author of more than 100 expert and scientific papers, mostly in child allergology and immunology. She was active in the Presidency of Allergologists and Immunologists of Yugoslavia, and Presidency of Paediatricians of Yugoslavia.

The Institute for Pharmacology was also active within the Faculty of Medical Science. **Dubravka Potkonjak** (1986-2005), scientist and pharmacologist, contributed significantly to its work. Professor Potkonjak was a collaborator of Professor Pavel Štern, founder of the Institute and one of the most prolific researchers of the Faculty of Medical Science.

Jela Grujić-Vasić (1923-2009) made a significant contribution to medical chemistry. She was Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy from 1982 to 1988. She was the first Professor and Head of the Department for Pharmacognosy and Chemistry of Drugs. She published 195 scientific papers. She is also the author of a university course book and co-author of a course book and two manuals. She took part in the development of numerous scientific research projects. Jela is one of the few women ever selected to be full members of the BiH Academy of Arts and Science.

Herta Kuna (1922-2009), philologist and historian, described the corps of medieval Bosnian literature and Bosnian Franciscan literacy during the years of her scientific work. The book *Srednjovjekovna bosanska književnost* [Medieval Bosnian Literature] is the synthesis of her research on medieval Bosnia. Capital work linked with her name is *Hvalov zbornik* [The Codex of Hval] (1986). Professor Kuna encouraged the publication of *Zbornik krstjanina Hvala* [The Codex of Hval Krstjanin] (1404) manuscript, a perfectly illuminated code of the Bosnian Church. She published scientific articles and discussions in numerous publications and received several social recognitions and rewards for her work.

Zlata Grebo (1922, Trebinje) worked as a professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences in Sarajevo. She published a number of studies in demography and sociology, and her particular areas of interest were demographic policy, reproduction and the role of women in the development of society. Some of works include: *Želje i strahovanja jugoslovenske žene* [Wishes and Fears of a Yugoslav Woman] from 1965, *Ravnopravnost žene – dio borbe za socijalističko društvo* [Women's Equality – A Part of the Struggle for Socialist Society] (Sarajevo, 1969), *Materinstvo i rad – stvarna ili prividna dilema u porodici zaposlene žene* [Maternity and Work – Actual or Imaginary Dilemma in the Family of an Employed Woman] (1975), *Čovjek, rađanje i društvo* [Human Being, Birth and Society] (1975). She participated in the preparation of the census methodology in 1971 in the Federal Bureau of Statistics. She was rewarded for her work on many occasions.

Sana Salahović represented SFR Yugoslavia at the First World Conference on Women, held in Mexico City in 1975. She wrote scientific papers on women, substantiated with empirical data. The text *Scientific*

and technical –technological development and tendencies in the education of women of Yugoslavia is a reworked presentation from the International Seminar for Social Activity of Women of Yugoslavia, held in Belgrade in October 1971, attended by representatives from Algeria, Egypt, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, CSSR, Denmark, DR Germany, France, Netherlands, Italy, Canada, Hungary, Norway, Poland, Romania, Syria, SR Germany, SSSR and Switzerland. The Federal Bureau of Statistics published an overview of basic statistical indicators in the international women's year of 1975, *Woman in Economy and Society of Yugoslavia*, which was researched by Sana Salahović. Her text, *Women's Position in the Contemporary World* from 1976 also stands as important (Pregled, Sarajevo). Salahović is Zlata Grebo's sister.

Slavica Krneta (1927–2010) was a professor at the Faculty of Law in Sarajevo and a member of ANUBiH. She contributed greatly to the development of law and legal science in BiH. Her areas of interest were civil law, and copyright and industrial property. She had been a guest lecturer on numerous international universities and was involved in the drafting of a number of laws. She published regularly.

Natalija Mastilo (1930-1992) launched and edited the magazine *Nastava geografije* [Geography Class]. She was chair of the Teaching Commission of the Union of Geographic Associations of Yugoslavia and organised the 4th and 5th geographic symposia. A bibliography of her works includes several hundred items.

Desanka Kovačević-Kojić (1925) is an excellent historian. She published six books as author and around 100 scientific and expert papers. She was a collaborator of the *Encyclopedia of Yugoslavia*. She was the President of the Association of Historians of Bosnia and Herzegovina. She won numerous prizes and recognitions. In her work, she mostly studied the economic history of the Middle Ages, particularly of medieval Bosnia. She was accepted as a full member of the BiH Academy of Arts and Science.

Hanifa Kapidžić Osmanagić (1935) is a literary critic and theoretician, essayist and translator. She published a large number of studies and essays in comparative literature, French literature and literature of South Slavic peoples. She was a long standing editor in chief of *Novi izraz* magazine for criticism of literature and arts. She is a full member of ANUBiH. She was a president of PEN centre, Head of the Department for French Literature, Council Chair of the Department for Roman-Based Languages, Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo (1973-1975) and Deputy Rector of the University of Sarajevo (1985-1988).

Adila Pašalić Kreso (1944) is a pedagogist, ANUBiH member, Vice-President of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES), President of the Mediterranean Society of Comparative Education (MESCE), Editor of *Porodica i dijete* [Family and Child] magazine and Head of the Department of Pedagogy at the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo. She was Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Political Science in Sarajevo (1981-1985). She published over one hundred articles in expert

periodicals, as well as domestic and foreign magazines.

Peruničić Branislava (1936) was a scientific collaborator with the Institute for Automatics and Computer Science (IRCA), collaborator with the Institute for Computer and Information Systems (IRIS) in Energoinvest, President of the Energoinvest's Computerisation Council and a delegate of the SFRJ Council of Academies. She is the President of the BH section of the leading world Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), a full time professor at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and an ANUBiH member. She published 29 papers and a course book *Analysis of Signals and Systems* with co-author Melita Ahić-Đokić. She gave the most significant contribution in three fields: theory of systems with variable structure; digital protection, breakdown location and measuring in power systems; graph theory.



*Olga Vidović,
family album
photo*

Institutes that consolidated scientific research, expert and teaching work were active at the Faculty of Agriculture. **Olga Vidović** (1921) made a special contribution to the Institute for Farming and Plant Breeding. As a result of years of research work, Olga published the first monograph about beans in the territory of SFRJ in 1988 with Dr Jovan Todorović. Olga Vidović is one of the most prominent experts in the field of genetics and new varieties. She contributed to agricultural science and practice by creating five new varieties of beans. She used to be a full-time professor at the Faculty of Agriculture in Sarajevo and served as Vice-Rector of the University of Sarajevo. She received numerous awards for her work

and engagement.

Natalija Dozet (1923) initiated the establishment of the Section and Institute for Processing and Control of Agricultural Products and led numerous research and development projects. She was Deputy Dean and Dean at the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry. She made a special contribution to the development of the laboratory capacities of the Institute by developing numerous course books, manuals and practicums.

Ljubinka Bašović (1930-2002) is the first doctor of library science in BiH. She worked at the Central Department of the National Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1958-1971). She participated in the establishment of the Department for General Literature, Performing Arts and Library Science at the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo. With her teaching work, theoretic and expert texts, she contributed to shaping the programmes of the Library Science Course at the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo, which became a model for other library science courses in SFRJ. For her efforts in this field, she received the annual reward of the Culture Community of SR BiH in 1973. She published the books, *Biblioteke i bibliotekarstvo u BiH: 1945-1975* and *Biblioteke i bibliotekarstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini: 1918-1945.*, which brought her the highest Republic award Veselin Masleša (1987).

Marija Kon (1894-1987) – was the first woman doctor of science in BiH. Kon was originally from Vienna.³¹⁶ She and her sister Lujza were the first female graduates in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They completed grammar school in Sarajevo. Marija then completed studies of German and Slavic languages at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University in Vienna and successfully defended her PhD dissertation entitled: *German Poetry of Petar Preradović* (1916). During the period 1919-1941, she worked as a teacher in grammar schools in Mostar, Cetinje and Sarajevo. She was dismissed in 1941, and transferred to Italy in 1942. Following the capitulation of Italy in September 1943, she arrived to the liberated territory, where she worked as a teacher and Principal of the grammar school in Glina. During the period 1945-1949, she performed various functions in culture and school education in Mostar and Sarajevo. She worked as the Professor of Yugoslav literature at the Higher School of Pedagogy in Sarajevo (1949). Since the establishment of the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo in 1950, Marija Kon was one of the founders of the German Language and Literature Course and the first President of the established Department for German and English Languages. She retired in 1965. She dealt with all periods of German literature and paid special attention to translation. She published works in magazines *Život* and *Izraz*. Some of the translated books she worked on include: *J. Ch. von Grimmshausen, The Adventurous Simplizissimus, Sarajevo, 1954*; *G. Lukacs, Goethe and His Age, Sarajevo, 1956.*; *Anna Seghers, The Dead Stay Young, Sarajevo, 1959.*

Marija Đorđević (1902-1982) – the first woman from Bijeljina to become a faculty teacher and a translator. In the early 20th century, Đorđević's family owned one of the strongest trading companies in the region, and she gained the early opportunity to develop her talent for foreign languages. She completed a higher course at the Higher School of Pedagogy in Belgrade, and from 1930 to 1938, worked as French and German teacher at the Teacher Training School in Novi Sad, and then at a grammar school in Belgrade, where she also taught Russian after the Second World War. She spent 1937 and 1938 in Paris, studying the French language. From 1950 to 1965, she was German Professor at the Faculty of Forestry in Belgrade. She translated from German, French, Russian and English to Serbo-Croatian and from Serbo-Croatian to German and French. She contributed to many literary magazines with articles and reviews; she wrote a preface to her translation of Heinrich Böll's novel; she made a selection of modern Finnish poetry and prepared required notes; she also wrote texts about translation. Đorđević left a rich heritage of books to the national library Filip Višnjić in her hometown Bijeljina. She died in Belgrade.

Emina Začiragić (1940) built her career in the judiciary and as an attorney. Her political engagement started in 1980. She was a member of the Municipal Committee in Jajce when the war started. She will be

316 Source: http://bs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marija_Kon (June 1, 2014)

remembered as the first woman judge in Jajce and one of the first ten women attorneys in BiH.

Overview of Theatre Prospects

The era of self-governing and patriarchal socialism in Bosnia-Herzegovinian society was marked by the opening of theatre and film direction courses, theatres such as Pozorište mladih (Youth Theatre) (1950), Malo Pozorište (Small Theatre), and today's Kamerni Teatar '55 (Chamber Theatre) (1955), and by the more intense articulation of women's theatre creation. During this period, women directly appeared as authors, theatre theoreticians, costume designers and directors, and they achieved this with the socialist strategy of an emancipating and educational policy, which enabled future generations to have equal status in this industry. Certainly, such emancipating and educational equality was reflected in being able to study your subjects of interest, but in the representational and structural contexts, women were ideologically and numerically excluded from the theatre world when it came to direction, scripts or other forms of direct creation of fiction or narrative. This situation resulted in a dearth of women theatre directors and producers. Even in the post-Yugoslav period, this industry was deemed as "male." However, this does not mean that women did not leave any trace in the world of theatre.

Helena Uhlik-Horvat, a script writer and costume designer was born in Tuzla in 1920. She completed secondary school in Belgrade and studied painting and ballet in Zagreb. After a short engagement as a ballerina and costume designer in Belgrade, in late 1949, she transferred to the National Theatre in Sarajevo, where she was fully dedicated to costume design and scenery from 1955. She achieved her biggest successes with dramas by Robert Bolt (Thomas Moore), Arthur Adamov (Dead Souls), Miroslav Jančić (Bosanski kralj), Molière (The Middle Class Nobleman). When it comes to opera, her creations for Verdi's *Aida*, *Falstaff* and *Don Carlos*, Rajičić's *Simonida* and Wagner's *Lohengrin* were particularly notable. Among ballet premieres, Tchaikovsky (Swan Lake), Prokofiev (Romeo and Juliette) and Hristić (Ohridska legenda) were especially distinguished. Apart from her theatre work, Uhlik-Horvat successfully designed costumes for several television shows, entertainment-musical programmes and films. She received many significant rewards in costume design: the Annual Award of the BiH Association of Applied Artists and Designers (ULUPUBiH) in 1964, the 6th April Award of the City of Sarajevo in 1966, special reward from the Association of Applied Artists and Designers of Vojvodina at Sterijino pozorje in Novi Sad in 1972, the Reward of Theatre Games in Jajce in 1973 and 1974. She taught fashion drawing in Zagreb and history of scene costume in the Drama Studio in

Sarajevo. She died in Zagreb in 2007.³¹⁷

Olga Babić, leading drama actress of the National Theatre, for the role of Mary in the drama *Long Day's Journey into Night* by Eugene O'Neill she received the 6th April Reward. Likewise, **Danica Rošulj-Malkin**, leading drama actress of the National Theatre for the role of Josie Hogan in Eugene O'Neill's drama *A Moon for the Misbegotten* received the 6th April Reward in 1969.³¹⁸

Hela Volfart-Kojović was a stage designer and costume designer. She was born in Sarajevo in 1928. She completed secondary school in Vienna. After the war, in 1945, she was admitted to the prestigious Higher School of Applied Arts, where she studied for one year, and in the second year, she specialised at the Fashion Department. In 1950, she completed Secondary Painting School, and in 1953 she graduated from the Costume Design Department of the Academy of Applied Arts in Belgrade. From 1954 to 1961, she worked as a painter at the Ethnography Department of the National Museum in Sarajevo. From 1953 to 1971, she was dedicated to costume design and designed costumes for over 150 theatre plays. Apart from her work at the National Theatre in Sarajevo, she was a long-standing collaborator of Kamerni Teatar '55, Youth Theatre and Puppet Theatre in Sarajevo. Her most important costume designs for drama premieres at the National Theatre in Sarajevo are: Nušić (Sumnjivo lice, Gospođa ministarka, Protekcija), Chekhov (Uncle Vanja), Krleža (Gospoda Glembajevi, Kome zvono zvoni), Selimović (Tvrđava), Bizet (Carmen), Verdi (Nabucco), Gounod (Faust)... **Folfart-Kojović** was the first educated costume designer in Bosnia-Herzegovinian theatres. She received numerous rewards and recognitions for her social and professional work: 1971 – reward from the Association of Professional Theatres of BiH for the best scene design at the First Encounter of Puppet Theatres of BiH in Mostar; 1971 – Charter for extraordinary credits and contribution to history of the National Theatre in Sarajevo; 1977 – 6th April Reward of the City of Sarajevo for the entire play *Omer Pasha Latas*; 1979 – Recognition for the most successful work at the annual exhibition of ULUPUBiH. She currently lives in Vienna.³¹⁹

Gordana Muzaferija, a dramaturge, was born in 1948 in Oštarije, (Croatia). She completed elementary school and grammar school in Visoko. She graduated and obtained master's degree and PhD on the topic: *National Poem as an Inspiration in Yugoslav Drama Creation* at the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo, where she taught Croatian literature as a full time professor. She started her university career as an assistant at the Academy of Performing Arts in Sarajevo more than 20 years ago. She was also appointed full time professor of history of South Slavic drama and

317 Abdičević, A. (2002) *Scena i kostim*, Sarajevo, Muzej književnosti i pozorišne umjetnosti BiH

318 Source: <https://www.facebook.com/HistorijskiArhivSarajevo/posts/660188477366890> (July 3, 2014)

319 Abdičević, A. (2002)

theatre. She published many literary-historical and dramatological – theatrological works, and two books of drama texts by Alija Isaković with exhaustive prefaces. She also wrote two monograph studies: *Činiti za teatar* and *Kazališne igre Mire Gavrana*. She published around one hundred expert and scientific papers and took part in numerous Slavic studies events, symposia and conferences in the country and abroad. She appeared as guest professor at faculties in Mostar, Tuzla, Rijeka, Innsbruck and Halle, and became a collaborator with Miroslav Krleža Institute of Lexicography and Croatian Academy of Science and Art in Zagreb. She participated in the development of theatre encyclopaedia “Larousse – Bordas”, as expert in Bosnia-Herzegovinian theatre. She regularly participated in annual symposia organised by Sorbonne Paris in South Slavic centres. She died in Visoko in 2008. Gordana Muzaferija is one of the rare authors who was included in canon anthology selections of the publishing company Alef³²⁰, edited by Enes Duraković. This extensive project of anthological valuation, obviously undertaken with the dual intention to preserve and strengthen Bosniak identity on the one hand and to confront the destructive power of the war machinery for destroying symbolic properties as the foundations of development of BiH society, on the other hand, inadvertently shows us the other side of the medal of symbolic violence. It does not always require mortars, but only the *knowledge* and submission of those who put up with it. The prevailing criteria for construction of the Bosniak literary corps and BiH canon are certainly nationally defined, but writers and critics get some more space in the former, in accordance with the supplementary criterion of cultural memory, while only one female author had the honour to participate in the selection for the latter. Gordana Muzaferija is recognised as an expert in dramatic literature. **Bisera Alikadić**, **Mubera Pašić**, **Jozefina Dautbegović** and **Ferida Duraković** were selected as female poets, and the Anthology of BiH Narration in the 20th Century only singles out one female narrator – **Alma Lazarevska**.³²¹ Gordana Muzaferija died in Visoko.

Overview of Literary Prospects

Analysing the history of domestic and world literatures; creating personal literary experiences, distorting the *understandable by itself* concepts of tradition and expanding limits of discourse, developing new poetics within the literary expression: these traits characterise women’s literary creation in the Yugoslav era. The characteristics of this era actually form the basis of women’s literary creation in BiH and other parts of the (post)

320 See: Muzaferija, G., Rizvanbegović, F., Vujanović, V. (1995) *Antologija bosanskohercegovačke drame XX vijeka*, Sarajevo, Alef

321 Moranjak-Bamburač, N. (2003) *Signature smrti i etičnost ženskog pisma* in Sarajevske sveske, 2, Sarajevo: Mediacentar, p. 113-123

Yugoslav region and have opened the door to new generations of female writers following the breakup of SFRJ. Key female authors in the SFRJ period included: **Dara Sekulić** (1931), **Nasiha Kapidžić-Hadžić** (1932-1995), **Vojka Đikić** (1932), **Marina Trumić** (1939-2007), **Bisera Alikadić** (1939), **Jasmina Musabegović** (1941), **Mubera Pašić** (1945) and **Jozefina Dautbegović** (1948-2008).

Women authors are mostly chronologically placed in this period, as this is the time when they published the majority of their works, when they made much greater impact and were much more subversive in contextual meaning. However, some authors placed in this era continued writing in post-Yugoslav BiH as well (Trumić, Dautbegović, Musabegović), and some continue still, like Bisera Alikadić.

Bisera Alikadić (1939, Livno) is a BiH writer who actually marked the beginning of the literary-artistic value of women's literary creation³²² and of a clearly articulated *feminine-feminist* literature, as Grosz understands it. Borders between these two categorisations are not self-understandable³²³ when it comes to literary poetics by Alikadić or dominant topics in her works. The key topic in her extensive literary opus is certainly the construction of the female subject and/or identity; she actually places the experience and conditions for emergence of women's subjectivity at the centre of her literary narrative. Alikadić directly dealt with feminist articulations and unravelled misogynous and patriarchal representations of female characters and female experience in BiH and Yugoslav literature. In her literary works, she raised the issue of an objectionable female figure, femininity as otherness, female corporeality, patriarchal fear from female sexuality, inter-textual reliance on overall experience of world and domestic literature and literary tradition, and unravelling the myths about female and male representations in poetry or prose. With the appearance of Bisera Alikadić, practices that led to understanding female sexuality within patriarchal frameworks were scrutinised. She often depicted male characters as insecure, scared, submissive and grotesque. Since her first novel *Larva*, published in 1979 (although it should have been published in 1966, but its printing was postponed due to over-erotising in the novel), Alikadić actually determined the topics of her works, either in poetry or prose. *What can be determined as one of the important feminist-literary preoccupations is the very effort to return dignity to figures like Eve, Antigone, Medea, etc. and the value that was being established outside the stiff patriarchal binary oppositions.*³²⁴ It is deemed symptomatic that literary critics³²⁵ from this Yugoslav epoch often viewed Alikadić as a

322 This literary and theoretical classification refers not only to Bisera Alikadić, but also Jozefina Dautbegović, Mubera Pašić and Marina Trumić.

323 See: Demiragić, A. (2006) *Revizija romana Larva i Krug Bisere Alikadić* in *Sarajevske sveske*, 13, Sarajevo: Mediacentar, p. 369-379

324 Demiragić, A. (2006)

325 Particularly the literary criticism of Zilhad Ključanin; see: Ključanin, Z. *Vrtovi naslada*

mediocre author, an erotic writer who suffered due to her inability to become a mother, and always observed her literary texts as a reflection of her personal experience, as if nothing other than *the personal* existed. In other words, this criticism represents a completely misogynous understanding, in which the writer is never able to distance herself from the text/body or rationalise it, because the author is allegedly inseparable from her text just by being a woman. Like Ugrešić in Croatia, Alikadić was striving to explain that literature did not necessarily arise from life, but from literature itself, i.e. from the desire for writing - to separate her writing from mere imitation of life. Although she never publicly declared herself a feminist, her engagement was completely *feminist*, rather than *feminine*. With the appearance of **Bisera Alikadić, Dubravka Ugrešić, Jasmina Tešanović, Mubera Pašić, Marina Trumić and Jozefina Dautbegović** it became quite clear that literature was no longer exclusively male business in the South Slavic trans-literary community. Bisera Alikadić laid the foundations for the period of socialist-self-governing and patriarchal socialism in Bosnia and Herzegovina and made an enormous impact on contemporary BiH and Yugoslav women's creativity in general. Bisera Alikadić published two novels, several books of poetry, tales and poems for children, a novella and three radio dramas. Her works are included in several reading lists in BiH. Alikadić is a member of the BiH Writers' Association. Her poetry books include: *Intonacije* (with S. Kabiljoand T. Šipovac, 1959), *Noć i čilibar* (1972), *Kapi i mahovina* (1975), *Drhtaj vučice* (1981), *Raspeće* (1986), *Izabrane pjesme* (1988), *Dok jesam ciganka* (1991), *Ne predajem se* (1994), *Grad hrabrosti / City of Courage* (bilingual, 1995), *Knjiga vremena* (1999), *Ludi kamen* (2002)³²⁶

Safeta Obhodaš (1951), Pale, Sarajevo - is a writer of BiH and the BiH diaspora. From 1980 to 1992, she published radio-dramas and stories and received several awards for them, as well as a book *Žena i tajna* in Sarajevo. Since 1992, she has lived and worked in Germany, and has been particularly engaged in presenting BiH culture to the German cultural community. She has also been engaged in advocating for better positions and educational opportunities for Muslims in Europe. This includes numerous literary events, visits to German schools, and projects with German and Bosnian colleagues. She writes and publishes in German.³²⁷

Vojka Smiljanić-Đikić (1932, Varcar Vakuf) – a poet, translator, editor of *Sarajevske sveske* and *Treći program Radio Sarajeva* magazines. She graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. In 1975, she received an award from the BiH Association of Translators. As the wife of an ambassador Osman Đikić, she lived in Algeria and Finland and spent several years in London. Her published books are as follows: Poetry – *Pjesme*,

Bisere Alikadić in Alikadić, B. (1988) *Pjesme*, Sarajevo: Veselin Masleša, p. 5-21

326 Sources: http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bisera_Alikadi%C4%87 and <http://www.sveske.ba/bs/autori/b/bisera-alikadic> (June 28, 2014)

327 Source: <http://www.safetaobhodjas.de/index.html> (June 29, 2014)

(Sarajevo, 1966), *Tkači vetrova* (prva književna komuna, Mostar, 1987), *Prepelica* (Sarajevo, 1977) and *Zid* (Sarajevo 2000).³²⁸

Dara Sekulić (1931, Kordunjski Leskovac), a poet. Sekulić attended grammar schools in Italy, Split, Sisak and Karlovac. She moved to Sarajevo in 1953 and completed Higher School for Social Workers. Since 1992, she has lived in East Sarajevo. She published around thirty books. She received the *Avramov štap* award.³²⁹

Razija Handžić, a writer – curator for literary collections in the City of Sarajevo Museum. In 1955, she presented the idea of a Museum of Literature and Theatrical Arts that was established in 1961.

Ajša Zahirović (1942, Sarajevo) – a poet, editor of the first anthology of Bosnia-Herzegovinian women's poetry, published in 1985, which mentions 40 female poets and another 50 women in culture.³³⁰

Marina Trumić (1939) – a writer and translator. She was born in Belgrade, but spent most of her career in Sarajevo. She published books of prose: *Između mene i tebe* (stories, 1971), *Daleko proljeće* (stories, 1971), *Lirski dnevnik Marije Wisniewske* (novel), *Čeznje i daljine* (travelogues, 1979), *Ime puta* (travelogues, 1987), *Mome poštaru s ljubavlju* (1995), *Živi glas umjetnika* (interviews with writers, 2005). She also published several books of poetry: *Između Varšave i Sarajeva*, 1999, *Cipele za Mona Lizu*, 2009. Several of her books were translated into Polish, the language from which she has translated for years. By translating works of the most important Polish poets, Trumić made a significant contribution towards introducing this large European literature in our language speaking area. She has translated works of Czesław Miłosz, Wisława Szymborska, Tadeusz Rozewicz, Dawid Warszawski, Ewa Lipska and many others. She received the award of the BiH Union of Journalists in 1968 and an award from the Republic of Poland – Tribute for Culture of Poland.³³¹

Jasmina Musabegović (1941, Vogošća) – a novelist and essayist. Musabegović graduated in South Slavic literature and French language in Sarajevo. She writes novels and essays and translates from French. In 1980, she published the book *Snopis*, and *Skretnice* in 1986; *Žene i glasovi* in 1994, and a novel *Most* in 1996. In her opus, she was focused on the position of BiH women. She worked in *Svjetlost* in Sarajevo as editor of the library of foreign literatures.³³²

In her book *Voices in the Shadows; Women and Verbal Art in Serbia*

328 Source: <http://www.penbih.ba/kojeko/djikicv.htm> (June 29, 2014)

329 Source: <http://radiotrebince.com/pjesnikinja-dara-sekulic-zena-zmaj/> and http://sr.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%94%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%B0_%D0%A1%D0%B5%D0%BA%D1%83%D0%BB%D0%B8%D1%9B (June 29, 2014)

330 Hawkesworth, C. (2000)

331 Source: <http://www.radiosarajevo.ba/novost/111951/odrzana-promocija-knjige-uspomen-marini-trumic> (June 28, 2014)

332 Source: http://bs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jasmina_Musabegovi%C4%87. i <http://www.abras-media.info/content/jasmina-musabegovi%C4%87-%E2%80%9E%C5%BEena-u-vihoru-historije%E2%80%9C> (June 29, 2014)

and *Bosnia*, author Celia Hawkesworth also mentions many other women poets and writers from BiH who found their place in this book, but also those who did not, including **Melika Salihbegović** (1945).

Women and Film in SR BiH

Analysis of gender relations and identities constructed in Yugoslav films uncovers the domination of male authorship and representation of female characters as a visual spectacle. Women are represented as passive objects, bearers and not creators of meaning. There is an evident lack of female characters who may serve as positive role models with enhancing or emancipating effects. As Dubravka Ugrešić puts it: *For fifty years, Yugoslav movies were made by almost exclusively male directors, reinforcing one and the same female character for years. Viewed from this perspective, the Yugoslav film presents a deep and devastating truth about the picture of women in the head of a Yugoslav man.*³³³ Yugoslav film representations reproduce the patriarchal absence of female symbolism, abundant with systemic depictions of tortures, rape and silencing of women.³³⁴ *The female body is either infantilised, humiliated, beaten, dead or maternalised.*³³⁵

Jumping out of the matrix, female views and cravings were usually punished. This is most evidently shown through the example of *Badema*, a protagonist of the awarded movie *Kuduz* (1989), directed by Ademir Kenović and written by Abdulah Sidran. *Badema* (Snežana Bogdanović) impersonates the stereotype of a dangerous adulteress, a confirmed non-mother and untameable woman with *too fast a heart*, who deserves punishment. *No man can fight against an unknown and invisible force* - these words of Bećir Kuduz (Slobodan Custić), a romanticised tragic hero and caring father, whose only sin was that he *loved Badema so much that he had to kill her*. *Badema* was punished with death for *provoking* the limits of the private sphere and of traditionally imposed femininity. Her death is legitimised with the last words, pronounced by a man, rather than herself: *Bećo, I cannot stay in one place. I yell: "Stop, Badema! Where to so fast?" but my legs keep going on their own, far away. That's me. There is nothing I can do about it! It's good that you killed me!*³³⁶

Women in Yugoslav film are mostly presented either as fetishised and fatal temptresses in the shadow of a male hero, or as passive, weak or emotionally fragile, representatives of high society or marginalised groups.³³⁷

333 Ugrešić, D. (1994) *Jer mi smo dečki* in *Kruh i ruže* 1, p. 30-35

334 *Ibid.* p. 12

335 *Ibid.*

336 From *Kuduz* (1989), directed by Ademir Kenović, SR BiH, Bosna film

337 Additional film suggestions: *Major Bauk* (1951), *Šolaja* (1955), *Hanka* (1955), *Vrata oštaju otvorena* (1959), *Neka daleka svjetlost* (1969), *Horoskop* (1969), *Devetnaest djevojaka i jedan mornar* (1971), *Deveto čudo na istoku* (1972), *Azra* (1988), *Ovo malo duše* (1991).

They are put in the traditional place of an object of love or hatred, instead of a subject of the narrative or discourse. This expresses the belief that only such fate is *natural* for the female gender.³³⁸ Female characters are reduced to the traditional dichotomy of virgin/whore, moral/immoral, humble/seductive. They impersonate prostitutes, women of questionable morality and social outcasts or quiet, obedient mothers, wives and sisters, who are politically passive and uninterested. Constructing the figure of a woman-mother serves as the strongest ideological, cultural and propaganda weapon in forming the state-nation.³³⁹ The nation is presented in a woman's body, while the hero of the nation is a man by definition. A very limited spectrum of female characters is enhanced with sadistic voyeurism, fetishisation and degradation of sexualised female bodies. *Rape was one of the most common motifs in Yugoslav movies in late sixties; the main types of women – a mother in black, a prostitute/singer, a raped girl – were presented in both Yugoslav war movies and more contemporary ones.*³⁴⁰

The female body is viewed as an object of voyeuristic observing and fetishisation. Apart from its contribution to the construction of identity, film also produces the identity of a woman who is always subordinated to somebody or something. In misogynous films of famous Yugoslav cinematography, the status of a woman as a second-class human being is implied.³⁴¹ Women are mostly depicted as an impersonation of a stereotype and of male, most often heterosexual, longing. The camera is treated as the replacement eye of a male viewer, reinforcing the traditional gazing balance, where a man is the powerful owner of the gaze, and the woman is a passive image, the raw material of his desire. Regarding the passive state of *being watched*, Mulvey says: *In their traditionally exhibitionist roles, women were observed and shown at the same time and, given that their appearance is shaped to achieve a strong visual and erotic impact, one can say that, as such, they connote viewing figures.*³⁴² De Lauretis makes a significant contribution to the analysis of the gaze technology, stating that the gender subject is designed with the help of various discourses and gender technologies that control the area of social meanings and thus create, promote and impose gender representations.

The Academy of Performing Arts in Sarajevo (ASU) was opened in 1981. **Razija Lagumdžija** (1925 – 1995) was its first Dean during the establishment of this high education institution, and in two further mandates

338 Bogojević, M. (2012) *The Beauty of Gender Sin*: Politics of Representation and Gender Masquerading in Yugoslav Auteur Film. Camera Lucida, 8, p. 11

339 Slapšak, S. (2002) *Identities Under Threat on the Eastern Borders in Griffin*, G. and Braidotti, R. Thinking Differently: A Reader in European Women's Studies, London & New York: Zed Books, p. 153

340 Slapšak, S. (2000) *Žensko telo u jugoslovenskom filmu: status žene, paradigma feminizma* in Arsić, B. *Žene, slike, izmišljaji*, Beograd: Centar za ženske studije, p. 135

341 Ugrešić in Omeragić, M. (2013) *Da li je moguća de/balkanizacija rodova? Kaženjene progovaraju* in Sarajevske sveske, 41-42; source: <http://sveske.ba/en/content/da-li-je-moguca-debalkanizacija-rodova-kaznjene-progovaraju> (May 28, 2014)

342 Mulvey, L. (2003) *Vizuelno zadovoljstvo i narativni film*. Razlika, 3-4, p. 5

(1981 – 1986). She was also Dean of the Academy of Pedagogy from 1980 to 1982. The award that has been bestowed on teachers and collaborators of the Academy since 2001 for the best results achieved in teaching, art and science nowadays carries the name of Razija Lagumdžija.

The eighties, as the most important and most prolific era of BiH cinematography up to that time, were marked by the first featured film directed by a woman – *Prkosna delta* (1980), Vesna Ljubić. **Vesna Ljubić** (1938) is a director, script writer and producer. She graduated from the Philosophy Department of the Faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo, and studied directing at the prestigious academy Centro sperimentale di cinematografia (CSC) in Rome. She worked as assistant to Italian director and script writer Federico Fellini, who had a strong influence on her development and film expression. Fellini's influence is particularly evident in *Prkosna delta* and *Posljednji skretničar uzanog kolosijeka*.³⁴³ Vesna Ljubić always tried to remain faithful to her film expression, regardless of dominant trends. Her films deal with the lives of ordinary people, their poverty and endurance despite adversity, and the ways of negotiating relations between the sexes.³⁴⁴ Vesna Ljubić made featured films and documentaries in Italy, SFRJ and India. Some of the best known include: *Bosanska rapsodija na rubu znanosti*, *Adio Kerida*, *Posljednji skretničar uzanog kolosijeka*, *Prkosna delta*, *Simha*, *Putovanje* and *Ecce Hommo*. Vesna Ljubić received an award for the best script for movies *Prkosna delta* (1980) and *Posljednji skretničar uzanog kolosijeka* (1987), and the award for best director for a short featured film *Iluzionisti* at the Festival of Documentaries in Belgrade. Radio-Television Sarajevo proclaimed *Simha* (1971) the film of the year. Indeed it was bought by many television stations in the Western Europe, which was rare in socialist Yugoslavia. Ljubić was also the editor of the Documentary-Drama Programme Desk of the BiH Federation Radio. Her travelogue about Hawaii is also well known. Ljubić is still engaged in documentary work.

As for actresses, women directors and script writers who made substantial contributions to BiH cinematography from 1941 to 1991, mention must be made of **Mirjana Zoranović**, a director, script writer and costume designer whose opus includes over twenty documentaries, most notably the short documentaries *Ana* (1984), *Revizor* (1983) and *Priča za odrasle* (1982); a script writer **Zlata Kurt**, best known for her script for the film *Azra* (1988); one of the most important BiH actresses, **Nada Đurevska** (1952), who played distinguished roles in *Miris dunja* (1982), *Igmanski marš* (1983), *Hasanaginica* (1983) and the TV series *Aleksa Santić* (1990); and film, theatre and television actresses **Semka Sokolović-Bertok** (1935-2008), **Ines Fančović** (1925-2011), **Jasna Ornela Bery** (1954) and **Jasna Diklić** (1946).

343 Aitken, I. (2011) *The Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of the Documentary Film*, New York: Routledge, p. 562

344 Ibid.

Women in BiH Art

Radmila Jovandić-Đapić, (1946) Sarajevo. In 1971, Jovandić-Đapić graduated from the Faculty of Applied Arts and Design in Belgrade, and in 1976 she completed post-graduate studies at the same Faculty and organised the first independent exhibition at *Grafički kolektiv*. From 1973 to 1992, she was firstly assistant, then a docent and eventually an associate professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Sarajevo. In 1992, she specialised in lithography and deep print for three semesters at the High School of Art and Industrial Design (UMPRUM) in Prague. From 1998 to 2001, she worked as a teacher in the School for decoration and porcelain shaping (AFPI) in Limoges, France. She is a member of ULUBIH/ULUPUBIH/Maison des Artristes, France. She has lived in France since 1992. As an independent artist, she works and explores in fine and applied arts and animates graphics courses.

Nada Pivac (1926-2008), Čapljina - an award winning BiH painter and pedagogist, and member of the Association of Visual Artists of BiH from 1960. She graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade in 1953, and in 1955 she completed post-graduate studies in Professor Nedeljko Gvozdenović's class. She was one of the founders of the Academy of Visual Arts in Sarajevo and the Academy of Visual Arts in Široki Brijeg, where she was a teacher. She received numerous awards for her work. The most important include: a plaque of the University for her contribution to its development, the 6th April Award of the City of Sarajevo, annual award of ULUBiH, "Collegium artisticum" painting award, award from the Republic Culture Community of BiH and many others. She died in Sarajevo in 2008.³⁴⁵

Emira Turnadžić (1955)³⁴⁶, Zagreb – a painter. In 1979, Turnadžić graduated from the Academy of Visual Arts in Sarajevo. Upon graduation, she worked for two years at the Master Painter Workshop of Ljubo Ivančić and Nikola Reiser and taught painting at the Academy in Sarajevo. In 1981, she received an award at the 11th Youth Biennale in Rijeka and the Collegium Artisticum painting award in Sarajevo. She lives and works in Ljubljana.

Rajka Merćep (1904-1961), Bileća – a sculptor and pottery artist, the only female artist from BiH who succeeded in having a significant career between the two wars. Merćep spoke six foreign languages. She was very well educated and went almost unnoticed in BiH. After the First World War, she moved to Sarajevo with her family; as a very young girl, she was interested in literature, theatre, philosophy and visual arts. She received her first sculpting instructions from Ivo Despić and Ante Matković, and

345 Memento Exhibition by Nada Pivac Kristijan Kreković Gallery, source: <http://tuzla.danas.info/2009/03/16/izlozba-slika-nade-pivac-memento-u-galeriji-kristijan-krekovic/> (June 28, 2014)

346 *Primarske Novice*; source: <http://www.primorske.si/Kultura/Slikar-ne-resuje-sveta-Izpoveduje-sebe-.aspx> (June 28, 2014)

then went to Zagreb to continue her education at the Academy with Ivan Meštrović. She decided to live in Paris where, along with sculpting she also attended pottery courses. She studied at *Academie Colarossi* i *Academie de la Grande Chaumiere*. In 1930, she achieved her first success with the *Lik Azije* bust at the Salon of the Independent. Critics of this work described the *male courage* in Rajka. Between 1935 and 1937, she returned to Sarajevo. However, due to her husband's business failures, they lost all their possessions and moved back to Paris, where she spent the rest of her life organising exhibitions in Parisien parlours. Merćep regularly participated in exhibitions of Yugoslav artists in Paris and other places, thus maintaining contact with her homeland. She also made sculptures in stone, terracotta and brass, with noticeable interest in forms of the female body and moves. She also made drawings accentuating the sculpture form, mass and shape. Rajka's drawings belong to the best realisations of this kind in BiH art.³⁴⁷

Lujza Kuzmić Mijić, (1889-1959), Sarajevo – Kuzmić Mijić left a significant trace in the development of Bosnia-Herzegovinian painting. Following completion of Girls' High School, she enrolled at a private painting course with Professor Jan Karel in 1906. In 1907, she went to Vienna to study painting. Following private course with professor Robert Schaeffer, she attended the Artistic School for Women. This school was far more liberal than the Academy, which left some trace and influence on Lujza's work, bringing her closer to Plenerists and Impressionists. Her career was thus at the very beginning oriented towards more modern flows of art. In the late twenties and early thirties of the 20th century, Lujza was at the very peak of her artistic maturity, painting portraits, landscapes and nature mort. *Blažuska kolonija* played decisive role in this, which she attended in the early twenties. This guided her towards modern visual art, fauvism, expressionism, and Cézanne in particular. Lujza adopted Cézanne's model of building form and colour organisation, which is evident from her nature mort works. Critics attributed *female* painting qualities to her works in exhibitions in Osijek and Sarajevo. Lujza thus, *guided by patriarchal moral norms, at the very peak of her artistic career abandoned painting in 1927 and exclusively dedicated herself to her family and husband, the distinguished painter Karlo Mijić*. Her modest opus now includes around twenty oil paintings, some fifteen drawings and several watercolour paintings.³⁴⁸

Memnuna Vila Bogdanić (1934-2004), Mostar – a Bosnia-Herzegovinian artist. In 1955, she completed the school of applied arts in Sarajevo, and in 1960 she graduated from the Academy of Visual Arts in Belgrade. In 1962, she completed post-graduate studies at the same Academy, in the department for graphics. From 1971 to 2004, she lived and worked in Perth, Australia. She had several independent and

347 Vujković, S. (2009) p. 73-77

348 Vujković, S. (2009) p. 61-65

collective exhibitions. She died in Perth in 2004.³⁴⁹

Ljiljana Molnar-Talajić³⁵⁰ (1938-2007), Bosanski Brod – prima-dona of Sarajevo opera until 1975. Molnar-Talajić was opera primadona of the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb until 1980. She completed solo singing studies at the Academy of Music in Sarajevo in 1961 and post-graduate studies in 1963. She appeared at the opera stage for the first time during her studies in Sarajevo in 1959, playing Countess in Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*. She sang at the Sarajevo opera for fifteen years, and from 1975 to 1980 she was primadona of Zagreb opera. She was rewarded for her Cho Cho San in 1967 in Tokyo, and in 1969 she received an award for *Aida* at Maggio Musicale in Florence and became the world primadona. After that, she appeared on some of the largest world stages: national opera in Vienna, Scala in Milan, Covent Garden in London, and Metropolitan in New York. She died in Zagreb in 2007.

Nada Ludvig-Pečar (1929-2008) – a composer – born in Sarajevo, she started her music education in 1939, and continued in 1945 (interrupted by the Second World War) at the department for musical theory and pedagogy of the National School of Music. She completed school in 1953, when she produced her first composed works for piano: Suite in G mol, G flat and E mol, and Prelude and Fugue. In 1955, she enrolled at the music academy, first for a conducting course, and then for a composition course in 1957. In 1959, she transferred to the Academy of Music in Ljubljana (Akademija za glasbo). In 1962, she completed regular studies and post-graduate studies in 1966. She started working immediately after completion of the Secondary School of Music as teacher of piano and theory classes at the Lower School of Music. Following completion of *Akademija za glasbo*, she continued teaching theory classes at the Secondary School of Music. In both of these schools, she was known as an excellent and favourite pedagogue, confirmed by her diplomas and acknowledgements, and especially by her pupils, many of whom chose a musical profession thereafter. She was appointed teacher of musical forms at the Music Academy in 1969. Having passed regular selection steps at the Academy, she was appointed regular professor in 1984. From 1965-1966 she was an editor of music at TV Sarajevo and also taught at the Academy of Pedagogy for a short time. Apart from her composing and pedagogical work, Nada was also active as a writer and co-author of expert papers that were presented at folklore and music therapy events, course books for pupils and teachers in music education, and also as editor of radio and TV shows and author of articles and studies in expert publicist writing. She was a member of BiH Association of Composers (UKBiH) from 1953, and President of the Association from 1981 to 1982. Ludvig-Pečar was also a member of SOKOJ (Organisation of Musical Authors) Presidency from 1982 to 1984. For all the above work, she was awarded

349 Source: http://bs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memnuna_Vila_Bogdani%C4%87 (June 26, 2014)

350 Source: http://bs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ljiljana_Molnar-Talaji%C4%87 (June 26, 2014)

a Plaque with the Diploma of the University in Sarajevo, a Diploma on the occasion of celebrating the 20th anniversary of the elementary school of music *Vojislav Vučković* and a Diploma for achieved results in music classes from the Elementary Education Community Sarajevo (1971). She retired in 1989. After returning to post-war Sarajevo from the USA with impaired health and devastated by her husband's death, she went on to Vienna to her daughter Judita where she eventually died in 2008. Her creation left a significant mark on an epoch and started women's contribution to overall composition in contemporary BiH.

Anđelka Bego-Šimunić (1941) - born in Sarajevo, where she completed secondary school of music at the department for piano, the Grammar School and Academy of Music. She completed composition studies at the Academy of Music in Sarajevo in 1967, and post-graduate studies in 1973. From 1969, she worked as teacher of harmony, counterpoint, solfeggio and theory of music at the Secondary School of Music. From 1973/74 to 1975, she was a part-time assistant, and from 1975, she was permanently employed at the Academy of Music in composition and orchestration courses, and also occasionally taught at musical theory classes. She was a member of UKBiH from 1965 and its President from 1986 to 1992. She was one of the initiators of the important pre-war festival Days of Musical Creation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. From 1978 to 1987, she was editor in chief of *Zvuk* magazine. She was Deputy Dean of the Academy of Music from 1987 to 1989. She first introduced herself to the audience in 1966 with her piece *Allegretto Scherzoso* for symphony orchestra, performed by the the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Sarajevo. Her piece *Sonatina in Es* was performed in the same year, and in 1971, a concert for piano and orchestra was performed by pianist Milica Šnajder and the Symphony Orchestra of RTV Sarajevo.

Rada Nuić (1942), Tuzla – a composer. Nuić graduated from the department for theory and pedagogy and enrolled in a composition course. She spent her career as musical editor at Radio Sarajevo from 1971 to 1992 and Radio of BiH Federation until 2007. With several compositions in the domain of radiophonic music and mixed electronic, Nuić included Sarajevo in a circle of radio stations that nourished radiophonic music. She presented Yugoslavia and BiH with her radiophonic compositions at prestigious *Prix Italia* and *Prix mouflon* competitions and at the festival of electroacoustic creation in Stockholm. She also worked on television as a host, script writer and music author. She is the author of music for theatre plays and four films. She was awarded for the best theatre music at BiH theatre festivals. She received several awards for her artistic work on Republic competitions and the Yugoslav Radio Festival in Ohrid. Nuić also wrote prolifically for daily newspapers and *Oslobođenje*, *Večernje novine*, *Stećak*, *Zora Cankarjeva*, *Lichtungen* (Graz), *Bosanska pošta* (Oslo) magazines. She lives and works in Sarajevo.

Julija Pejnović (1903-1987) was an opera singer, a soprano and actress who left an indelible mark on the artistic scene of Banja Luka. She

taught piano and solo singing classes at the Musical School in Banja Luka. She lived for music and for her pupils.³⁵¹

Savka Krčmar has been a member of the Association of Visual Artists of BiH since 1983 and winner of the golden diploma for painting at the 6th exhibition of Yugoslav portraits in 1987. She completed the secondary school of arts in Sarajevo, and graduated from the Faculty of Visual Arts in Beograd. For years, she took part in annual exhibitions of the Association of Visual Artists of BiH, *Mali format*. In her youth, she was also a parachutist. She lives and paints in Sarajevo.

Three Women in Popular Culture

Silvana Armenulić (Zilha Bajraktarević) (1931-1976), Dobož – one of the biggest stars of folk music in former Yugoslavia, with many *golden* and *silver* records, sold in large numbers. She acted in several movies and feature series, mostly as a singer. She was killed in a car crash in October 1976. According to some estimates, more than two million recordings of her songs have been issued to date.

Izeta Beba Selimović (1939-1982) – born in Trebinje, one of the most popular and best singers of *sevdalinka* in BiH. She arrived in Sarajevo in 1943, where she completed her school education. She started her singing career in 1957 at Radio Sarajevo and quickly gained popularity. She dedicated her entire career to the original *sevdalinka* and preserved its originality, free of any modernisation. She received *Povelja Zlatne značke RTVSA*, Honorary Oscar for life's work (Tuzla 2008), and many other acknowledgements and charters for musical success and selfless charity through humanitarian concerts.

Jadranka Stojaković (1950) was born in Sarajevo. Stojaković first appeared as an independent performer in 1968 at the festival *Mladi pjevaju proljeću*. She played acoustic guitar and harmonica. She graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Sarajevo. In the late seventies, she started interpreting *sevdalinka* songs and Desanka Maksimović's poetry with a new musical arrangement. She also produced applied music for television (children's shows of TV Sarajevo) and wrote the introductory theme for the 14th Sarajevo Winter Olympic Games in 1984. From 1988, she lived and worked in Japan, and she returned to Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2012. From the seventies onwards, she performed in many musical festivals in Sarajevo, Zagreb, Opatija and Belgrade. She took part in the Yugoslav contest for Eurosong in 1972.³⁵² She issued four LP albums and many deem her the best known BiH and Yugoslav songwriter of pop

351 Source: <http://www.6yka.com/novost/47980/upoznajte-zene-iz-proslosti-koje-su-zaduzile-banjaluku>

352 Sources: <http://www.jadrankastojakovic.com/> and http://bs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jadranka_Stojakovi%C4%87 (July 12, 2014)

music and author of numerous urban chansons and evergreens in the seventies and eighties.

A Note About Sports

Sports prospects were not discussed above, although successful women certainly existed in this area who moved the limits. Below is a part of an interview³⁵³ with Milkica Milojević – one of the first women referees in BiH and SFRJ. Milkica Milojević³⁵⁴ is now a journalist and long standing activist in the feminist movement. We cite her words below, because they provide a wider picture about women's position in a men's sport such as soccer.

At the time when young people start showing interest in a hobby, when everyone searches for themselves in something, I was attracted to soccer and refereeing, Milkica remembers. Durin a labour action in 1979 in Brod, instead of embroidery, sewing or medical courses, she decided to apply for referee training. (...) Milkica decided to learn the rules of the game and ended up as the best participant in the group. Nevertheless, nobody expected that she would take the referee exam and join the work of the Association of Referees. (...) At the first match, the captain of one of the teams requested a few-minutes delay before start, in order to pick up flowers for the referee on a nearby meadow. Milkica passed the referee exam with grade 4, but she did not start refereeing at that point. Meetings of referees never assigned her any matches. When she demanded to know why, it was explained to her that she could only referee female soccer matches. Even if there were female soccer clubs, they were in the first league, and I was not able to referee there as a beginner. Besides, the rules that the local referee association's decision was based on did not strictly prohibit my refereeing in male soccer matches, our interlocutor tells us. As she was acquainted with the administrative procedure and persistent in her desire to referee, she addressed the Referee Confederation of Yugoslavia with a request for authentic interpretation of the rules. At the time when she sent the request, the number of women referees

353 Interview led by Ana Kotur, journalist and editor of www.ukljuci.in (July 12, 2014)

354 She was born in Banja Luka in 1961. She graduated from political sciences and is a professional journalist. She has been active in the women's movement since 1998 (OŽ Lara Bijeljina, Udružene žene Banjaluka, Helsinški parlament građana Banjaluka) and is one of the co-founders (with Radmila Žigić) of the first women's political internet magazine in BiH: Lara-online. She is currently the president of the Association of Journalists of BiH.

was negligible. She learned about the response to her request from the press – *Sportske novosti* magazine from Zagreb at the time published a headline: *A Women is Allowed to A List*. I was assigned a match at the next meeting. The very fact that somebody knew how to beat the procedures of the cruel soccer world was a great achievement, our interlocutor tells us. (...) She describes her refereeing as fairly sharp. Still, this was a somewhat logical choice. As a woman, I knew I had to be sharper, because I was not able to deal with players who were much bigger and physically stronger than me in the field in any other way, she explains. In one of the matches, she even sent off the former member of the Yugoslav national team, Jovan Aćimović for yelling at other players and obstructing the work of the assistant referee. (...) A referee did not show up at one of the matches between junior teams in Belgrade. Milkica was the first assistant referee and, according to the rules, she was supposed to referee the match. However, a delegate of the Association of Referees decided that Milkica would not referee it. She abandoned the match and after some time was summoned by a disciplinary commission. I refused to appear before the commission and plead not guilty, she says. The Association of Referees admitted its mistake and, although she was still active for some time afterwards, this is roughly when her referee career ended.

General Remarks about the Socialist Era

The above brief overview of women's position in SFRJ inevitably leads to a conclusion that women actually reached a higher level of emancipation and equality than was the case prior to this period. It is also important to underline that with their struggle, persistent dedication and commitment, women alone won the rights that were legally accorded to them after the Second World War. Their struggle and socialist postulates led to public and political advocacy for equality between women and men.

However, the purpose of this part of the book is also to show that, regardless of laws and constitutional principles that proclaim equality, the deeply rooted traditional and patriarchal *modus vivendi* resisted women's emancipation and activity outside the private sphere. Although women did become more active in the public sphere, obtaining the right to work and equally participating in building the socialist state and a better society, resistance to education and teaching of illiterate women and girls was observed immediately after the Second World War, as well as negative viewpoints of family about women's entry to the public sphere.

Described in general theses, woman's identity as a mother still

remained the main identity of the Yugoslav woman, followed by the identity of working woman. Nevertheless, the number of women in politics and in leading management positions remained small – a situation that it was almost impossible to change. Although the political hierarchy constantly referred to women's needs in politics, with the abolishment of AFŽ in 1953, a mass-scale women's organisation that was also politically active, contradictions between official political positions about women's political activities and gender equality could be easily seen. As Ana Miškovska-Kajevska says, AFŽ stood in the way of securing the power of the Communist Party. After its abolishment, women were left to deal with the women's issue and gender equality, as if they were the only part of the society. This author thus presents the thesis that leads to a conclusion that the *mainstreaming* of the women's issue in socialism was a way to ensure the power of the Communist Party, which was dominated by men, and not necessarily an honest attempt to improve women's position.³⁵⁵

What is perhaps most objected to within the socialist structure when it comes to women's rights is the prevention of women from becoming more politically active as equal subjects and active agents in creating their position in society. Therefore, one can conclude that, although passing laws and constitutional principles that proclaim equality is infinitely important, this aspect alone is not sufficient. Efforts should be put into building relations between people and changing the traditional patriarchal beliefs, but also into enabling women to influence the creation of the society and resolving the women's issue from adequate positions of power.

There were only few women in politics during the eighties, and even after the break-up of Yugoslavia. In her writing about nationalism, patriarchy and war in former Yugoslavia, Žarana Papić presents three reasons behind the small number of women in politics. As the first reason, Papić finds that 50 years of socialism made women passive. By granting them important rights – the right to work, divorce and abortion and by emphasising that socialism resolved the women's issue – it only adapted them to the dominant patriarchal system upon which socialism was based. Papić concludes that socialism was a conglomerate of different social and ideological elements that were communist, male, patriarchal and authoritative. Women were offered a specific mix of progressive legal rights and very real and persistent patriarchy that managed their destinies and daily life. Women therefore had no effective political experience, political tools or strategies to use once the democratic transformations started. The second reason the author offers is in the fact that an independent and powerful women's movement that could have provided political skills never came to life in the former Yugoslavia. Feminist groups that appeared in the seventies were peripheral and only engaged few women. Finally, the third reason is the new political parties that propagated extreme nationalism, which was militant, nationalistic and sexist, and marked all

355 Miškovska-Kajevska, A. (2006) p. 25

dissenters as traitors.³⁵⁶

Nevertheless, with the downfall of socialism, break-up of Yugoslavia and wars during the nineties, and accelerated repatriarchalisation and nationalism, women's position in the society experienced retrograde steps and significantly deteriorated.

*After the disappearance of the communist paradigm of equality and the growth of conservative ideology of a state, nation or religion in every post-communist country is based on strategies of retradition-alisation, instrumentalisation and naturalisation of women's identities, their social roles and symbolic representations.*³⁵⁷

The rights that women won and obtained during socialism were neglected and women were sent back to the private space. Men became active subjects – warriors - and women became passive objects and victims. Therefore, from today's perspective, there is a slightly nostalgic view of the socialist era as the time when women made significant progress and secured a better position in society. Whilst this is true, the women's issue was still far from being fully resolved. Decades of women's work and advocacy for a better society were erased in a very short time, and replaced by efforts to strengthen patriarchy and ensure men's position of power.

A Note about Nada

Nada Ler Sofronić was born in 1941 in Sarajevo. She was a member of the group of first feminist theoreticians in the former Yugoslavia. For many years, she taught social psychology at the Faculty of Political Science in Sarajevo. She played an active and leading role in the second wave of the women's movement in the region. She was conceptual creator of the First International Feminist Conference in East Europe, held in the Student's Cultural Centre in Belgrade in 1978, with the title *Drug-ca – Novi pristup?* (Fe-Male Comrade – A New Approach?) Her PhD dissertation is deemed to be the first feminist thesis that was defended in socialist Yugoslavia and partly published in the book *Neofeminizam i socijalistička alternativa* (1985). Her activism and scientific work marked not only the development of the second wave of feminism in SFRJ, but also significantly contributed to the analysis of the gender dimension of global neoconservative trends and women's position in the post-socialist transition. She published a large number of theoretical essays and articles. She is the director of the Centre for Policy Research and Advocacy *Žena i društvo* in Sarajevo.³⁵⁸

356 Papić, Ž. (1994) *Nationalism, patriarchy and war in ex-Yugoslavia* in *Women's History Review*, 3:1. p. 116

357 Papić, Ž. (2002) *Europe after 1989: Ethnic wars, the Fascistization of Civil Society and Body Politics in Serbia* in Griffin, G. and Braidotti, R. p. 128

358 Source: http://www.zenskestudije.org.rs/01_o_nama/biografije.html (June 24, 2014)

A Note about Žarana

Žarana Papić was born on 4 July 1949 in Sarajevo. Her mother and father actively participated in the anti-fascist struggle, opposing nationalism and fighting for social justice, thus creating the foundations for the development of Žarana Papić's personality – a sociologist, anthropologist, Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade and women's studies throughout the region, and one of the pioneers of Yugoslav feminism. Papić's first encounter with contemporary feminist theory occurred at the Conference of Croatian Sociological Association in Portorož in 1976. In the same year, she attended the first course of Women's Studies, organised in the Inter-University Centre in Dubrovnik. After that, she and her colleagues organised the first international feminist conference in East Europe: *Drug/ca žensko pitanje, novi pristup?*. This conference presented the new feminist movement and theory by re-examining the dominant system, and enabling establishment of the hard nucleus of the group of feminist theoreticians and activists in Yugoslavia. The conference was the beginning of feminist criticism of patriarchy in the socialist era. Papić belonged to the first post-war generation of Yugoslav feminists and her work and activism largely influenced the development of younger generations. She is the co-founder of the Centre for Women's Studies in Belgrade (1992). In the history of Yugoslav feminism, Papić is remembered as one of the pioneers of feminism who set high standards both in theory and activism, fighting for a more equal and just society. During the most recent war, she was among the first to confront nationalist policies and publicly spoke out against the war. She is one of the anti-nationalist feminists who constantly worked to build peace and reconciliation in BiH and the wider region. She died suddenly in 2002 in Belgrade. The French Government posthumously awarded Papić the *Palme Académiques* and the title of *Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques*.

PART IV: THE NINETIES

The War and Post-War Period in Bosnia and Herzegovina

This Was Not Our War

This chapter will discuss the position of women in the period 1992-1995, focusing on their role in different fields of action, such as the military, civil defence, education, medicine, art, politics, and women as war criminals and victims of rape.

Context

The period covering the end of the eighties and early nineties of the 20th century was marked by socio-economic and political turmoil, and the transition from a socialist society to a *democracy* that is characterised by war and the division of the former Yugoslavia into nation-states. The dissolution of Yugoslavia affected all segments of society and imposed the question of ethnic division, which had a major impact on almost all spheres of society, including the issue of gender equality, women's representation in decision-making positions and other spheres of public life. The first democratic, multi-party elections were held in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1990 and they brought to power the three major national political parties representing the three dominant ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs) and which were to organise the political life of the country. After the proclamation of independence of Slovenia and Croatia at the end of February 1992, a referendum on the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina was organised. On March 1, 1992 Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence, and immediately thereafter witnessed growing tensions, which escalated into war, which officially began in April 1992. Between April 1992 and December 1995, and until the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, there massive human rights violations took place in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (RBiH), including war crime, crime against humanity, murder, rape and expulsion. The homes of many became the frontlines and the population in many parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina was forced to leave.

The Bosnian Book of the Dead

According to the census of 1991 – which is still considered the latest one – out of a total of 4,377,033 inhabitants, women accounted for

2,193,238.³⁵⁹ *The Bosnian Book of the Dead* provides a statistical overview of the total number of the dead and missing victims of the war in all municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, registering 95,940 persons who were killed or missing in the period from 1991 to 1996. According to the gender breakdown, there were 86,039 men and 9,901 women killed. The same source reports that nearly two thirds, i.e. 5,873, women were killed in 1992, 4,848 between April and September 1992. This suggests that more women were killed over the period of four months in 1992 than during the entire duration of the armed conflict. When it comes to national structure, out of a total of 9,901 women killed during the war, 7,179 of these were Bosniaks and 4,411 were killed in 1992. There were 1,664 Serb women victims and the majority of these (928) were killed in 1992. Out of a total of 896 Croat women victims, the majority (446) were killed in 1992. There were also 182 women victims of other nationalities. For 288 women the exact date of death could not be established. Out of 9,901 women victims, 97.48% of women were killed or went missing as civilians.³⁶⁰

Women and War

War, as a male affair, is an activity in which women do participate in different ways. They usually remain on the sidelines or sometimes become manipulated for the purposes of the ruling political elites or in some cases they themselves support the ideology in some way. While, in violent conflicts, women are mainly considered within a victimising discourse, the roles of women in times of war vary. *The feminist movement in both Belgrade and Zagreb divided into anti-nationalistic and nationalist branches over the question of nature and scale of rape in the wars of the nineties in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and later in Kosovo.*³⁶¹

The symbolic function of a woman victim of war in the feminist literature of former Yugoslavia is not as simple as it seems at first glance. On the one hand, it is complementary to the concept of a woman peacemaker and activist, but at the same time it is contrary to its symbolic powerlessness and passivity. At the same time, it is also a symbolic contrast to the image of militant, warmongering maleness. Finally, a woman appears also as a semi-aware victim susceptible to war, nationalist and patriarchal

359 Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, 2010

360 Tokača, M. *Spolna i nacionalna struktura žrtava i ljudski gubitci vojnih formacija (1991-1996)*, prema *Bosanskoj knjizi mrtvih*, IDC; source: <http://www.prometej.ba/index.php/home-4/1005-spolna-i-nacionalna-struktura-zrtava-i-ljudski-gubitci-vojnih-formacija-1991-1996> (June 10, 2014)

361 Svirčić, J. *Feministički raskol devedesetih: takozvane nacionalistkinje i samoproglašene antinacionalistkinje*; source: <http://stav.cenzura.hr/feministicki-raskol-devedesetih-takozvane-nacionalistkinje-i-samoproglasene-antinacionalistkinje/> (June 27, 2014)

manipulation. In all these cases, female social activity and female victimhood are mutually intertwining concepts, which generate one another, both intended as essentially different concepts from social activities and victimisation of men, especially in the war context.³⁶²

Women in war-torn societies are faced with various forms of sexual violence, which is sometimes perpetrated systematically to achieve military or political objectives. Collapse of infrastructure first affects women because they remain the sole care-takers of the family. According to the definition of Mary Kaldor³⁶³, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina was one of the new, post-modern wars in which new methods of warfare were used and different types of crimes were committed. The new wars take place in urban areas and include the civilian population, i.e. people are no longer going to war, but instead, the war comes to them. Therefore, in the contemporary conflicts the majority of the victims are civilians, mostly women and children. The role of the mothers of soldiers is also emphasised in this period. Conflict can lead to the empowerment of women, causing structural and social transformations and producing new realities that redefine gender.³⁶⁴ Women are leaving their traditional roles in order to meet the social and economic demands of the war, and some, for the first time, become responsible for their families and take on leadership roles. One example of this is the women of Srebrenica who have distinguished themselves in the public sphere, both as victims and women who have lost their families, remained on their own and who are still struggling to return, fighting for their dignity and finding their missing ones. The women of Srebrenica were expelled and most now live as displaced persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Before the war, Srebrenica was a male dominated society where men were the heads of households. However, the war, and the period after the war, changed the role of Srebrenica women who were less educated than men and mostly housewives.³⁶⁵

Over the period of last two decades of the 20th century, four powerful currents intertwined, hence changing the direction of a steady, albeit slow, socio-political evolution of women. The first was the death of Tito in 1980, which provided the framework for the political disturbances and unrests throughout the region. The second was the collapse of Communism, which changed the social rules in this part of the world. The third was the birth of nationalism, which filled the vacuum created due to the first two

362 Drezgić, R., Žarkov, D. (2005) *Feminističke nevolje sa Balkanom* in: Sociologija, Vol. XLVII, No. 4, p. 298

363 Kaldor, M. (1999) *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

364 Meintjes, S., Pillay, A., and Turshen, M. (2001) *The Aftermath: Women in Post Conflict Transformation*, Zed Books, London, p. 6

365 Simić, O. (2010) *Rod, konflikt i pomirenje: Gde su muškarci? A šta je sa ženama?* Časopis za političku teoriju i istraživanja globalizacije, razvoja i rodnosti, source: http://postjugo.flg.uj.edu.pl/baza/texts_display.php?id=329 (June 27, 2014)

factors. The fourth was the war, during which women had to take over tasks that they did not expect, while at the same time, they were exposed to traumas and losses. A woman who tried to survive the fierce whirlpool of the four currents could hardly plan for the next day, let alone her life.³⁶⁶

The war has affected the demographic structure, not only because of the expulsion of population and the emergence of majority ethnic areas, but also in terms of gender structure, since the majority of casualties of the war were men. Carol Mann presented an interesting observation in her study of women of Dobrinja³⁶⁷, suggesting that women were the first refugees to leave Sarajevo while the men remained detained by military obligation. The main consequences of these departures were the creation of new communities and the rise of divorce.³⁶⁸

In the period of the war, women's issues were no longer just women's issues, but also issues of Bosniak/Muslim, Croat and Serb women. The war placed women in a specific position. They were losing the rights they acquired during the period of Socialism when the status of women was formally regulated in many ways, especially when it came to women's reproductive rights, collective rights, and social welfare institutions and when they managed to carve out higher visibility in society. *The rise of ethnic nationalism in the former Yugoslavia had 'grown' in parallel with misogyny, since it was based on distinctly heroic and masculine mythology.*³⁶⁹ The period after the war also showed that women are almost invisible in society, and mentioned only when celebrating anniversaries in order to demonstrate that there were women who participated in the defence – women fighters and heroines - or as female victims of rape. Unlike women who contributed to the National Liberation War and whose role was celebrated and marked after the war, the female participants of the 1992-1995 war remained invisible.

The war rapes in Bosnia and Croatia opened the door to Balkanistic discourses. In this way, the tradition, patriarchy and aggression (highlighted as “of a specific Balkan type”) represent the context not only for the feminist analyses in this area but also for reinterpretation of gender relations through the concepts of conflict and violence. Unfortunately, feminist works from the former Yugoslavia did not deal with theoretical considerations of the categories of nationalism, the Balkans and war violence before the collapse of Yugoslavia. This means that these categories appear as more or less self-evident and transparent, or have a teleological meaning, hence nationalism, war and the Balkans are considered to be the

366 Hunt, S. Ovo nije bio naš rat: Bosanke obnavljaju mir, Biblioteka Dani, p. 207, 208

367 See: Mann, C. (2006) *Kućne amazonke, otpor žena iz Dobrinje, predgrađa Sarajeva*, Svjetlost, Sarajevo

368 Ibid. p. 36

369 Hauser, M., Ne prestajati počinjati, p. 59, source: http://www.medicazenica.org/download/Monika_Hauser-Ne_prestajati_pocinjati.pdf (June 27, 2014)

same and the product of one another.³⁷⁰

Horrific examples of war crimes committed against women are largely focused on their rape stories - the role of women as victims. Women served as a means of marking territory - the demonstration of power. *Women have become differentiators on ethnic, cultural and political levels.*³⁷¹ During the war turmoil dual processes occur leading not only to the victimisation of women, but also to their empowerment as a result of the questioning of gender power relations at both the local and the wider international levels.³⁷² During the war women's organisations emerged, which primarily dealt with female victims of war and rape victims, thus empowering the civil sector.³⁷³ Since many men were prevented from moving freely or were engaged in military activity, the public space was left to women.³⁷⁴ Women were redefining the traditional roles that society prescribed for men and women, supporting a growth in woman's self-esteem. This gave rise to a large number of new and dedicated women leaders and many of these assumed leadership roles after the war.³⁷⁵ Darija Žilić, in her article *Gender Essentialisms*, writes about the ways in which women can be used to serve the nationalist agenda or to deconstruct *a national story*, yet, in both cases, they remain outside of history. She refers to examples of societies that emerged after the break-up of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ). When writing about the connection between gender and war, Nira Yuval-Davis, a theoretician, explains that the war is an experience that brings along exile, which is gender specific, since 80 percent of the total refugee population are women and children.³⁷⁶

War is often seen as a *male* thing, while women are rarely discussed in this, except as victims. The woman's nature is perceived as peaceful, unlike the fighting spirit of men. Therefore it is important to discuss nationalism, the attitude towards a woman as a victim, women fighters, women-rape survivors and women perpetrators of war crimes. In order to seriously consider the role of women in armed conflicts, it is necessary to explore the ways in which the gender dimension is involved in the social and political consideration of the armed conflict.

During the war, violence against women was manifested in numerous

370 Drezgić, R., Žarkov, D. (2005) p. 302

371 Žilić, D.: *Rodni esencijalizmi, politizacija i mirovni aktivizam na prostoru bivše Jugoslavije*, p. 230

372 Ibid.

373 *Žene u Bosni i Hercegovini između valova: može li specifično kontekstualni feminizam pomoći*, p. 85

374 Slapšak, S. (200) *Hunting, ruling, sacrificing: traditional male practices in contemporary Balkan cultures*, in: Breines, I., Connell, R. and Eide, I.: *Male roles, masculinities and violence, A culture of peace perspective*, UNESCO, Paris, p. 139

375 Simić, O. (2010)

376 Yuval-Davis, N. (2003) *Nacionalistički projekti i rodni odnosi*, Treća, Časopis Centra za ženske studije, broj 1-2 / vol. V, p. 208

ways, from the physical violence to which raped women were exposed to domestic violence. Women's organisations that emerged at the beginning of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, *Women for Women* in Sarajevo and *Women in Black* in Belgrade, studied the differences between the two sides of the frontline in which women happened to be. On the side of the Serbian Army, the rape committed on the frontline was continued at home *as if all the standards of permissible behaviour were cast away*.³⁷⁷ This was exacerbated by the loss of a clear distinction between civilian and military life, and alcohol was often one of the causes, especially among soldiers.³⁷⁸ During the war, especially after the summer of 1995, following the massacre in Žepa and Srebrenica, a large number of refugees came to Sarajevo and Dobrinja, mostly from rural areas. In most cases, these were women, children and elderly people who were supposed to get used to a new way of life typical of urban areas. For a large number of refugees this was their first time to be in an urban environment, and women, who were often dressed in traditional clothing, became victims of discrimination because of their specific way of life. The adjustment was very difficult, particularly for women and mothers who were emotionally connected to the hearth and home from which they were expelled and which influenced their identities as wives, mothers and housewives.³⁷⁹ Mann goes on to explain the position of women refugees who have settled in Dobrinja:

*The violent deaths of their husbands and older sons, disturbed relationships with other children they had brought with them and difficulties of daily survival pushed these women into irresolvable crises of identity, of which women of Dobrinja were spared.*³⁸⁰

There are few data on women who spent the wartime in Bosnia and Herzegovina and were involved in various segments of society and who became more visible in society due to their contributions. Nevertheless there are a large number of ordinary women, nameless heroines who fought, day by day, for survival. Women were burdened with the care for their families under unimaginable conditions. The story of each woman who had to feed her family, put her children through school, the story of each raped women, single mother, refugee, is a story for itself and which requires only time to be told.³⁸¹

377 Mann, C. (2006) p. 37

378 Ibid.

379 Ibid. p. 38, 39

380 Ibid. p. 39

381 See also *Ženska strana rata* published by Women in Black with 120 authentic stories, letter and memories of wars led in former Yugoslavia 1991-1999. Source: http://zeneucnom.org/pdf/zenska_strana_rata.pdf

Women, Rape Victims

The war in Bosnia was marked by mass crimes which initiated the debate on the establishment of international bodies for the prosecution of war crimes.³⁸² The rape in Bosnia and Herzegovina had its own local, regional and international dimensions. The experience has become relevant to women's history because sexual crimes were a part of the atrocities that occurred in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and as such they became an element of women's activism, which advocated the protection of women in armed conflicts and defining mass rape as a crime against humanity.³⁸³ Based on the reports of mass rapes in Bosnia and Herzegovina and information about rape camps, data were presented on how rape was used, systematically, as a weapon of war, especially for the purposes of genocide and ethnic cleansing. According to the findings of the Team of the European Community Mission to assess the situation in 1992, there were 20,000 to 50,000 women who were raped during the war.³⁸⁴

Of a large number of war crimes committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the most shocking for international public were reports of the UN Fact-Finding Mission (Bassiouni Commission), as well as numerous media reports of ethnic cleansing, genocide, mass rapes, concentration camps, the siege of Sarajevo and the arbitrary killing of civilians.³⁸⁵

During the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina the female body served as a symbolic space. It was used as a strategy to overpower *the enemy* signified by the woman's body; therefore in 2006 rape was declared a strategy of ethnic cleansing.³⁸⁶ What eventually proved to be a problem was reflected in the so-called phenomenon of *the victim hierarchy*. Ethnically based rape represents a new and more severe category than *ordinary rape*, and as such is interpreted as a threat to the nation rather than as an assault against a woman.³⁸⁷ In 1993, the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna organised a forum, in which the war crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia were discussed, especially those perpetrated against women. By signing the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, which were adopted on 25 June 1993, 171 countries attending the World Conference acknowledged that *the violation of human rights of women in situations of armed conflict is in fact the violation of fundamental principles*

382 Mlinarević, G. et al. (2012) *Procesuiranje ratnog seksualiziranog nasilja na sudu Bosne i Hercegovine: šta se dogodilo sa interesom pravde? Analiza i preporuke u vezi sa rodno osjetljivim praćenjem suđenja za ratno seksualizirano nasilje u Bosni i Hercegovini u periodu 23. maj 2011. do 25. maj 2012.*, Sarajevo, 2012, ACIPS, p. 11

383 Bakšić-Muftić, J. (2003) *Zločin silovanja u Bosni i Hercegovini*, Odjek, ljeto-jesen-zima, <http://www.odjek.ba/index.php?broj=03&id=21> (June 10, 2014)

384 Mlinarević, G. et al. (2012) p. 11

385 Ibid. p. 11

386 Ibid.

387 Popov-Momčinović, Z. (2013) p. 111

of international human rights and humanitarian law.³⁸⁸

Since, in the 1990s, the atrocities committed against women during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (and in Rwanda) have become more visible and as a result of the pressure exerted by the feminist movements not only from the region of Southeast Europe, but also at the international level, rape was, for the first time in history, recognised as a war crime and a crime against humanity. The first trials for wartime sexual violence took place in the international arena, namely at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, which was established in May 1993.³⁸⁹

During the war, women rarely had an opportunity to report rape because public services, the police and the judiciary were not functioning and perpetrators of rape were often members of the army and police. The situation was not any easier after the war, because some of the rapists got jobs in public institutions, and many women, afraid of being stigmatised in society – due to the patriarchal standard which imposed an obligation on women to *preserve one's face* – hesitated to report it. Suppressing a fact of rape was a new trauma for women victims of rape, which was not followed by sufficient psycho-social support. Therefore, it took a lot of effort, in particular by non-governmental organisations and individual peacemakers and humanitarians, to have rape declared a crime against humanity. According to the 2004 Report on the Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina largely influenced the reproductive and sexual health of women and girls, mainly due to rape, sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancy.³⁹⁰ One of the first women to speak out publicly about rape in Bosnia and Herzegovina was **Nusreta Sivac**, who devoted her life to achieving justice, which wartime victims of rape must seek through cooperation with the Hague, collecting testimonies about rape.

Public Space and the Beginning of Feminism in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Research on the role of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the 1992-1995 war is scarce, as is relevant literature that examines the experiences of war through a gender perspective. In addition to (a few) statistics on the participation of women in different segments of society during the war, especially women who directly participated in armed conflicts and military, one should also take into account the context in

388 Source: <http://www.minoritycentre.org/sites/default/files/becka-deklaracija.pdf> (June 20, 2014)

389 Mlinarević, G. et al. (2012) p. 11

390 *Izveštaj o primjeni Konvencije o ukidanju svih oblika diskriminacije žena u Bosni i Hercegovini*, (2004) Gender centar BiH, p. 5

which women happen to be, in a symbolic sense, and which impacted on their role in a new political and social order. When the war broke out, Yugoslavia became essential to the feminist issues worldwide due to the fact that the war provoked a reaction from many activist groups and academics, while Yugoslav feminism began to abate. War, nationalism, rape, women's rights, international law, have all become vastly researched topics, but that was not the case with Yugoslav feminism. Yugoslav feminists were first to deal with the issue of the impact of war on their identity and activism. Subsequently, analyses of the feminist movements in the region were carried out, but few dealt with the theoretical issues of feminism.³⁹¹

In the former Yugoslavia women were mainly involved in organising pacifist movements and humanitarian aid, but they were also war accomplices because of the system itself and its symbolic order, which supported the war agenda and favoured historically male-dominated groups. The war in the former Yugoslavia was, in every respect, a project of *the brotherhood*, not *the sisterhood*.³⁹²

A specific feature of the symbolic order and social relations is that every system of power takes as a model some of the previous systems of power, projecting itself on those models to the extent possible. Binary models - especially the binary gender model - are symbolic power systems through which this symbolic system operates and upon which it is projected. This projection *legitimises* the practices and dominance. Extreme cases of war and nationalism are particularly prone to arrogate and adopt models of gender differences, using them as fulcrums. They exploit and manipulate gender differences, using them and organising themselves around these axes.³⁹³

In the circumstances of a specific situation such as war, the role of women also becomes specific. According to tradition of Bosnian-Herzegovinian women, their primary role is in the family, as mothers, housewives and wives, while men occupy the *public* sphere. War is a public sphere in which women too participated, but their role was not as visible as that of men nor was it recognised in the same way. Swanee Hunt, in her book *This Was Not Our War*, describes discussions she had with women from Bosnia and Herzegovina:

And so, the discussions that follow - concerning education, career, social roles - may appear to be on a low level, until interpreted in the context of intense social changes. And it is these elements of a woman's life in pre-war Bosnia that will become the compass of their

391 Žarkov, D. (2001) *Feminism and the disintegration of Yugoslavia: on the politics of gender and ethnicity*, p. 1

392 Iveković, R., *Žene, nacionalizam i rat: Vodite ljubav a ne rat*, source: <http://www.zenskes-tudie.edu.rs/izdavastvo/elektronska-izdanja/casopis-zenske-studije/zenske-studije-br-2-3/274-zene-nacionalizam-i-rat-vodite-ljubav-a-ne-rat> (July 2, 2014)

393 Ibid.

post-war activities in reclaiming the country.³⁹⁴

In the foreword to the book *Somebody said Feminism?* Adriana Zaharijević says the following about the beginning of feminism in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

*While Druga žena [The Other Woman] was a crucial historical moment, which impressed the Eastern European feminisms into European feminist heritage, the feminist movement in this area emerged from the war-torn country and strong opposition to militarisation and nationalism on all sides. Duška Andrić - Ružić from Medica Zenica, described this succinctly through the example of Bosnia and Herzegovina: If it was not for the war, we would have never had this big women's scene, i.e. NGO sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina ... We started dealing with feminism out of necessity, not out of theoretical or practical consideration. We were driven into it by the need to heal the consequences of the war.*³⁹⁵

In the period that was marked by the war, women were caught in a twofold function. On one hand, they were the victims, while on the other they were caretakers of the family. Some women consciously advocated the better position of women during the war while some, under the circumstances, had to cope the best way they could to support themselves and their families. The word that best describes their lives in conditions of war is survival, which was expressed in the most creative ways possible. They survived with humanitarian aid, making up recipes that required minimum ingredients. Among the women who were devoted to *surviving* there were artists, actresses, musicians, singers, dancers, directors, poets, models, professors, teachers and others who, by survival in the circumstances of the war, resisted the destruction that the war brought.

In the book *Home Front Amazons*, which Carol Mann dedicated to women of Dobrinja, a Sarajevo suburb, one can read interesting stories of survival, improvisation, and life in a lopped off part of Sarajevo. At the same time, this is a study dealing with the issue of civil defence and the organisation of women in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A variety of war stories are corroborated by the story Stanojka Cana Tešić told in an interview for the book of Zilka Spahić Šiljak, *Shining Humanity*.³⁹⁶ Her story speaks of solidarity in difficult times and help, which is not just mere assistance but sacrifice, courage and selflessness. At the beginning of the

³⁹⁴ Hunt, S. p. 210

³⁹⁵ Zaharijević, A. (ed.) (2012) *Neko je rekao feminizam: kako je feminizam uticao na žene XXI veka*, Sarajevo, Sarajevski otvoreni centar, Fondacija Heinrich Boll, Ured u BiH, Fondacija CURE

³⁹⁶ This is a research about the lives of eleven women, leaders and peace-builders with different ethnic and religious, but also non-religious identities.

war, in order to help her Muslim friend, Tešić decided to risk the life of her own children by taking her friend to a safe place.³⁹⁷ This is just one of many stories in which women were champions, but at the same time one of the few that has been recorded. Every settlement, every part of the city, every town in Bosnia and Herzegovina has its own *woman's* story - a story that will take time and hard work to be recounted.

Women Combatants

One of the segments in which women stood out in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the wartime period was their participation in the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Their motivation to take an active part in it varied, as did their forms of participation. Women were soldiers, doctors, journalists, and organisers of civil defence, helping refugees. Women held various positions and exercised several functions and some very interesting stories exist relating to their participation. One such story is about an army poster portraying the image of **Šemsa Kiselica**, with a rifle in her hand. Because of their bravery, women in the military were called Amazons.³⁹⁸

Women bore the brunt of the aggression in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Those who stayed at home with the children had an obligation to provide food and water. It was not at all easy to find wood to heat an apartment or house in the besieged city of Sarajevo. Also, they were taking care of men when they returned from the front lines. Their task was to provide water for them to take a bath, put food on the table and take care of the family, and all this on their own.³⁹⁹

The story of women participants in the Army of RBiH is different from the one that portrays women of Bosnia and Herzegovina as victims. Lejla Hadžiahmić, in her Masters Dissertation, which she dedicated to women combatants of the Army of RBiH - the combatants who defended Sarajevo⁴⁰⁰, raised, among other things, the issue of motivation which drove some of the Sarajevo women to join the defence of the city in the early months of the war. The author analysed in her work the image in which women combatants were portrayed in print media, dailies and weeklies, in the early months of the war. It appears that in the early

397 Spahić-Šiljak, Z. (2013) *Sjaj ljudskosti: životne priče mirotvorki u Bosni i Hercegovini*, Sarajevo, TPO fondacija, p. 169-172

398 Omanić, A., Serdarević M., Ovčina A., Omanić H., Omanić J., (2009) *Participation of Women in War in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1992 to 1995*, *Materia Socio Medica* 21.3, p. 175

399 Dautbegović-Bošnjaković, S. (2013) *Zaboravljena dimenzija rata u BiH - vojnkinje*, in: *Kojeg je roda sigurnost*, Sarajevo, Sarajevski otvoreni centar, p. 88

400 Hadžiahmić, L. (2010) *Women-combatants in Defense of Sarajevo: Agents or Victims*, Master's Dissertation, University of Sarajevo, CIPS, Master's programme in gender studies, Sarajevo

months of the war, the Army of RBiH was open to all equally, and that women combatants were portrayed solely as patriots. Later in the war, the picture changed and women began to appear increasingly as victims. Hadžiahmić showed in her work that women were not exclusively victims of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina and that such representation reduces the value of women's motivation to take on roles that were reserved for men only.⁴⁰¹

Women joining the Army did not eliminate the oppressive gender stereotypes according to which women are seen exclusively as victims. This is corroborated by experiences of many women combatants of the BiH Army who decided to take part in the battle, thereby assuming the role of a doer as opposed to a sufferer. Their choice was the total opposite to gender norms. The motive of women combatants to join the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as they explained, was their sense of personal responsibility and the need to protect the community, which was the target of the attack.⁴⁰²

It is important to note that in most cases women joined the army voluntarily, on their own initiative, while men were marshalled at the beginning of the war. Some of the women Hadžiahmić interviewed joined the Army out of a sense of the injustice of the war. Indeed, in some cases there were whole families that joined the Army, simply because their houses were located at the frontlines. As an example, Hadžiahmić mentions Sokolović Kolonija, a Sarajevo suburb located nearby the airport, where a group of women joined an army unit out of a sense of social responsibility.⁴⁰³

According to records⁴⁰⁴ from December 1995 there were 5,360 women in the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thirteen of these women were awarded the highest award during the war, *the Golden Lily*: **Fadila Bajrić** (1951, from Bosanski Petrovac, 502 VBBR of 5th Corps of BiH Army); **Zlata Gazibara** (1957, from Sanski Most, 108th Krajiška Brigade); **Dževada Tartaragić** (1964, from Foča, Reconnaissance-squad – Fikro, 4th Motorized Brigade); **Aida Zuko** (1970, from Sarajevo, 124th Light infantry brigade **Kralj Tvrtko**). This recognition was awarded posthumously to **Emira Bašić** (1969, from Bosanski Novi, 15th Motorized Brigade); **Mevlida Elčić** (1963, from Derventa); **Kornelija Jurić** (1972, from Sarajevo, **Kralj Tvrtko** Brigade); **Atifa Karalić** (1957, from Novi Šeher, Maglaj, 317th

401 Ibid.

402 Dračo, I. (2013) *Sigurnost za koga? Feminističko redefiniranje koncepta sigurnosti*, in: *Kojeg je roda sigurnost*, Sarajevo, Sarajevski otvoreni centar, p. 223

403 Hadžiahmić, L. (2010)

404 Data on women soldiers taken from: Round table *Uloga žene u odbrani Bosne i Hercegovine* (2013, Sarajevo), collection of papers, Udruženje za zaštitu istorijskih vrijednosti BiH Haber, Sarajevo; Omanić, A. et al. (2009); *Monografija Zlatni ljiljani, Odlikovani pripadnici Armije RBiH 1992-1995*, Sarajevo, 2000, Dan štampe, Zenica; *Bosanske heroine: Žene koje su branile BiH*, source: <http://radiosarajevo.ba/novost/87876> (February 28, 2014)

Mountain infantry brigade); **Razija Merić** (1974, from Kalesija, Sabotage Independent Battalion *Black Wolves*); **Indira Pjanić** (1972, from Cazin, The Municipal Staff of the Territorial Defence of Cazin); **Nevzeta Sefer** (1952, from Travnik, 312th Motorized Brigade); **Fadila Odžaković Žuta** (1958, from Gorazde, 1st Motorized Brigade; *Order of the golden coat of arms with swords and Golden Lily*); **Edina Čamdžić** (1972, from Kladanj, 121st Mountain infantry brigade; *Medal for Bravery and Golden Lily*).

In addition to the individuals positioned in different functions within the BiH Army groupings of women also existed. In August 1992, in Pofalići, a troop of girls called *Blue Birds* formed, operating under the command of **Sabaheta Čutuk**. Members of this troop fought in Žuč, a hill near Sarajevo.⁴⁰⁵ In October 1994, members of the various units of the BiH Army formed an association of women members of the Army. There were about 30 women from Sarajevo and Zenica in the Association, who dealt with education, providing accommodation for women refugees and assistance to pregnant women. Without support of the BiH Army, the Association was deprived of funding, but owing to occasional donations, it continued to function until it was eventually closed down.⁴⁰⁶ At the beginning of the war, the Army of BiH announced a public call for women to join the army in logistics, communications, and administrative positions. Research by Lejla Hadžiahmić suggests that, while women were allowed to join the Army as volunteers in the early months of the war, and later, through public calls, they were not fully involved in the army orders. The post-war demobilisation process also showed that women were not perceived as an important factor, nor were their interests protected, because they were first in the line to be demobilised. Women began to return to family lives and private spheres, facing the reality of return home on their own, without any institutional assistance. In her work on women who participated in the Army during the war in Sarajevo, Sunita Dautbegović-Bošnjaković analysed the experiences of women combatants who were demobilised after the war and those who remained in military service. She interviewed women members of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁴⁰⁷ As she pointed out, one of the problems faced not only by women soldiers but also many other women was neglect in the public sphere of life. Many women whose role was important during the war were essentially invisible and socially unrecognised in post-war society, while after they were demobilised they received no assistance in finding a job and returning to normal life.⁴⁰⁸ To date, women soldiers remain marginalised, and their needs neglected, even by institutions that promote

405 Bosanske heroine: *Žene koje su branile BiH*, source: <http://radiosarajevo.ba/novost/87876> (February 28, 2014)

406 Hadžiahmić, L. (2011) *Women-combatants in defense of Sarajevo: Agents or Victims* in: WBSO, Gender Identity in Security Vocations, NO 19 January-April, p. 43

407 Dautbegović-Bošnjaković, S. (2013) p. 84, 85

408 Ibid. p. 91

gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Stories of women who participated in the Army are various and numerous, but only few were documented. Data currently available only concern the Army of BiH, a small portion of which related to women's participation in the war.⁴⁰⁹

Civil Defence, Education, Science and Culture

In addition to women who actively participated and served in different functions in the Army, women also played an important role in civil defence. One of the few contributions that deal with this issue is a study by Carol Mann, who devoted her research to Dobrinja, a Sarajevo suburb that was, during the war, infrastructurally cleaved from the rest of the city. She wrote about women transforming a war space into a domestic and feminised space; a self-contained city, isolated and managed by women, which changed its weft to enable survival of the majority of its residents.⁴¹⁰ She referred to the women of Dobrinja as *Home Front Amazons* because it was they who saved this Suburb of Sarajevo.⁴¹¹ Dobrinja was administratively divided into sectors, each of which had its manager - mainly women - who were appointed by the chief commander.⁴¹² According to Mann, the core of civil defence in Dobrinja was women who were the second generation of WW II, aged 35-45, mostly middle class, educated, and speaking at least one foreign language. Mann writes about Emira, an architect from Dobrinja who managed to transform Dobrinja in only 14 months. Although a sniper killed her husband, she remained in the building with two children and three cats. She started a tailor shop and organised fashion shows. Later, she launched a printing company, in which she printed a cookbook, a manual for young photographers and a manual for installation of greenhouses. She then opened an architectural firm, developing designs and solutions for the reconstruction of the city.⁴¹³ Dobrinja was completely cut off from the city. It was a city within a city, which triggered the spark of resistance and the will for survival among its residents. This isolation forced the teachers who stayed in Dobrinja to organise schooling for children before anywhere else in the city, where schooling was organised in basements.⁴¹⁴

409 More about ARBiH members and their roles in: Round table *Uloga žene u odbrani Bosne i Hercegovine* (2013, Sarajevo), collection of papers, Udruženje za zaštitu istorijskih vrijednosti BiH Haber, Sarajevo

410 Mann, C. (2006) p. 5

411 Ibid. p. 54

412 Ibid. p. 33

413 Ibid. p. 48, 49

414 Berman, D. M. (2004) *Heroji Treće gimnazije: ratna škola u Sarajevu 1992 – 1995.*, Sarajevo, Institut za istoriju, p. 94

According to the 1991 census, women accounted for 50.1% of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina. They accounted for 48.55% of the population that held primary school education, 38.58% of the population with secondary school qualifications, 38.63% of the population with higher school qualifications and 37.18% of the population with a university degree.⁴¹⁵ Thus, these are the latest official data which changed significantly due to the war. Even at the beginning of the war, education had become a sensitive subject due to the fact that schools were divided and as such undermined the model of multi-ethnic life in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Religion, which was banned in the previous system, was now introduced in schools and during the war proved a suitable means of manipulation based on national and religious affiliation. All of this led to a decentralised education system. Wartime schooling was affected by many constraints such as lack of infrastructure, teaching staff, textbooks, etc. Depending on the part of the country the teaching staff adapted to the circumstances. Schooling was organised in houses, basements, hallways, or in places spared of shelling, in school buildings that kept their original function. In some places, school buildings were turned into refugee camps, hospitals or military staffs.

*Who could have imagined that all this time the schools really functioned, that students actually attended classes and teachers kept record of student attendance and that exams were, in fact, organised at the University?*⁴¹⁶

War schools were part of the illusion of normality because they offered hope that one could live in impossible conditions. The educational process did take place on the basis of a reduced programme written by the Ministry of Education. In August and September 1992, for example, articles from Sarajevo daily newspapers show that between the beginning of the siege and the beginning of the 1992/1993 school year, the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Physical Culture of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina issued a resolution concerning the start of the school year. One of the articles from *Oslobođenje*, dated 10 September 1992, which appeared under the headline, *The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina: Instruction for Adaptation to Wartime Condition*, refers to the *Decision on the Registration of Students in Elementary and Secondary Schools and the Beginning of Instruction in the 1992/1993 School Year*.⁴¹⁷ As early as 3 May 1992, educators gathered at the Pedagogical Institute to confront the implications of the siege in educational terms. Two educators from the Pedagogical Institute, **Hajrija-Šahza Jahić** and **Melita Sultanović** assumed the task of conducting situation analysis of

415 Taljanović, A. (2010) *Žena u politici Bosne i Hercegovine*, Sarajevo, p. 72

416 Berman, D. M. (2004) p. 42

417 Ibid. p. 46, 47

elementary and secondary education to determine the specific needs of schools.⁴¹⁸ Both were involved in the reorganisation of the educational system and contributed to development of the prototype war school, the Bjelave School, which set the stage for development of war schools throughout the city. **Melita Sultanović** prepared a paper on the development of war schools in local communities.⁴¹⁹ The framework for the local community school concept was finalised in February 1993 at a Pedagogical Institute seminar on the organisation of war schools in the city, attended by 470 teachers.⁴²⁰

A woman who made a significant mark on wartime education was **Emina Avdagić**, the school directress of *Treća gimnazija* from May 1993. At the time when many teachers were leaving Sarajevo, and schools were taken over by the BiH Army, she had to find the way to organise schooling with a lack of premises and teaching staff. War schools were already functioning at the time, and Emina was responsible for opening new points – *punktovi* – and taking care of the teaching staff and for keeping pedagogical documentation with due regard to the students' and teachers' safety.⁴²¹

There are a few recognitions awarded to women teachers who contributed to schooling in war conditions, and no statistics on the number of women who managed to keep the school system running during the war. **Nadžida Šukalo** was a teacher in the Elementary School Edhem Mulabdić in Sarajevo during the war and class teaching advisor to the Ministry of Education. The President of the state at the time, Alija Izetbegović presented her the highest war recognition – *Golden Lily* – on 24 June 1993.⁴²² **Fatima Gunić** was a teacher who was killed together with her students on 9 November 1993, in the explosion of a grenade in the improvised classroom in which she taught. Today, a school in the Sarajevo municipality of Novi Grad, in which she taught, was named after her. **Meliha Alić**, directress of *Druga gimnazija*, won several awards at the international mathematics competition during the war. Another interesting story is the one about a scientific contribution of **Mirsada Hukić**, a microbiologist, who in Bosnia's poor laboratories, examined the causes and consequences of the HFRS (hemorrhagic fever with renal syndrome), the outbreak of which affected many soldiers near Tuzla at the end of the war. Her discovery positioned Mirsada among the leading microbiologists in the world. Due to the discovery of the *Tuzla 43* virus she became the first woman from Bosnia and Herzegovina who to be a full member of the European Academy of Science and Arts. During the research she and her team addressed the World Health Organisation in partnership with the Swedish

418 Ibid. p. 49

419 Ibid. p. 24

420 Ibid. p. 50

421 Ibid. p. 136

422 *120 godina osnovne škole Edhem Mulabdić Sarajevo*, p 40

Institute for Infectious Disease Control.⁴²³

Among the women who contributed in the area of health⁴²⁴ was **Muamera Puška**, who visited the residents of Dobrinja, bringing medicines and other supplies that Dobrinja hospital needed. This earned her the name Mother Theresa.⁴²⁵ Nurse **Sadeta Dervišević**, her husband Sead Dervišević and physician Jusuf Hadžir founded the Dobrinja hospital. She was awarded the *Florence Nightingale*, a prize awarded to nurses. After one of her patients received an infusion, Dervišević decided to accompany her home across a meadow, which was under constant sniper fire where she was wounded. Her wounding was documented on video and aired in the world media. Subsequently, the video footage was used to make a documentary *Life for the Lives of Others*.⁴²⁶ Nurse **Avdija Čustović** and her husband worked in a military hospital on the Mount Igman. She was wounded and transferred to hospital in Hrasnica, and later in the Koševo hospital in Sarajevo. Once discharged from hospital on 23 February 1996, she returned to her unit, the 101st Mount Brigade. The Presidency commissioned her as captain and awarded her a clock with the inscription of the Chief Commander of the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁴²⁷ **Aida Volić** was an otolaryngologist who founded and ran, for two years, a hospital in Suhodol. At one point, she was the only doctor in the hospital responsible for surgeries for three months. She operated on the civilian population of the surrounding villages, delivered babies and treated the wounded. During operations, which sometimes lasted for hours, her nurses would give her something to drink as she operated, while others pedalled a bike to generate electricity needed for light. There is an interesting story about Volić who, on one occasion, treated a wounded soldier of HVO (Hrvatsko vijeće obrane - Croatian Defence Council), Darko from Kiseljak, who was left behind and alone at the front line. Physician **Silva Rizvanbegović** became known for issuing a public appeal over the media, asking for help for the Sarajevo Emergency Department. She was killed in an ambulance car while accompanying her patient.⁴²⁸ Pharmacist **Biljana Vejzagić** and her husband, Mirza, passed everyday through the Serb checkpoints – thanks to her Serb name – to get to Dobrinja.⁴²⁹ **Jasminka**

423 Đugum-Hukić, A. *Malo ko Akademiju nauka BiH doživljava kao svoju*, source: <http://www.slobodnaevropa.org/content/huki%C4%87-malo-ko-akademiju-bih-do%C5%BEivljava-kao-svoju/25359646.html> (June 12, 2014)

424 Source: *Sumeja magazin za ženu i porodicu* No. 8-5 2002, No. 23-2007, No. 32, Tuzla: UGM, 2009; Omanić A. et al. *Zdravstvo u okruženom/opsjednutom Sarajevu. Dokumentacioni materijal istraživačkog projekta*. Medicinski fakultet Univerziteta u Sarajevu, Ministarstvo zdravstva Kantona Sarajevo; *Sudjelovanje žena u ratu u Bosni I Hercegovini u razdoblju 1992-1995*; Omanić, A. et al. (2009)

425 Omanić, A. et al. (2009) p. 176

426 Ibid. p. 177

427 Ibid. p. 177

428 Ibid. p. 177

429 Ibid. p. 178

Kovačević, an emergency medicine specialist, spent the war taking care of the Sarajevo Emergency Department.⁴³⁰ **Maja Jerković** was the directress of the Regional Hospital in Mostar. **Behija Akšamija-Rizvić**, a doctor of internal medicine, founded an infirmary during the war within the humanitarian organisation Merhamet. From April 1992 to December 1995, **Merima Pašić** was the Surgeon General of the 105th Motorised Brigade of Dobrinja. Professor Doctor **Nada Zjuzin** opened the first Centre for Paraplegia.⁴³¹

Among women who risked their lives to report on the events during the war were reporters who reported from the front lines. One of the most prominent names from wartime Bosnia and Herzegovina was **Arijana Saračević**, who had the most striking reporting experience during the war, reporting from the front lines. She filed over 2000 reports from the front line during the war. She was awarded the *Golden Lilly*, the highest military award for bravery, the first time it was ever awarded to someone who was not a member of the BiH Army. Arijana received the best war reporter prize *Crystal Eagle* by the *International Foundation for women*, at the ceremony in New York in 1993.⁴³² On 26 October 1993, in New York the *International Women's Media Foundation* awarded Arijana and **Mirsada Sakić-Hatibović** the joint *Courage in Journalism* prize for their fearless reporting during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. She received also the annual award of the Association of BiH Journalists in 1992. Mirsada Sakić-Hatibović and Arijana Saračević were the second winners of the *Courage in Journalism* award, following Kemal Kurspahić and Gordana Knežević in 1992.⁴³³ Another war reporter was **Vildana Selimbegović**. In the book *Žene u BiH: Dolje ti rijeka, dolje ti je pruga*, she wrote about her war experiences, during which she produced over 1000 reports, records and interviews with members of the BiH Army on the front lines. One of her articles from that time, headlined *I mi konje za trku imamo*, was dedicated to members of the BiH Army who attacked civilians and prisoners of war.⁴³⁴ **Gordana Knežević** was, for a period of time during the war, an editor in chief of the daily newspapers *Oslobođenje*.⁴³⁵ **Snježana Mulić-Bušatlija** was the head of Press Centre of the Municipality of Novi Grad Sarajevo during the war. She and her team edited and issued the newspapers *Novi Grad*. She edited, printed and translated articles into French and

430 Čengić, E. (2008) *Metak u haljinici*, Dani, special issue, april/travanj, Civitas, p. 72

431 Omanić, A. et al. (2009) p. 217

432 Mehmedić H. (1995) *Corridor, list koji zbližava ljude*, No 3, 15. Sarajevo, p. 3

433 Source: Sakić-Hatibović, M. and Saračević, A. - 1993 *Courage in Journalism Award*, <http://www.iwmf.org/mirsada-sakic-hatibovic-arijana-saracevic-1993-courage-in-journalism-award/> (April 10, 2014)

434 Gavrić, S. and Stojić, H. (eds.) (2011) *Žene u Bosni i Hercegovini: Dolje ti Rijeka, dolje ti je pruga*, Sarajevo, Buybook, p. 147

435 Kurspahić, K. and Knežević, G. - 1992 *Courage in Journalism Award*, *Oslobođenje*, Bosnia and Herzegovina, source: <http://www.iwmf.org/kemal-kurspahic-gordana-knezevic-1992-courage-in-journalism-award/> (April 10, 2014)

sent them on CDs to St. Nazaire, whose citizens sent humanitarian aid to the Municipality of Novi Grad. A group of children from different schools of the Municipality Novi Grad went to France during summer break every year from 1993 and attended French language courses. She made a documentary film, *A Letter Recommended from the Heart*, about the life of children in Sarajevo during the war. The film was translated into French and aired in the local TV station in western France, after which much humanitarian aid was collected for children whose lives were shown in the film. Her second film *Orphans* is a story about a boy and a girl from an inter-ethnic, Croat-Bosniak marriage, and their life after their father, a Croat who served in the Bosnian Army, was killed. This film, which was aired on TV BiH during the conflict between Croats and Bosniaks, helped to calm tensions among children of different ethnic backgrounds. Mulić-Bušatlija was a founder member of the Women's Association *Bosančica*.⁴³⁶ **Nurdžihana Đozić** started a magazine *Žena 21*⁴³⁷, during the war.

In her book *Shining Humanity – Life Stories of Women Peacebuilders in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, **Zilka Spahić-Šiljak** presents the stories of women who were, in their respective communities, recognized as peace builders, humanitarian workers and activists who contributed to a post-war reconciliation. Some of these women engaged in activism during the war, in different places in Bosnia and Herzegovina and under different conditions. Zilka presents the stories of 11 women, including **Sabiha Husić** who, during the war, worked in Medica Zenica, providing assistance to women survivors of war rape⁴³⁸; **Jadranka Miličević** who, when the war broke out in 1992, left Sarajevo and went to Belgrade, where she joined *Women in Black* in protesting against war, providing assistance to women victims of rape and refugees, and in organising humanitarian aid that was sent to Sarajevo; **Lidija Živanović**, who spent the war in Banja Luka⁴³⁹; **Nada Golubović** who, during the war, engaged in peace activism and supported Serb refugees arriving from Croatia. She often used her name and the name of her husband to receive humanitarian aid, which they then forwarded to their non-Serb neighbours⁴⁴⁰; **Stanojka Tešić Cana**, who engaged in peace activism in 1992. Cana Tešić lived in Bratunac with her husband and two children. In the early months of the war, she transported people to different places, helping to save their lives⁴⁴¹; **Radmila Žigić**, twenty days before the war broke out, organised an anti-war meeting in a place where such an endeavour was quite risky. Žigić lived in Orašje and, as she claimed, was not part of either the SDS or HDZ party, which shared power there. Feeling insecure, she resigned from the position of editor

436 Source: <http://word.world-citizenship.org/wp-archive/470> (April 10, 2014)

437 Hunt, S. p. 469

438 Spahić-Šiljak, Z. (2013) p. 30

439 Ibid. p. 110

440 Ibid. p. 140

441 Ibid. p. 166

in chief of the public radio station Orašje and returned to northeastern Bosnia, where Serbs/Orthodox made up the majority.⁴⁴² In 1993, Žigić, along with two other journalists, launched the magazine *Extra* in which they wrote about tyranny, profiteering and winning peace negotiations, aware that their writing about war crimes could, at any time, make them themselves victims⁴⁴³; **Galina Marjanović** lived in Banja Luka and, during the war, she and her husband helped the refugees who found refuge in Banja Luka. She founded the organisation *Duga*⁴⁴⁴; **Jasminka Rebac**, lived in Croatia during the war, where she, together with the Association *Povratak*, founded a school for refugee children who, at the time, did not have the right to attend regular schools in Croatia.⁴⁴⁵

Associations

The first peace initiatives in the region emerged in early 1991 and were launched by women. The organisation *Women in Black* from Serbia and women's group *Silence kills – Let's Speak for Peace* from Slovenia organised candle-lit vigils every night in the major city squares of Ljubljana and Belgrade. *Women in Black* came out publicly and spoke of their responsibility for the war in the framework of the collective responsibility of Serbia. They organised admission centres for women and children who fled from war affected zones. Other organisations that helped women refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina included: *Suncokret Centar za žene žrtve rata* [A Sunflower – Centre for Women Victims of War], *B.a.B.e. – Grupa za ženska ljudska prava* [Group for Women's Human Rights], *ZaMir* [For Peace] – *electronic network in Zagreb, Pakrac, Belgrade, Sarajevo, Tuzla and Priština*, through which women activists cooperated with each other.⁴⁴⁶ Women's groups from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia initiated the first women's peace talks and exchanges in 1993 in Zagreb and Geneva. At the time, such activities were seen as treacherous, because nationalist ideology did not want to see any kind of association among the states that emerged from the former Yugoslavia.⁴⁴⁷ The women's initiative *Pokret majki* [Mothers' Movement] emerged at the outbreak of the war in Slovenia, and spread its activities to war affected Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Mothers' Movement* in Bosnia and Herzegovina had only one demand, which was for their sons to be released from the Yugoslav People's Army. Over time, *the Mothers' Movement* was used to increase ethnic tensions.⁴⁴⁸

442 Ibid. p. 274

443 Ibid. p. 276

444 Hunt, S. p. 425

445 Spahić-Šiljak, Zilka (2013) p. 292

446 Dautbegović-Bošnjaković, S. (2013)

447 Ibid. p. 83

448 Source: <http://postjugo.filg.uj.edu.pl/baza/files/212/ratirod.pdf> (June 20, 2014)

Bosnia and Herzegovina was a unique case, because the peace movement in BiH was the strongest at the beginning. There were hundreds of people in Mostar, Banja Luka, Sarajevo and other places, protesting against war. At the time, the peace movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina was united. People acted together regardless of their ethnic differences, aware of the tragedy that would affect them if Yugoslavia fell apart.⁴⁴⁹

One of the first women's organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina was *Medica-centar za terapiju žena* [Medica-centre for women's therapy] in Zenica, established by Dr. **Monika Hauser** in 1993. Gynaecologists and psychologists from different ethnic backgrounds who worked in Medica provided assistance to women and children victims of rape and war.

*It is November 1992. The wild war in the Balkans has been ramping for already a year. In the heart of Europe. German media constantly write about it. They report on the situation in the battlefields and the waves of refugees. For months, however, one thing has been taken in silence – it is unclear whether this is so because the war reporters deemed it unimportant or because the victims themselves avoided the cameras and microphones of the world: in this war, women and girls are being raped. The rapes are systematic and massive; taking place after the conquest of villages, in the concentration camps, in special brothels with women – ‘the spoils of war’.*⁴⁵⁰

Zlatiborka Popov-Momčinović, in her book *Women's Movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina – The Articulation of a Counterculture* suggests that the first formal women's group was formed, which applied and lived feminism through its dedicated work with women victims of violence.⁴⁵¹ Hauser's approach implied that the victim should be first brought to a state of stability, prior to undergoing any therapy and facing war experiences. This was achieved through various exercises aimed at reminding women of their internal strength.⁴⁵² Hauser and her team visited refugee camps, often crossing the territories controlled by different armies.⁴⁵³

Women also gathered around the *Association for Intercultural Activities and Preservation of the B&H Heritage – AIASN*, which was registered in October 1992 with aim to collect information about the destruction of cultural and historical heritage. Members initially gathered in the premises of the Municipality *Centar*, which was given to the International Centre for Peace, some members of which collected obituaries of children and of other citizens who had been killed, while other members – who would later establish AIASN – collected information about the

449 Ibid.

450 Hauser, M. p. 9

451 Popov-Momčinović, Z. (2013) p. 111

452 Hauser, M. p. 59

453 Ibid. p. 9

destruction of heritage. In February 1993, they organised the first symposium entitled *Historija zdravstvene i socijalne kulture BiH* [History of Health and Welfare in Bosnia and Herzegovina]⁴⁵⁴. The association *Mak Bosanka* brought together women academics who ran a media campaign for the acceptance of raped women and children born out of forced pregnancies. They organised lectures on different areas of health, education and culture. This association was founded by **Tatjana Najdhart**, **Mevlida Serdarević** and **Edina Vlašić**. As a part of the activities of this association, **Methija Maglajlić**, **Jasmina Musabegović** and **Mediha Halvo** organised the first exhibition on the suffering of women and children in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The exhibition was presented in the Gallery MAK.⁴⁵⁵ **Hamijeta Ibričević** and **Mevlida Serdarević**, as members of the association *MAK Bosanka*, participated in the activities related to reorganisation of the Islamic Community. Serdarević became the very first female Member of Parliament of the Islamic Community in its history.⁴⁵⁶ The associations *AIASN* and *MAK Bosanka* also organised lectures in mosques.

The Jewish community focused on the activities of the humanitarian organisation and association *Bohoreta*, led by **Sonja Elezar**. Women were involved in many other organisations, which were not necessarily women's organisations, but dealt mainly with humanitarian work.⁴⁵⁷ The association *Sarajke* was established by Bakir Nakaš, Director of Sarajevo Hospital General and **Jasna Hasić**, an attorney of the Ministry of Health. Members of this association were volunteers who cleaned, carried water and took care of patients, most of whom came to the hospital by foot. In memory of their engagement, the Sarajevo Hospital General erected a monument – a bicycle – because the bicycle was the most desirable, but yet unavailable means of transportation at the time.⁴⁵⁸ **Mirsada Hodžić**, **Aisa Maca** and **Pava Barišić** were founders of the parent's forum *Sve za sve*. They rescued children from the hospital in Cavtat and conducted activities, the aim of which was to get young draftees home from the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA).⁴⁵⁹ The international initiative in Bosnia and Herzegovina *Biser* helped victims of rape in their re-socialisation. In March 1994, the organisation *Stope nade* established women's centres in Mostar, together with women from the local community. The aim was to bring together women and, after the war, to help refugees. During the war, the Swedish organisation *Kvinna til Kvinna* helped women and children

454 Lačević, F. (2008) *Uloga žene u odbrani Sarajeva: Duhovno-povijesne pretpostavke nezapamćenog otpora ženeopsadi i čudu snage u odbrani Sarajeva*, in: Okrugli sto Opsada i odbrana Sarajeva: 1992-1995, presented on November 23, 2005. Godine-Sarajevo, Institut za istraživanje zločina protiv čovječnosti i međunarodnog prava Univerziteta, p. 207

455 Ibid. p. 205

456 Ibid. p. 213

457 Omanić, A. et al. (2009) p. 210

458 Ibid. p. 178

459 Ibid. p. 177

refugees, especially those from Srebrenica who escaped to Tuzla, providing them with psychological assistance and helping them to stay close to their children.⁴⁶⁰ The association *Kakanjke Užok* was founded in 1993, with the aim to assist women in various segments of life in society. The association *Udruženje žena Tuzle* was founded in 1992 and *Žene sa Une* in 1994. One of the first associations established in memory of the first victim of the war in Sarajevo was *the Association Suada Dilberović*. This association worked in education and in gathering together children and young people. Similar activities were carried out in the Association *Fatma*, which was established in Sarajevo in 1993, but carried out its activities in several cities of the country.⁴⁶¹ Inspired by the initiative of *MAK Bosanke and Medica Zenica*, some women's organisations such as *Bosančica, Sarajka, Žena BiH, Žena 21, Biser, Sumejja*, etc. formed the Union of Women's Associations of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ŽAR). The first meeting of the Union took place in Tuzla, on 8 October 1994⁴⁶² and was attended by 38 organisations from all free territories, including the associations of women combatants.⁴⁶³ One of the most active members of the association of women combatants was **Zuhra Brkić**, who, prior to the war, worked as a judge in Živinice. It is important to note that most women's organisation took place in Sarajevo, since it was the capital of the country and, in a way, a symbol of resistance. In a meeting of the associations of women combatants it was agreed to focus all the activities in Sarajevo, regardless of the fact that these women were from Zenica, Živinice, Travnik, Bihac, Konjic and other places.⁴⁶⁴

Swanee Hunt also mentioned some of the organisations established during the war: *Kolo srpskih sestara* [Circle of Serb Sisters]; *Udruženje žena Hercegovke-borci* [Women's Association of Herzegovinian Combatants], the initiative launched in 1994 and officially registered in 1997; *Žena BiH* [Woman of Bosnia and Herzegovina], established in 1994 in Mostar, *Vive žene* [Vive Women], established in 1994 in Tuzla; *Žene za žene* [Women for Women], established in 1993; *Forum žena Gračanica* [Women' Forum from Gračanica], established in 1992; *Žena 21* [Woman 21], established in 1994; *Srcem do mira* [Through Heart to Peace], established in 1992 in Zagreb, originally under the name *Women of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, but later renamed *Through Heart to Peace* and continuing operations in Sanski Most; *Bosanska familija "Bosfam"* [Bosnian Family "Bosfam"], established in 1994 with support of organisation OXFAM.⁴⁶⁵

Members of the women's section of the Association *Bohoreta*

460 Source: http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/Resources/NGO/kvinna_tomakeroom-forchanges_2006.pdf (June 20, 2014)

461 Omanić, A. et al. (2009) p. 206

462 Ibid. p. 211

463 Ibid. p. 204

464 Ibid. p. 205

465 Hunt, S. p. 617-619

voluntarily visited the helpless, sick and disabled, bringing them water, humanitarian aid and medicines, and thereby helping them feel safe and secure, rather than alone and abandoned. In early 1993 throughout Europe sisterhoods of the *Association La Benevolencija* started emerging. As a result, a network of organisations called *Prijatelji La Benevolencije* [Friends of La Benevolencija] was established, which collected all sorts of assistance – money, food, medical equipment and medicines.

Women Symbols of Resistance and Many Other Nameless Heroines

Suada Dilberović, a senior year medical student from Dubrovnik. She studied in Sarajevo and was one of the participants in the first peace protests organised before the Assembly of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁴⁶⁶ She will remain remembered as one of the first two victims of the war in Sarajevo, who were killed on the Vrbanja Bridge. The other was **Olga Sučić**, a clerk of the Assembly, who was 34 at the time. Sučić died on the way to hospital. On April 5, the central news reported news of Suada Dilberović, the first victim killed on the Vrbanja Bridge, while Olga Sučić was not mentioned. Both Dilberović and Sučić were buried in the Cemetery *Bare* on 8 April, however, while Dilberović's funeral was attended by hundreds of citizens and journalists, Sučić's funeral was attended only by the closest members of her family. On 6 April 1996 the Vrbanja Bridge was renamed the Bridge of Suada Dilberović. Gordana Trifković, Sučić's ex-husband, together with an *Oslobođenje* journalist, Edina Kamenica managed, after long efforts, to have her name inscribed on the memorial plaque only in December 1999. On 3 December 1999, the Official Gazette of Canton Sarajevo published the following: *At the site of the Vrbanja Bridge, the territory of Municipality Center, a memorial plaque will be placed in memory of Suada Dilberović and Olga Sučić, who were, on 5 April 1992, killed by paramilitary groups of SDS.* The old plaque was not replaced until 6 April 2001.⁴⁶⁷



A postage stamp *Jasnin encijan* [Jasna's Gentian or Gentiana jasnae] was named after **Jasna Šarić**, an assistant professor of the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, who was killed in 1993 while she waited in the queue for water in front of the Sarajevo Brewery. After her death, the endemic plant of Bosnia and Herzegovina was named after her – *Gentiana jasnae*. The postage stamp won first

466 Mulić-Bušatlija, S. (2008) *Vrbanja most, Trči, Nora, trči! O mostu, Suadi i Olgi*, DANI, special issue, Civitas, April, p. 33

467 *Ibid.* p. 33

place in China in 2011.

Kadira Mujanović is a woman who, in the first few months of the war, lived in the City Hall, until it was set on fire on 25 August 1992. Mujanović was an employee of the National Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and when the war broke out she moved in the City Hall, together with her family, in order not to risk her life walking every day back and forth from Bare, a Sarajevo suburb, to work. There were two another two families who lived in the City Hall for the same reason.⁴⁶⁸

In 1993, Miss Besieged Sarajevo contest took place in Bosnian Cultural Centre (BKC). The winner of the contest was **Inela Nogić**, who soon became a symbol of Sarajevo resistance. The girls participating in the contest sent a message to the world: *Don't let them kill us. Miss Sarajevo* became the single which the band U2 dedicated to Inela Nogić.⁴⁶⁹

In January 1995 a Roma Ball was organised, in which **Lindita Tatri** won the Miss beauty pageant.

Maja Đokić, an athlete, was only 17 years old when she was killed on 9 April 1995 in Sarajevo. Humanist Michael Mahoney established a fund in her memory.⁴⁷⁰

Kada Delić and **Mirjana Horvat** were the only women who qualified for the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona. In their team were also **Mirsada Burić** (athletics) and **Anja Margetić** (swimming), and in the 1993 Mediterranean Games our women's basketball team won the first gold medal for Bosnia and Herzegovina. After the Olympics in Barcelona, Delić participated in the 1993 World Championship in Athletics in Stuttgart, the 1994 European Indoor Championship in Paris, the 1995 World Championship in Athletics in Gothenburg. **Bibija Kerla** was the 1992 national champion in doubles (bowling) and was invited to the national team of the former Yugoslavia that was supposed to compete at the World Championship. In 1994, in Ludwigshafen, she participated in the Bowling World Cup as a member of the BiH national team.

Cultural Life and Women

The war situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina required mobilisation of women and their submission to a higher state and national goals. However, there were several women's organisations operating in Sarajevo, and the cultural life of Sarajevo was largely run by women. Instead of

468 Haman, A. *Kadira Mujanović, žena koja je živjela u Vijećnici*, Front slobode, source: <http://www.frontslobode.ba/vijesti/drustvo/19963/kadira-mujanovic-zena-koja-je-zivjela-u-vijecnici> (June 10, 2014)

469 Source: <http://www.klix.ba/magazin/showbiz/miss-opkoljenog-sarajeva-za-klix-ba-na-izboru-za-miss-smo-porucile-da-je-duh-naseg-naroda-neunistiv/140608060#6> (June 9, 2014)

470 Omanić, A. (2009) p. 177

repeating the AFŽ model, a kind of spiteful insistence on urban identity of women emerged in Sarajevo.⁴⁷¹

During the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina a new generation of artists emerged whose personal and artistic maturing was determined by war experiences. Art was a way of survival and it created space for a creative approach to solving existential problems, which were not only a matter of physical survival.

Under the rain of ammunition flying over their heads, artists (not platitudes and it refers to the larger centres such as Sarajevo, Mostar, Tuzla, Zenica and other places), starving and frostbitten, went to rehearsals, and under candlelight and next to a wood stove - or in rare happy moments in Sarajevo, next to gas heaters - interpreted characters of Beckett, Sartre, Mrožek, Chekhov ... Indeed, there were some national patriotic themes, but classics and contemporaries focusing on existentialism prevailed. It appeared that after the pre-war national momentum and the *big* themes, which gave preference to collective over individual identity, during the war one began to think again about the meaning and meaninglessness of human existence, the individuals, both male and female, and their destinies, desires and fears. *Small people* and *ordinary stories* - as it is commonly termed in public discourse - became the centre of a war of meaninglessness. During the war, most of the artists thought and acted in this way, while rehearsing at basement stages and galleries. The basement space, in which art was both created and consumed, was paradigmatic.⁴⁷²

Gradually, in museums, galleries, archives and other cultural institutions remained mostly women, who organised the work of these institutions and rescued museum, archive, library and other material. In the National Museum, for example, of a total of 60 employees, only 18 remained, most of whom were women. **Azra Begić**, curator of the National Gallery of Bosnia and Herzegovina, **Behija Zlatar**, and many other women organised the rescue of material, and were also involved in rescuing the Gazi Husrev-bey Library. At that time women were not in managerial positions in cultural institutions. The only woman in a managerial position was **Dženana Gološ**, Directress of the Institute for Protection of Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage of Sarajevo. **Lejla Gazić** became Directress of this Institute when the Oriental Institute was destroyed.⁴⁷³ Interestingly, during the war an art troop of the 1st Corpse of the RBiH Army formed, which brought together artists from various fields of art who contributed not only to the development of culture but also to resistance efforts. **Azra Begić** and **Nermina Zildžo**, art historians from the

471 Splapšak, S. (1996) *Žene i rat u bivšoj Jugoslaviji*, Ogleđi, Republika br.145-146 1-31. August, source: <http://www.yurope.com/zines/republika/arhiva/96/145/145-16.html> (April 21, 2014)

472 Kaikčija, L. *Ženske/feminističke izvedbene umjetnosti u BiH 1990-2010: razvoj i kontekst in: Ženski glasovi u izvedbenim umjetnostima Zapadnog Balkana 1990-2010.*, p. 90

473 Ibid. p. 215

BiH Gallery, also made their contribution, as did **Mirsada Baljić**, who was the head of the visual art section of the *Art Troop* of the Army of RBiH from 1992 until 1995.

Then, there was **Alma Suljević**, a sculptress who reshaped a destroyed tram into an allegorical *Kentauromahia*⁴⁷⁴. Suljević was one of the participants in the peaceful protests at the Vrbanja Bridge, where Suada Dilberović and Olga Sučić were killed. She helped remove one of the victims from the crime scene, and only later found out that the victim was Olga Sučić. During the war, the Directing Department of the Academy of Performing Arts in Sarajevo enrolled only two female students. In 1994, the Academy formed a Dramaturgy Department. During the war, many women from abroad visited Sarajevo, among them **Susan Sontag**, who in 1994 directed Beckett's play *Waiting for Godot* in the Sarajevo Youth Theatre. Sontag was followed by Liv Ullmann, Bibi Andersson, Joan Baez, Annie Leibovitz, Damian Cerne, Maria Black Belair, Anne Marie Bezdrob, etc.⁴⁷⁵ The premiere of Sontag's play *Waiting for Godot* took place in Sarajevo on 17 August 1993, with actresses **Ines Fančović**, **Nada Đurevska**, **Irena Mulamuhić** and **Milijana Zirojević** starring in it. **Izeta Građević**, together with several artists, opened a gallery in the Obala Art Centre, which hosted numerous exhibitions of international artists during the war, among which was the exhibition of Annie Leibovitz in October 1993, *Sarajevo Portraits*.⁴⁷⁶ **Dalida Hadžihalilović** was a member of the design group Trio, who during the war designed numerous posters. They became known for their exhibition *Greetings from Sarajevo*, which was presented in many European galleries and on the pages of international magazines. On 17 May 1992 Sarajevo War Theater *Sartre* was established, but in August it was made a constituent part of the Regional Headquarters of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo. On 12 January 1993, by a Decision of the War Presidency of the Assembly of the City of Sarajevo, it was declared a public institution in the field of culture of particular interest for the defence of the city. On 10 January 1994, this theatre performed its play *Silk Drums* at the premises of the Surgery Department of Koševo Hospital. At the time, the members of the SARTR company were **Ines Fančović**, **Irena Mulamuhić**, **Lejla Pašović-Mustafić**, **Amela Vilić**, and **Mirjana Čistopoljski**. In 1993, Mess Festival grew into an international theatre and film festival. Members of its team at the time were **Lejla Pašović-Mustafić**, **Lejla Hasanbegović**, **Mirsada Bjelak-Škrijelj**, **Ognjenka Finci**, **Marijela Margeta**, **Nada Salom**, **Senada Kreso**, **Aida Čengić**.⁴⁷⁷ **Greta Ferušić** is a woman who survived both the Auschwitz

474 Abadžić-Hodžić, A. *Osvrt na neke aspekte umjetničke produkcije u BiH 1990-ih*, source: <http://behar.hr/osvrt-na-neke-aspekte-umjetnicke-produkcije-u-bih-1990-ih/#> (June 12, 2014)

475 More on war-time art in Sarajevo: <http://www.famacollection.org/bhs/>

476 Seksan, V. (2008) *Trijumf volje*, Dani, special issue April, Civitas, p. 131

477 Pašović, H. (2008) *Za šta smo se borili*, Dani, special issue April, Civitas, p. 136

death camp and the siege of Sarajevo, and whose life was presented in a documentary filmed in 1996 in Sarajevo, Auschwitz and Jerusalem.⁴⁷⁸

Nađa Mehmedbašić worked as a TV reporter and producer. In the television festival in Japan, INICEF awarded her a *Prix Japon* for her film *Sarajevski spomenar* [Sarajevo Album], which she filmed during the war. Actress Liv Ullman herself appeared at the premiere of this film in Cinema Tesla, which was organised in the early days of peace. During the war she worked as a journalist and editor in various media. She also started a puppet theatre *Sun Side* [Sunčana strana], for which she wrote plays and songs. Her plays were often performed in basements and children's wards. In 2005, owing to her journalistic engagement, Nađa was among seven women from Bosnia and Herzegovina nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, and in 2006 she was included in the book *1000 Peace Women*, published in Geneva.⁴⁷⁹ The very first play of the newly established theatre SARTR, *Sklonište* [Shelter] was written for **Jasna Diklić**. Safet Plakalo and director Dubravko Bibanović chose Jasna Diklić to play the character of Mina Hauzen. This role won her the title of the Woman of the Year in art in Bosnia and Herzegovina 1997. **Nermína Kurspahić** was, during the war, the editor in chief of *Odjek* [Echo], the oldest magazine for art, culture, science, and social issues in BiH. **Amra Zulfikarpašić**, a graphic designer, having received a package during the war from a friend and colleague Mila Melank, organised a performance at the *Kamerni teatar 55*. She previously shared the cans of food she received with her friends, and Sarajevo culinary wizards made a big feast from these food shipments. The performance was called *Otvaranje Milinog paketa* [The Opening of Mila's package].⁴⁸⁰

Dubravka Zrnčić-Kulenović has lived in Sarajevo since 1965. She graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy, Department for Theatre Studies and Comparative Literature in 1976, and since then worked as a dramaturge at the Puppet Theatre. After integration of the two theatres she worked as a dramaturge of the Puppet Department of the Youth Theatre, and later took over its Drama Department. During the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina she was a freelance artist in Croatia. In 1996 she returned to Sarajevo and worked as a dramaturge of the Sarajevo War Theatre. In 1997, with a group of artists she founded a Puppet Studio, as the first independent and informal school in Bosnia and Herzegovina for young artists and children, where she works as a pedagogue. As a dramaturge, she was involved in over one hundred plays, many of which she also directed.⁴⁸¹

Ljubica Ostojić (1945) was born in Belgrade. At the end of 1945 she

478 Ibid. p. 137

479 Biser, Internacionalna inicijativa žena Bosne i Hercegovine, Sarajevo, March 8, 2007

480 Source: <http://www.source.ba/clanak/8801413/> (July 14, 2014)

481 Source: <http://novovrijeme.ba/dubravka-zrncic-kulenovic-dramaturginja-i-rediteljica-neophodno-je-reorganizirati-institucije-kulture/> (July 2, 2014)

moved with her family to Sarajevo, where she currently lives and works. She graduated in visual arts from the Pedagogical Academy and majored comparative literature and theatre studies at the Faculty of Philosophy. She worked as a dramaturge of the Drama Department of the Youth Theatre and a long-time theatre critic for newspapers *Oslobođenje*, *Večernje novine*, *Odjek* and *Književna revija*. She is the editor of the documentary, experimental and poetic drama on Radio Sarajevo, and a dramaturge associate of the Mostar Youth Theatre. Since 1994 she has worked as a full professor of the Sarajevo Academy of Performing Arts where she teaches practical dramaturgy. She writes radio plays, TV dramas, screenplays, reviews and essays in the field of performing arts, literature and visual arts. As a dramaturge, dramatiser and adapter she has worked on many plays in contemporary theatre. Since 1974 she has been a member of the Writers' Association, and since 2007 a member of the P.E.N. Centre. She won many literary and theatre awards, including the *Grozdanin kikut* award for contribution to the development of drama teaching in 2000.⁴⁸²

Literature

The nineties, as the first decade of post-Yugoslav Bosnia and Herzegovina, were characterised by a period of war letters⁴⁸³ - writing as Derridian public mourning and bereavement, the war letters as a traumatic facing of the real horrors of war, war devastation and the vulnerability of the human body. Within these poetics, there is the woman's wartime letter - not only as an integral part of the poetics but also as a partial construct that implies difference - as a strategy that contrasts the heroic male figure and the sacrificial female figure. As a result of the break-up of Yugoslavia, the creation of ethnically clean areas and escalation of nationalist discourse, the patriarchal division of roles to male figures, who are portrayed as heroes or warriors, and female characters, portrayed as victims and guardians of the patriarchal home and order, imposed themselves as a dominant interpretation of the spook of war destruction. One of the most symptomatic interpretations is the analysis of *Hasanaginica*, the mythical character of South Slavic peoples, which appears in all literary history overviews of the region, in this case of Bosniaks, through which one can track all the changes that replaced Yugoslavianism by *awakening* homogeneous national awareness. In the SFRJ, *Hasanaginica* and her concept of so-called guilt - *but his wife, she could not, because of modesty* - was seen as a class dispute in the caste organisation of feudal society, while in the post-Yugoslav Bosnia and Herzegovina, *Hasanaginica* died as a Muslim, and *her shame is pristine and her tragedy inspiring. Nothing could have and*

482 Source: <http://www.bh-leksikon.ba/index.php?sid=879> (July 13, 2014)

483 See: Moranjak-Bamburać, N. (2004) *Ima li rata u ratnom pismu?* in Sarajevske sveske, 5, Sarajevo: Mediacentar, p. 79-93

should not have been otherwise.⁴⁸⁴ Both interpretations fit the ideological tendencies within which they were interpreted, except that the latter is related to the female figure portrayed as a sacrifice. Such a female figure, who sacrifices herself for the sake of home, husband, father or children is always needed in the process of awakening national awareness and promoting the nationalist rhetoric of liberation. In such circumstances ideologically imposed poetics subversive trends occurred among novelists such as **Ferida Duraković** (1958), **Alma Lazarevska** (1957) and **Jasna Šamić** (1949), as an attempt to denote differences in resistance against the hard core male discourse that finds its ultimate embodiment in a warrior discourse⁴⁸⁵, deconstructing the power structures, power and knowledge, which *inter alia* led to a traumatic encounter with the ghosts of war. As authors, they betray the dominant nationalist discourse by offering the unexpected narrative of war traumas, which abandons heroic figures in general, be it male or female.

Ferida Duraković in her – now iconic – collection of poems *Srce Tame* [Heart of Darkness] (1992), confronts the heroic figure of the warrior hero with the figure of a mother who demands the right to her story, the personal version of her war experience and history, devoid of anthologies, canonisation, and official trends. The figure of the mother as a lyrical subject in her poems leaves the role of victim determined by the circumstances of life and resists the structures, which reduce the mourning to a process of accelerated oblivescence of loss and the past for the sake of formal reconciliation. Duraković, in her poems, deals with the concept of history, seeking to reduce the official historiography to a narrative – the narrative in which not everyone can participate, especially not those whose experience of war does not coincide with the official power and reconciliation structures.

Alma Lazarevska (1957) was born in Veles, Macedonia. She is a contemporary Bosnian author and publicist. She completed elementary and secondary schools in Sarajevo and graduated from the Sarajevo Faculty of Philosophy. She writes and publishes since 1981 and her works include fiction, essays and columns. She is the author of the collection of short stories titled *Smrt u Muzeju moderne umjetnosti* [Death at the Museum of Modern Art], which was published in 1996, and which deals with the siege of Sarajevo. Her bibliography includes essays *Sarajevski pasijans* [Sarajevo Solitaire] from 1994, a novel *U znaku ruže* [Under the Sign of a Rose] (1996), short stories *Biljke su nešto drugo* [Plants are a Different Matter] (2002). In 1986 Lazarevska won the Yugoslav Journalism Award *Dušan Timotijević* and the 1996 Best Book prize of the BiH Association of Writers.⁴⁸⁶ In the short story collection *Smrt u Muzeju moderne umjetnos-*

484 Šehabović, Š. (2004) *Mit o Hasanaginici, kulturalne matrice i rodna isključivanja* in *Razlika/Difference*, 9, Tuzla: Društvo za književna i kulturalna istraživanja, p. 283-291

485 Moranjak-Bamburać, N. (2003) *Signature smrti i etičnost ženskog pisma in Sarajevske sveske*, 2, Sarajevo: Mediacentar, p. 113-123

486 Hawkesworth, C. (2000); http://sh.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alma_Lazarevska; <http://www>.

ti (1996.), and her novel *U znaku ruže* (1996.) Alma Lazarevska is trying to save from oblivion and sudden abandonment the stereotypical heroic rhetoric, which many of us witnessed, but are reluctant to recall, returning slowly to the mainstream patriarchal views of the world.⁴⁸⁷ In a Proustian style of storytelling, completely innovative in the South Slavic inter-literary community, Lazarevska through the questioning of experience of pain betrays the readership by not giving them what is expected of a war narrative. *There are books talked about and talked to. Smrt u Muzeju moderne umjetnosti for me is the book with which I still have an open dialogue, and while I am diving into the associative vortex of the fluid storytelling, I can hardly define the ways in which it affects me.*⁴⁸⁸

Jasna Šamić in her novel *Mraz i pepeo* [Frost and Ashes] (1997) settles accounts with her personal areas of identity between the boundaries, i.e. our literature in exile. Her prose work represents a text in which the woman appears as a generator of meaningfulness, and where a whole series of cultural stereotypes such as the question of identity, nation and homeland, the issue of family and women's role in it, and above all, the position of women intellectuals in unstable times of political and ideological turmoil, demolition of one and the establishment of other "values" on the nationalistic grounds, are examined based on women's experience and from the female perspective.⁴⁸⁹ This novel, interpreted within post-structural theories and feminist critiques, represents a deconstruction of self-explanatory understanding of tradition, fragmented constructions of identity within them, the position of female characters as excluded, despised and rejected *others*, eligible only as vulnerable victims, mothers and guardians of patriarchal order. Confronting the big stories, this novel searches for the personal experiences of history, the attempts at reconstruction of the alleged official knowledge, because *when writing a history, one need not lie, just omit some things*, as one of the protagonists in the novel states.

All three authors articulate their poetics as a *feminist* type of text with a clear strategy of questioning the methods, objects, goals or principles of the main currents of patriarchal canons. Through the strategy of deconstruction they question the self-explanatory understanding of patriarchy and of the literature itself.

Women War Criminals

The first woman from Bosnia convicted of a war crime against humanity before the Hague Tribunal was **Biljana Plavšić**, a former President

penbih.ba/kojeko/lazarevska.htm (July 12, 2014)

487 Moranjak-Bamburać, N. (2003) p. 113-123

488 Ibid.

489 Denić-Grabić, A. (2010) *Bosanskohercegovačkih roman na kraju 20. stoljeća*, Brčko: Preporod

of Republika Srpska. She was sentenced to 11 years' imprisonment, but was released after serving only two thirds of her sentence.⁴⁹⁰ The Hague Tribunal convicted Plavšić because, in the period from 1 July 1992 to 3 December 1992, *in concert with others in a joint criminal enterprise, Biljana Plavšić planned, instigated, ordered, assisted and executed the persecutions of Bosnian Muslims, Bosnian Croats and other non-Serb populations in 37 municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.*⁴⁹¹ Plavšić voluntarily surrendered to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia on 10 January 2001. During her time in prison, she released a book entitled *Svjedočim I and II* [Witnessing I and II], revealing her vision of the war, the work of SDS, and relationships with then key politicians and with Arkan and the period after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement.⁴⁹² The first woman convicted of war crimes in BiH was **Rasema Handanović**. The Court sentenced her for the criminal offense of War Crimes against Civilians and War Crimes against Prisoners of War because she participated in the attack on the village of Trusina, Municipality of Konjic, on 16 April 1993, as a member of the Special Unit for Special Purposes, the *Zulfikar*, which was under the Supreme Command of the Army of RBiH. She was accused of participating in a firing-squad execution of prisoners of war and civilians. The Court sentenced her to five-and-a-half years in prison, after she struck a plea bargain with the Prosecutors' Office.⁴⁹³ From 1996 until her extradition she lived in the United States under a false name. **Albina Terzić** has been convicted before the Court of BiH and sentenced to five years in prison for war crimes against civilians on the charges that, as a member of the HVO, she participated in the inhumane treatment of civilians of Serbian nationality who were unlawfully detained in the elementary school in Odžak, and factory *Strolit* in Odžak in 1992. **Monika Karan-Ilić** was convicted of war crimes against civilians on the charge that she participated in torture, inhumane treatment and infliction of suffering on Bosniak and Croat civilians in the Luka camp and Brčko police station. Another woman accused of war crimes against humanity was **Marina Grubišić – Fejzić**, who, in the period from May until August 1992, as a member of HOS, participated in the crimes committed against Serb prisoners detained in *Dretelj* camp. This case is still in the trail phase.⁴⁹⁴ **Azra Bašić**⁴⁹⁵ was accused before the BiH Court of war

490 Source: <http://www.blic.rs/Vesti/Hronika/348783/U-BiH-pet-zena-osudjeno-zbog-ratnih-zlocina> (April 10, 2014) *U BiH pet žena osuđeno zbog ratnih zločina*, Tanjug | October 20, 2012

491 Court proceedings against Biljana Plavšić ICTY, case no. IT-00-39 I 40/1 (Indictment from January 10, 2001, judgment dated February 27, 2003)

492 Krupić, A. (2010) *Žene ratni zločinci: s posebnim osvrtom na žene izvršioce ratnih zločina u Bosni i Hercegovini 1992-1995*, Dobra knjiga, Sarajevo, p. 135-137

493 Source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2137411/Rasema-Handanovic-guilty-war-crimes-Bosnia.html> (July 12, 2014)

494 Source: <http://www.sudbih.gov.ba/index.php?opcija=predmeti&id=698&jezik=b> (June 20, 2014)

495 Source: <http://www.lex18.com/news/croatian-living-in-kentucky-cleared-for-return-in->

crimes against Serb civilians in the war camp near Derventa. The local court in Belgrade sentenced **Nada Kalaba** to nine years in prison on the charge that she participated in the 1991 massacre in the eastern Croatian town of Vukovar. **Indira Kemerić** from Tuzla was accused of a war crime against the civilian population. The case is still in the trial phase.

So far a total of nine women were accused of war crimes committed during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In seven cases, the charges also included criminal offences of sexual violence (Albina Terzić⁴⁹⁶, Indira Kamerić,⁴⁹⁷ Marina Grubišić-Fejzić,⁴⁹⁸ Monika Karan-Ilić, Radmila Banjac, Bora Kuburić, Dragana Đekić). In various prosecutors' offices in Bosnia and Herzegovina investigations are being conducted against some 40 women suspected of involvement in war crimes.⁴⁹⁹ Almira Krupić conducted research on women war criminals and in her book *Žene ratni zločinci*⁵⁰⁰ [Women War Criminals], she portrayed women who were committing war crimes in Bosnia in the period of 1992-1995. She identified a list of twenty women who, according to the testimonies of the witnesses, were involved in the atrocities.

Women and Politics, 1992-2014

After the first democratic, multi-party elections, which took place in 1990, women in the Assembly of BiH held 2.92% of the seats, which was the lowest ratio of women's participation in the highest-level authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina since 1946. At the local level, in the elections for municipal assemblies, they won 5.0% of the seats.⁵⁰¹ The lists were closed and the patriarchal environment and general re-traditionalisation of society had an impact on the structure of political parties and the defining of electoral lists.⁵⁰² Following a referendum in the spring of 1992, a new chapter in the life for the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina was opened, marked by suffering, losses of families, property, dignity, in which women were not significantly politically involved. After the first post-war general elections in 1996, power was assumed by the leading national parties, the same parties that were in power during the war, which repre-

war-crimes-case/ (June 5, 2014)

496 Source: <http://www.justice-report.com/en/articles/albina-terzić-nagrada-za-silovanje> (June 5, 2014)

497 Source: <http://www.justice-report.com/en/articles/primoravan-da-udara-i-seksualno-zlostavlja> (June 5, 2014)

498 Source: <http://www.justice-report.com/en/en-audio/zelenika-et-al-forced-to-have-oral-sex> (June 5, 2014)

499 Source: <http://www.justice-report.com/en/articles/žene-okrutnije-u-zločinima> (June 5, 2014)

500 See: Krupić, A. (2010) p. 90

501 Taljanović, A. (2010) p. 73

502 See: Spahić-Šiljak, Z. (2007) *Žene, religija i politika*, IMIC, CIPS, TPO, Sarajevo

sented the three largest ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina (SDA, HDZ and SDS). In the House of Representatives of the BiH Parliament women accounted for 2.38 %, whereas they accounted for 5% and 1.89% in the House of Representatives of the Federation Parliament and in the National Assembly of Republika Srpska respectively.⁵⁰³ In the 1998 General Elections, women accounted for 26% of the House of Representatives of the BiH Parliament, 15% in the House of Representatives of the Federation Parliament and 22.8% in the National Assembly of Republika Srpska.⁵⁰⁴ In the 1997 Local Elections, women accounted for 6.15% and 2.4% in the Federation of BiH and Republika Srpska respectively.⁵⁰⁵ In the 2000 General Elections, there was 4.76% women's representation in the House of Representatives of the BiH Parliament, 17.4% in the House of Representatives of the Federation Parliament and 14.86% in the National Assembly of Republika Srpska. That year open lists were introduced, which enabled an individual approach to campaigning.⁵⁰⁶ In the 2004 Local Elections women achieved representation of 18.1%.⁵⁰⁷ In the 2006 Elections, women accounted for 14.28% in the House of Representatives of the BiH Parliament, 21.42% in the House of Representatives of the Federation Parliament and 20.48% in the National Assembly of Republika Srpska.⁵⁰⁸ After the 2010 General and 2012 Local Elections, results⁵⁰⁹ showed that participation of men and women in legislative bodies at all levels were similar to the results of earlier elections. Currently, there is not a single woman in the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The House of Representatives of the BiH Parliament is made up of 33 men and 9 women, while the House of Peoples of the BiH Parliament comprises 13 men and 2 women. In the Council of Ministers there is not a single woman holding a ministerial position. The Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina comprises 16 men and 1 woman (Ministry of Environment and Tourism), while Government of Republika Srpska comprises 11 men and 5 women. The first woman Prime Minister of the RS Government, **Željka Cvijanović**, was elected in March 2013 in the Fifteenth Special Session of the RS National Assembly.⁵¹⁰

The OSCE programme *Women in Politics*, along with the campaign *Nas je više* [We Are More] led by women's non-governmental organisations in 1998, before the General Elections, promoted a *women's quota*, aiming to increase the number of women elected to legislative bodies. Owing to their efforts, the gender quota was introduced in the interim

503 Taljanović, A. (2010) p. 80

504 Ibid. p. 80

505 Ibid. p. 81

506 Ibid. p. 156

507 Ibid. p. 81

508 Ibid. p. 156

509 See: http://www.oscebih.org/documents/osce_bih_doc_2012071212593128bos.pdf

510 Source: <http://www.narodnaskupstinar.net/> (June 15, 2014)

election rules of the Election Law. The BiH Election Law, introducing a quota of 30% of the less represented gender on electoral lists, was adopted in 2001. After the introduction of the quota some positive changes occurred and in even the 1998 Parliamentary Elections the number of women MPs increased from 2.7% to 27.64%. At the same time, however, open lists were introduced, which obstructed the functioning of quotas.

The important legal documents governing the issue of equal participation of women in political life in BiH are the Constitution, the Law on Gender Equality in BiH, and the BiH Election Law. The Gender Equality Law, adopted in 2003, is one of the most important legal documents that regulate the position of women in the country and guarantee gender equality in economic, social and political life. The BiH Election Law is also an important legal document that governs the political rights of women in the country. It regulates the distribution of male and female candidates on electoral lists. Article 4.19, Paragraph 4 of the BiH Election Law imposes a binding electoral quota. This law foresees sanctions for noncompliance of the stipulated order. In March 2013, the Law on Amendments to the Election Law⁵¹¹ was adopted, following a recommendation by NGOs in the Alternative Report on the Implementation of CEDAW convention and Women's Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2010. The amendments concerned the provisions governing the election implementation bodies, as well as provisions governing the certification and nomination of candidates for elections, which incorporated the binding quota of 40% of the less represented gender.⁵¹²

In early February 2013, women MPs in the House of Representatives of the Federation Parliament established a Women's Caucus, which operates as an informal group. This initiative was launched by the International Republican Institute in BiH with the aim of enabling joint action of women MPs in advocating the initiatives within their respective parties and the government levels at which they operate.⁵¹³ Since then, this club of female politicians belonging to different political groups has made a significant effort in its organisational development and impact within the Parliament. To date, the caucus has worked with national NGOs to draft amendments to: increase sanctions against perpetrators of domestic violence and other criminal offences against women and girls such as incest, statutory rape, criminalised acts against maternity leave, change the age limit to be legally considered a minor, and harmonise compensation for maternity and paternity leave across the country.⁵¹⁴ As a part of its sup-

511 Law on Amendments to the Election Law BiH (Službeni glasnik BiH, no. 18/13), Articles 1 and 2

512 *Alternativni izvještaj, Dodatak 3, Alternativnom izvještaju o implementaciji CEDAW konvenciji i ženskim ljudskim pravima u Bosni i Hercegovini*, Sarajevski otvoreni centar, July 2013, p. 20

513 Ibid.

514 Garcia Fransioli, E. *Godišnji izvještaj o stanju prava žena u Bosni i Hercegovini tokom 2013.*

port for the EU integration process, and with assistance of the international community, BiH has, in recent years, launched a series of changes aimed at reforming the armed forces and police, the Constitution and other important areas of economic and political life.

In October 2013, 15 NGOs came together to create the Women's Platform for Constitutional Reform from a Gender Perspective. The Women's Platform prepared five demands to be included in the constitutional reform: application of gender-sensitive language in the Constitution of BiH, since the current constitution only uses the masculine gender, the introduction of affirmative action principles in the Constitution of BiH to work towards using the gender equality law to its full effect, amendments to the existing catalogue of fundamental rights, to include provisions with respect to common health care services, social and family care, affirmation of a higher level of judicial and legal protection of human rights and liberties, since the current constitution stresses the collective rights of constituent peoples (i.e. Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks) rather than the rights of the individual, the principle of direct democracy to be applied to the process of constitutional reform.⁵¹⁵

There are many barriers that keep women away from politics and decision-making in the public sphere. One such barrier is gender division of labour, according to which women are traditionally placed in the private sphere, which includes household chores or female tasks i.e. professions in the field of education. Political life is one of the segments in which women are under-represented. A reason for this is that society is imbued with traditional beliefs that women do not belong in the public sphere, influencing decisions on the issues that are relevant to the entire society. While women are formally and legally ensured equality and opportunity to elect and be elected, to participate equally in the distribution of power and decision-making functions, and to represent the government at the international level, they are still inadequately represented in the political life of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Open lists, many legal documents and recommendations of international organisations on the participation of women in politics favour of women's involvement in politics in BiH, but in practice, political life in Bosnia and Herzegovina does not treat women and men equally. Analysis of the position of women within political parties in BiH is a topic that deserves special attention, because political parties appear to be the main factors in positioning the candidates on the ballots and later, in allocating governmental posts after elections. Political parties often do not take into account specific women's issues, while at the same time, they deny women the opportunity to speak on behalf of the party or to represent the party. Women's branches of political parties often have no influence in the structures of their parties, nor do they participate in their policy-making forums.

p. 11

515 Ibid. p. 12

Among distinguished women who have marked political life during the war is **Tatjana Ljuljić-Mijatović**, wartime member of the Presidency and the only woman in a seven-member Presidency of the Socialist Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Ljuljić-Mijatović was elected a member of the BiH Parliament as a replacement of Nenad Kecmanović, who left Sarajevo at the beginning of the war.⁵¹⁶ Ljuljić-Mijatović was one of the women mentioned in Swanee Hunt's book, *This Was Not Our War*. Before the war Ljuljić-Mijatović worked as a professor of horticulture, and during the war she was the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Ambassador to UN in Vienna. At the beginning of the war she was interviewed by a Vienna Television about the siege of Sarajevo. After this interview, Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs requested that she be appointed the BiH Ambassador in Vienna, and so it came to pass in 1993. After the war, Ljuljić-Mijatović remained in the Social-Democratic Party.⁵¹⁷ Another woman, who significantly influenced political life in BiH, was **Biljana Plavšić**. She was born in 1930 in Tuzla. Plavšić sat in the hierarchy of the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) from its very establishment. She was a member of the Collective Presidency from 18 November 1990 until April 1992, and President of the Council for Protection of the Constitutional Order of the BiH Presidency and the first President of a Serb Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, serving from 28 February 1992 until 12 May 1992.

Amila Omersoftić is a woman who left a significant mark on the media and political scene of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as co-founder of one of the three winning national parties, Party of Democratic Action (SDA), of which she was a member until 1996. Within the party, she served as the President of the Personnel Commission and a member of the Main Board⁵¹⁸, which meant that she was positioned at the top of one of the most powerful parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the period from 1994 until 1998 Omersoftić served as the Director General of the BiH Television (RTV BiH), as a direct appointee of the President Alija Izetbegović.⁵¹⁹ This is how Omersoftić described her appointment to the position of the director of National Television:

In February 1994, in the midst of fierce fighting of Serbs and Bosniaks on one side and Croats and Bosniaks on the other, in Sarajevo, showered by shells and sniper gunshots, five minutes before four o'clock, the phone in my office rang. I heard the voice of President Izetbegović, whom I have not seen or heard from for two months. "Amila, are you near a typewriter, he asked. Start writing your CV. Bega will be there

516 Pejanović, M. *Through Bosnian eyes*, p. 110

517 Hunt, S. p. 485

518 *Disciplinovanje medija BiH: Televizija u rukama Stranke demokratske akcije*, source: <http://www.aimpress.ch/dyn/pubs/archive/data/199405/40505-002-pubs-sar.htm> (April 10, 2014)

519 Ibid.

*in five minutes to collect it. The Session of the Presidency is about to start any time now and you will be appointed a directress of Radio-Television of Bosnia and Herzegovina". Before I managed to say "but Mr. President", he hung up.*⁵²⁰

One of the first dilemmas she encountered was a controversy about inter-ethnic marriages, which was discussed in the newspapers *Oslobođenje*, and which Omersoftić refused to report on in the news, despite the order received from Džemaludin Latić. Due to her refusal to air the requested response, she lost the support of the leadership of the SDA. *Soon we heard from Grand Mufti*⁵²¹. *He asked for 15 minutes in the News to say what he thinks of it. I turned him down, telling him that the maximum time log he could get was 90 seconds. Thereupon I lost the support of this institution as well.*⁵²² She was in conflict with the opposition parties and the then Prime Minister Haris Silajdžić, who for a brief period of time banned the presence of the TV BiH journalists in Government sessions. In the period from 1992 until 1993, Omersoftić was a manager of the governmental administration for refugees and displaced persons, and in 1996 she founded the political party *Stranka žena Bosne i Hercegovine* (Women's Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina), of which she was the President.⁵²³ In December 1995, when the Dayton Peace Agreement was about to be signed and a new chapter in political life of Bosnia and Herzegovina was to begin, no woman was involved in the negotiations. In June 1996, the first women's conference titled *Žene transformiraju sebe i društvo* (Women Transforming Themselves and Society) was organised in Sarajevo. As a part of this conference, a workshop about *Women and Politics* was organised in which the need for greater participation of women in political life was discussed, as well as women's contribution to qualitative changes in politics and the need to have a minimum 30% quota of women in parliaments, executive and judicial branches.⁵²⁴

Semih Borovac was the first woman Mayor of the City of Sarajevo. **Lamija Tanović**, a professor at the Faculty of Science and Mathematics, was the President of the Liberal Democratic Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2005. **Lidija Korać**, vice-president of SDP BiH, was a legal representative on behalf of SDP in all legal disputes filed before the Constitutional Court of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. **Borjana Krišto**, from HDZ BiH, was the first woman president of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Prior to this, she was Minister for Justice of HBŽ (Herzeg-Bosnia Canton), and then Minister for Justice in the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Currently, she is an MP in the

520 Source: http://www.sarajevskatribina.info/bos/konferencije/2004/govornici/amila_omersoftic.html, (April 10, 2014)

521 Reis Mustafa ef. Cerić

522 Source: http://www.sarajevskatribina.info/bos/konferencije/2004/govornici/amila_omersoftic.html, (April 10, 2014)

523 Ibid.

524 Taljanović, A. (2010) p. 74, 75

House of Peoples of the BiH Parliament. **Željka Cvijanović**, from SNSD, is the first woman Prime Minister of Republika Srpska. Before that, she was a Minister for European Integration. **Aleksandra Pandurević**, from SDS, since she was elected an SDS delegate in the BiH Parliament in 2010, has been the loudest and most distinct woman MP in the National Parliament. **Sehada Kolenović**, from SDA, is the Chief of Office of Sulejman Tihić, the President of SDA Party. **Azra Hadžiahmetović**, from SBiH, was one of the founders of Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina (Stranka za BiH). She was a Minister for Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and is currently an SBiH delegate in the State Parliament.

Bisera Turković, was the first woman Ambassador appointed in the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina. She was Bosnian Ambassador to Croatia (1993-1994), Hungary (1994-1996), Permanent Mission to the Organisation for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) in Vienna (1996-2000), the United States, Mexico and Brazil (2005-2008). Currently she is Bosnian Ambassador to Belgium. From 2000 to 2001, Turković worked as the Minister for European Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina. From 2001 to 2004, she was Executive Director of the Centre for Security Studies in Bosnia and Herzegovina. She was a member of the Executive Board of SDA from 1991 until 1996 and member of the Main Board of SDA from 1991 until 1997.

In 1992, **Ismeta Dervoz** initiated the participation of the Radio and Television of Bosnia and Herzegovina (RTV BiH) at the Eurovision Song Contest and has been a long-time manager and executive producer of RTV BiH. She was awarded the Charter of International League of Humanists for her work from 1992 to 1996. To date, she is a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina on behalf of SBB BiH.

Besima Borić was President of the Municipal Committee of the Socialist Alliance in Vogošća from 1986 to 1990. After the war, she resumed the work of the municipal organisation of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), and in 1997 she was elected to the Municipal Council of Vogošća. In 1998 she was elected to the Federation Parliament. From 2001 to 2003 she was Minister for Labour, Social Affairs, Displaced Persons and Refugees in the Government of Sarajevo Canton.⁵²⁵ Currently, she is an MP in the Federation Parliament. Borić collaborates with many NGOs that promote women's activism and the political participation of women, and has contributed to the institutionalisation of women's human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Svetlana Cenić, an economist, was the Minister for Finance of the Government of Republika Srpska. During the war, she was the Cabinet Secretary of Nikola Koljević. From 2000 to 2005 she worked as a non-partisan advisor to Dragan Čavić. She performed several functions related to public finances, consulting, sustainable development and foreign trade affairs.

525 Spahić-Šiljak, Z. (2013) p. 190

General Note on this Chapter

In the most difficult existential moments during the war, women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in addition to suffering the misfortunes that affected all citizens, were also burdened by universal patriarchal organisation and compliance with certain ideologies. Today, when we talk about women in wartime Bosnia, we mainly talk about women rape survivors, the mothers of Srebrenica, some of whom still search for the remains of their beloved ones and who each year, on 11 July, remind Bosnia and Herzegovina and the world of these heinous crimes, which remain the most horrible legacy of the last war. This chapter does not offer a detailed overview of the role of women, for that would be impossible given the limited space and short time available for this research. This chapter on the nineties gives only basic guidelines that could lead to further research on the position of women during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, it is important to note that the information currently available does not speak about all segments of society, nor on all the areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina during wartime, or all the women who have marked this period of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Also missing from this and the following chapter are the scathes from the lives of women whose fates represented a kind of paradigm of the time in which they lived. The reason for this is not because there were no such women. Quite the contrary, there were many. They played different roles during the war, but after the war they were left to the mercy of the ruling regimes and today, they are still struggling, risking a quiet life, to make change – political, economic, legal and cultural.

PART V: Borders of the Millennium: the Present

*It is hard to be a woman in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and when you are born as Roma woman, your life is twice as hard.*⁵²⁶

The initiated *watering down* and *dissipation* of women's rights and influences achieved with women's move from the private to public sphere during the war continued in post-socialist Bosnia and Herzegovina. Transition, re-building the country, the post-Dayton context, quotas – national, territorial and gender - democratisation and other social contracts proved to be very gendered with regard to the restructuring of women's positions. In the processes of economic reintegration, re-articulation of labour rights and achievement of political power, women's place and role continued to follow a retrograde trend, which started with the most recent war. The main enemies of feminism in the post-Yugoslav space were state and national ideologies, impressively parallel in their discourse, actions and position towards women.⁵²⁷

This part of the book describes women's struggle against being pushed aside in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It deals with women's association and activist efforts, women's fight against neoliberalism and fascism, and the delusions imposed on them by numerous patriarchal structures. Given that the last two decades were substantially saturated with capitalism and neoliberal ideas, such social and economic consensus since the last war has logically requested women's expansion to various labour sectors – often as mere labour force, and not as those enjoying equal rights. Also, one must understand that this is a post-war period where, like during any war, society faces women's participation in different positions, which eventually reinstates a situation much worse than the initial one, applying well-rehearsed repressive methods. In this respect, it is certain that some women in an important positions, or appointed to certain positions for the first time will be omitted from the text but, regardless of efforts and will, it is impossible to mention all important women who influenced change in society in the pages of this book. At the same time, in view of nationalist influences on emancipative rhetoric over the past 20 years and numerous media and political misogynous treatment of women and women's representation, the aim here is primarily to give space to those women who consciously, and in an articulated way, support the fight for equality, to those whose actions are clearly marked with their feminist and activist positioning.

526 Source: <http://www.zenskaposla.ba/content/bit-i-romkinja-i-politicarka-u-bih> (June 9, 2014)

527 Slapšak, S. (1996) *Žene i rat u bivšoj Jugoslaviji*, source: <http://www.yuurope.com/zines/republika/arhiva/96/145/145-16.html> (June 29, 2014)

Patriarchy and Capitalism, Patriarchy and Transition – Bosnia and Herzegovina after Dayton

The Dayton Constitution defines the administrative structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina. With its entry into force, the country was divided into two entities: the Federation of BiH and Republika Srpska. Brčko District was also established as a separate administrative unit. Each of these instances keeps its sovereignty and a high level of autonomy, as well as an entire bureaucratic and political structure. The Federation of BiH is further divided to 10 cantons that are deemed separate units, each with their own government. Such complicated structure and absolute decentralisation of the state, with successful political manipulation, created a mass-scale bureaucratic structure and system that much more often favours politicians than citizens.

An important reminder, repeated by all female activists and left unsaid by the majority, is that not a single woman participated in the signing and negotiation of the Dayton Agreement. What does it mean then to think about Bosnia and Herzegovina after Dayton? To think about women who dedicated their lives to the fight against nationalism, those who honourably fell and those who still hold their lines, despite nationalism, political fraud, tumour and other mortal disease. Are feminism and feminist struggle in Bosnia and Herzegovina doomed to failure? Are we fighting an already lost battle? In what conditions did the fight for equality actually take place in the past twenty years? Misogyny as a war legacy remained deeply rooted in public and private lives of Bosnian and Herzegovinian women.

*Nationalisms in Yugoslavia were built simultaneously with misogyny. What is more, one could say that the gradually deteriorating women's position in society during the final years of socialism was a warning before the breakout of nationalism and disintegration of Yugoslavia.*⁵²⁸

Compared to the present situation, socialism, which was not overly emancipating towards women, seems like a system that gave much more freedom. The number of women in the executive government and in leading positions is declining, with a well-manipulated quota system in voting lists.

*The absence of female votes, of political activists and public personalities, both in socialist and post-socialist eras, is a reflection of a long standing crisis of collective and ethnic identities, and of the discomfort of society, unable to face its past as it is – a complex and traumatic one – without simplification or re-traumatisation.*⁵²⁹

528 Iveković, R. (2000) p. 16.

529 Jambrešić Kirin, R. (2004) *Heroine ili egzekutorice: partizanke u 1990-ima* in *Između roda i naroda: etnološke i folklorističke studije*. Zagreb: institut za etnologiju i folkloristiku:

Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina are mostly mentioned as victims, and much less often as participants in the war. Their role in building of the country is neglected and they are now exclusively viewed through the figure of mothers of killed fighters or violence victims. Unfortunately, many women identify themselves with this role – in the general state of mind of BiH society, patriarchal tradition still comes first, which slows down liberalisation with its oppressive methods, and pushes aside emancipation of female rebels of the 21st century, placing them on the social periphery.

*The first delusion of western promoters of democracy in post-socialist societies is that every country that abandoned dictatorship or communism is actually transitioning to democracy by the very regime change... Another incorrect basic assumption is that democratisation is a natural, almost automatic process that logically follows after the overturn of a totalitarian regime.*⁵³⁰

None of the above assumptions is gender-neutral – they both directly affect women – primarily by avoiding to face the new pseudo-nationalist movements aiming at women's transfer to the private sphere, thus confirming their role as mother and caretaker, and by ignoring the lack of basic aspects of democracy in the transition process that directly affect marginalised social groups, unfortunately mostly comprised of women. Transition, in all its meanings, is a constant struggle and challenge, aimed at a better regulated society. Despite this, negative aspects of transition in BiH and the Balkans proved to affect women more than men. According to Sonja Lokar's statements contained in her presentation to students of Gender Studies at the University of Sarajevo, *Politics and Gender in Transition*,⁵³¹ women entered the transition with certain rights, and as integral parts of groups that dealt with human rights activism. In the majority of former Yugoslav republics, after the election victory of nationalist parties, the first item on the political agenda of new rulers was to reduce women's rights to contraception and abortion. What is more, women have become the biggest group of those described as transition victims. Transition affected women in two ways: as workers in industry and administration; and with the reinstatement of traditional values, the war and overall rise in discrimination.⁵³²

Centar za ženske studije, p. 319

530 Ler-Sofronić, N. (2002) *Kraj tranzicijske paradigme – rodna perspektiva* in Women and Politics: Gender and Political Theory. Dubrovnik: Ženska infoteka, p. 24-25

531 Lokar, S. *Politika i rod u tranziciji* – Lecture held on June 6, 2009

532 Ibid. p. 11-12

Social Rights, Education, Employment

Wartime discrimination against women did not subside during peace. *Women were the first to lose jobs during privatisation, or their working hours were cut in half, or they were put on waiting lists.*⁵³³ In terms of poverty, according to the Statistics Agency data, the percentage of poor population is almost equal among women and men. However, the problem becomes slightly different when other parameters are considered – it is evident that 53.7% of unemployed women accounts for housewives, and that the biggest percentage of poor women accounts for the age group above 65. The same is evident in data on pensions – in 2012, almost 200,000 men and below 100,000 women received old age pensions.⁵³⁴ In the domain of participation in the labour market, data from the BiH Statistics Agency shows that the employment rate among men in 2012 stood at 41.5%, and almost two times lower among women – 22.6%.⁵³⁵ On the other hand, the presented data about the structure of employed persons in 2012 shows us that 9% women belonged to the category of unpaid helping members, and only 2.2% men. The unemployment phenomenon obviously does not affect men and women equally.

Pressured by international institutions and owing to the lobbying of civil society, Bosnia and Herzegovina implemented legislation reform, and almost all laws in the country were amended to provide equal rights to all citizens. Nevertheless, despite the legislative progress, Bosnia and Herzegovina can still be described as a country with significant discrimination rate and a large number of poor and disempowered. *Primarily due to transition and all aforementioned characteristics, 80% of the population belongs to some of the vulnerable groups.*⁵³⁶

The domain of education and right to education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is only the continuation of the socialist system – the Law on Mandatory Elementary Education is implemented, and some cantons also introduced laws on mandatory secondary education. In this regard, if we follow statistics, we can see that there are almost equal numbers of boys and girls in schools, and there are no substantial deviations. Reasons for drop-out from secondary schools are gender-conditioned to a great extent, but given that there are no official state statistics on the number of drop-outs from secondary schools, it is impossible to conduct a deeper analysis of this problem.

In the education domain, this period brought expansion of higher education institutions and, in this respect, every administrative entity worked to open their own universities, or at least their local offices. This

533 Spahić-Šiljak, Z. (2012), p. 103

534 Statistics Agency of BiH (2013): *Žene i muškarci u BiH*, p. 34

535 Ibid. p. 31

536 Borić, B. (2012) *Socijalna pravda u Bosni i Hercegovini* in Politička participacija u BiH, Sarajevski Otvoreni Centar, Sarajevo, p. 123

led to an increased number of female and male students at universities. While such trends favour a higher level of literacy among the population, they indicate several problematic aspects in terms of gender analysis. Primarily, through gender statistics on universities, we can monitor the transfer of power centres. One of the examples is the Faculty of Law in Sarajevo, which was the only faculty in BiH that produced male and female lawyers. Nowadays, it is one of 10 such faculties in the country, deprived of the ideological support from the state that it enjoyed up to 1992.⁵³⁷ In this institution, *since the war, and especially after 2000, there has been evident increase in the number of female law graduates. The percentage of men dropped below one-third in the total structure of law graduates. The feminisation trend in legal education is an indicator of the declining reputation of this profession and decreased financial opportunities provided by the legal profession.*⁵³⁸ As Professor Bakšić - Muftić points out in the text, regardless of the obvious feminisation of legal profession, there are obvious trends of increasing numbers of men in executive and other high-level positions.

When it comes to education – according to data from the BiH Statistics Agency, education is accessible to all citizens of BiH, regardless of gender. While data specified in the Thematic Bulletin Women and Men in BiH⁵³⁹ indicates almost equal numbers of female and male pupils in secondary schools, data on numbers of graduates from higher education institutions shows an interesting trend – gender-sensitive statistics show that female university graduates by far outnumber male graduates, but the difference (up to 30%) levels off in the number of male and female Masters graduates, and the proportion of men and women drastically changes in favour of men at PhD level.⁵⁴⁰ This trend reconfirms the thesis that women in this period only have access to areas that do not constitute sources of power and economic prosperity – as chances for obtaining better positions and jobs with a higher level of education rise, women gradually get squeezed out of this space.

When it comes to other social rights, it is important to note that all formal requirements for exercising social rights by men and women in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been fulfilled – the adopted laws regulate and meet specific women's needs. Unfortunately, there is a huge gap between the laws and their implementation in Bosnia and Herzegovina – although all laws were passed with full respect of human rights, these laws are frequently not implemented in practice. One of such examples

537 Bakšić Muftić, J. (2012) *Pravni fakultet u Sarajevu - Iskušenja u vremenu*. Godišnjak Pravnog fakulteta u Sarajevu, LV, p. 70

538 Ibid. p. 77

539 *Žene i muškarci u Bosni i Hercegovini*, Tematski Bilten 3, Statistics Agency of BiH, Sarajevo 2013, source: http://www.bhas.ba/tematskibilteni/BHAS_Zene_Muskarci_BH.pdf (July 6, 2014)

540 Ibid. p 30

is discrimination against pregnant women: *According to domestic laws, pregnancy may not be the grounds for dismissal, which often happens in practice, especially in privately-owned companies and corporations.*⁵⁴¹

Regardless of the above, this period is still marked by certain victories and the opening of positions for women. For the first time, women have exercised their legal rights in the domain of equal access to certain social and economic structures, patriarchal principles in inheritance, employment and equal rights have been increasingly deconstructed, limits in gender perceptions of professions have moved etc. Unfortunately, as mentioned above, this progress is more conditioned by neoliberal demands of the labour market than by actual progress in the state of mind of female and male citizens.

Women's Association / Women's Movement

Nevertheless, the actual picture of the development of women's rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina is still incomplete without demonstrating the contextualised development of the women's non-governmental movement. Bosnia and Herzegovina became an independent state with almost half a million displaced citizens, destroyed industry and infrastructure, a huge number of dead and missing people, and an enormous scar from war rape. A country that survived genocide (even gendercide) becomes independent with traumas. Nevertheless, several gender-sensitive processes were launched at the end of the war.

First of all, space for women's groups and women's association was opened. From a movement that took care of the population, refugees etc. during the war, and from those that joined Medica Zenica in efforts to directly repair the war consequences, these groups became stronger after the war and better organised in providing aid to the population and responding to the various needs of society, including efforts aimed at reconciliation, education, association etc. According to a research by Zlatiborka Popov-Momčinović, the work of women gathered around those organisations was in no way harmless or simple – after the war, they were pushed aside and often even persecuted by the governmental structures that were actually the same nationalist structures that were in power during the war.

*According to an interviewed activist from this part of the country, the association was thus frequently visited by the police, activists were called for informative interviews, and their children were exposed to constant insults at school and harassment by teachers and other pupils.*⁵⁴²

Women's organisations partly originated from a feminist movement

541 Borić, B. (2012) p. 132

542 Popov-Momčinović, Z. (2013) p. 114

that was active during the war, and partly from activist impetus. Although many of the women involved were not enlightened feminists, as their work was progressing and as they were getting acquainted with the movement, they began to recognise their feminist identities.⁵⁴³ The same thing happened with organisations – from initial activities focused on a narrow community, as retrograde state policies expanded, they expanded their activities through the years – the more women were excluded from decision making processes, the more they moved their activities to the informal sector.

Despite the fact that they acted from periphery, over the years, women's NGOs managed to successfully lobby for several legislative changes. Women's organisations put substantial effort into creating gender-sensitive government structures - Bosnia and Herzegovina is the first country in the region that adopted the Gender Equality Law in 2003, which recommended a quota of minimum 40% of the less represented sex in public institutions⁵⁴⁴. Activists of the women's movement successfully lobbied for the introduction of a 30% quota for representatives of the less represented gender on election lists. Regardless of the incompatibility of the two laws, and the fact that quota difference indicates a form of discrimination, the fact that such initiatives were recognised in law is important. In addition, the efforts of women's organisations also resulted in recognition of domestic violence in the Criminal Code of BiH and regulating the status of civilian war victims, at least in one part of the country.

Apart from the Law, institutions for the promotion of gender equality were created in Bosnia and Herzegovina (a decision made owing in part to lobbying by the women's movement) – BiH Gender Equality Agency (led by **Samra Hadžiabdić – Filipović**) plays a coordinating role between two Gender Centres in the Federation of BiH (Director **Ana Vuković**) and Republika Srpska (the first Director **Spomenka Krunić**, currently **Mirjana Lukač**). These three bodies constitute the state mechanism aiming at the introduction of gender equality, monitoring the state of affairs and implementation of Gender Action Plan. Unfortunately, implementation of the laws and the influence of these formal structures are still far from satisfying, and there is still an evident need for creating a complete administrative infrastructure.

One cannot talk about women's organisations without mentioning the omnipresent donor problem – the fact is that the informal sector and activism often imply *pro bono* work, and women's organisations thus often rely on donors' support. International donors have been numerous and their policies unaligned, which led to the closing down of many initiatives. Struggling for survival, women's organisations were often forced to *hunt* for funding and sometimes to adjust to contradicting donor requests. On

543 Spahić-Šiljak, Z. (2013) p. 12

544 Source: http://arsbih.w1.daj.ba/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/ZoRS_32_10_B.pdf (June 5, 2014)

the other hand, financial independence from the local government is not absolute independence: donations sometimes imply dependence on other governments and international organisations – on their funds, but also on their visions⁵⁴⁵. In this regard, active citizenship is legitimized by donors, and women's organisations are forced to adjust, in order to survive.

*Without the international donor support, even formal recognition of women's rights would not have been possible in BiH. However, an approach that would recognise local experiences and provide local women with space for initiative would result in larger and more meaningful progress and would play a smaller role in the strategies of re-patriarchalisation and re-traditionalisation of current regimes.*⁵⁴⁶

Apart from political lobbying, female activists also made significant progress in peace activism and reconciliation efforts in BiH. In this regard, several publications and research studies were developed in the past years, focusing on organisations, but also on individual women who were active in those associations.

Peacemakers

There was enormous peace activism by women's NGOs and, as mentioned, it was concentrated on responding to the basic needs of the population. At that time, female activists were engaged in activities such as crossing the border, enabling people to meet, providing aid to weakened parts of the population, identifying local needs, etc. With time and donor support, women NGOs' influence was growing. Regardless of the frequent persecution of activists and their organisations by the ruling structures for opposing the current policies, their efforts were still recognised in the community. Their activities were expanding and, with donor assistance, they networked and created a stronger community. Regardless of criticisms that the work of women's peace organisations was apolitical or exclusively sparked by donations, many clearly made significant progress in the processes of facing the past in society. The fact is that BiH society has not fully faced its past yet, and that organisations involved in peace activism failed in organising a significant social movement.⁵⁴⁷ However, we must not forget that all these women acted from periphery – they were involved in peace building efforts at the local level, and men occupied the

545 Zaharijević, A. (2013) *Being an Activist: Feminist citizenship through transformations of Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav citizenship regimes*, CITSEE Working Paper Series 28, Edinburgh, Scotland, UK, p. 19

546 Mlinarević, G. and Kosović, L. (2011) p. 133

547 Topić, T., Živanović, A., Zolja, A. Mirovni aktivizam u Bosni i Hercegovini, p. 49, source: <http://www.zenezenama.org/bos/info/Studija-mir.pdf> p 49

decision-making positions. Given that these women were pushed aside and stigmatised by the rulers at the very beginning of their work, they clearly faced huge resistance from the start. For this reason, all peacemakers deserve tribute for their extraordinary civil courage and humanity.

In the publication *Peace with a Woman's Face – Empowering Women to Deal with the Past*, organisations *Lara* from Bijeljina and *HO Horizonti* from Tuzla identified 11 peacemakers, 11 heroines, women with extraordinary courage, daring and endless goodness⁵⁴⁸: **Azra Hasanbegović**, Mostar, **Vahida Sulejmanović**, Bihać, **Marija Kezić**, Banja Luka, **Duška Andrić**, Zenica, **Željka Prša**, Grahovo, **Marija Divković**, Tuzla, **Mirsada Bajrić**, Modriča, **Dr Lidija Salcer-Šunjić**, Sarajevo, **Branka Čarapić**, Višegrad, **Danica Perić Lončarević**, Bratunac, **Anka Todorović**, Bijeljina.

In her book *Shining Humanity*, Zilka Spahić-Šiljak analysed the life stories of 12 women peacemakers: **Sabiha Husić**, **Danka Zelić**, **Jadranka Miličević**, **Lidija Živanović**, **Nada Golubović**, **Stanojka Cana Tešić**, **Besima Borić**, **Rahela Džidić**, **Amra Pandžo**, **Radmila Žigić** and **Jasminka Rebac**.⁵⁴⁹

The chapter Peace activism in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the post-war period – perspective of female and male activists of the study *Peace Activism in Bosnia and Herzegovina* uses data collected from dozens of female and male activists throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. Some of these are: **Galina Marjanović**, Duga Banja Luka; **Jasminka Husanović**, Prijateljice Tuzla, **Lidija Živanović**, Helsinki Parliament of Citizens of Banja Luka, **Mirjana Maksimović**, Sanus Prijedor, **Nada Golubović**, United Women, Banja Luka, **Jasna Zečević**, Vive Žene Tuzla, **Mirjana Malić**, Sarajevo, **Nejra Nalić**, Mi-Bospo, Tuzla, **Senka Jakupović**, Sanski Most, **Memnuna Zvizdić**, Women to Women Sarajevo, **Branka Rajner**, Human Rights Bureau, Tuzla, **Danka Zelić**, Women Citizens Association, Grahovo, **Memnuna Mahić**, Eho, Ljubuški, **Amela Salkić**, Women's Forum, Bratunac.

Apart from their peace building efforts, women's NGOs notably paid a lot of attention to healing war traumas. As emphasised, Bosnia and Herzegovina entered this period with a large number of raped, displaced and missing persons and destroyed infrastructure. A large number of NGOs dedicated many of their activities to mitigating the direct consequences of the war, and particularly to achieving justice and resolving women's social issues. However, regardless of the engagements of several women's organisations, the problem of women-war victims in BiH is still not adequately dealt with. Rape victims now face not only existential problems, but reintegration problems as well.

In her piece *Rape Crime in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Local and*

548 Lara Bijeljina, HO Horizonti Tuzla (2013) *Mir sa ženskim licem – osnaživanje žena za suočavanje s prošlošću*, Kvinna till Kvinna

549 Spahić-Šiljak, Z. (2013)

International Dimensions,⁵⁵⁰ Jasna Bakšić-Muftić says: *Compared to other war events, this topic is not sufficiently covered in Bosnia and Herzegovina itself.*⁵⁵¹ Gorana Mlinarević⁵⁵² also feels that the few NGOs that deal with this problem are not able to make significant progress, especially with the dynamics of changing the position of raped women as stigmatized members of society.

*As mentioned above, one of the most serious issues covered with a veil of silence and denial is the legacy of rape and gender-based war crimes. Society is completely dumb when it comes to problems that victims of gender-based war crimes are facing. True, there are several NGOs that are trying to deal with this issue, but they are not able to do it on their own.*⁵⁵³

The patriarchal society that we currently live in treats victims of gender-based violence completely differently than other war victims. Rights and interests of victims of gender-based crimes are still ignored or intentionally overlooked.⁵⁵⁴ The issue of raped women and their children in Bosnia and Herzegovina is still taboo. With the exception of a few newspaper and scientific articles, one can say that there is practically no public interest in raising the issue of justice for victims of sexualised violence.

Gender Studies

Parallel to the increasing donor interest in women's issues, work to promote women's human rights and strengthen organisations, there has been growing interest in academic engagement in areas of gender, religious, women's and queer studies. The creation of small academic community started as early as in the late nineties.

The introduction of feminist and gender studies in the academic community started in late nineties and early 2000s with individual attempts by feminist scientists - Nirman Moranjak-Bamburać, Jasminka Babić-Avdispahić and Jasna Bakšić-Muftić – primarily in the fields of literature, philosophy and law. At the beginning, their influence comprised of the introduction of feminist issues and topics in university programmes conducted in Sarajevo, but later they

550 Bakšić-Muftić, J. (2004) *Zločin silovanja u Bosni i Hercegovini – lokalna i međunarodna dimenzija in Izazovi feminizma*. 26/04. p. 49-54

551 Ibid, p. 52

552 Mlinarević, G. (2008) *Seksualno nasilje nad ženama kao ratni zločin in Dijalog: Časopis za filozofiju i društvenu teoriju*, 3-4, p. 53-85

553 Ibid. 79

554 Ibid.

also introduced entire feminist courses. Recently, these scientists were joined by **Jasmina Husanović** and **Damir Arsenijević** in Tuzla, and **Danijela Majstorović** in Banja Luka.⁵⁵⁵

With the assistance of women's organisations, these theoreticians slowly organised themselves in informal groups and started informal education and courses with a feminist agenda. At the same time, *Women to Women* launched the *Women's Studies Žarana Papić* in BiH. This project, envisaged as a bi-semester study that should introduce mainly the ideas of women's studies to the participants, was an informal education initiative by an NGO, but still of great importance, because professors from the University in Sarajevo who established the Masters Programme in Gender Studies in 2006 taught the course. The Programme was launched at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Post-Graduate Studies at the University in Sarajevo.⁵⁵⁶

The next step towards institutionalisation of the Masters programme of Gender Studies at the University in Sarajevo was also made with the assistance of an NGO. International Forum Bosnia opened the Centre for Gender Research in cooperation with feminists, offering numerous programmes, workshops and organising academic debates. The result of these debates is a special issue of a magazine of the International Forum Bosnia dedicated to feminism: *Challenges of Feminism*, with published pieces by **Jasminka Babić-Avdispahić**, **Jasna Bakšić-Muftić**, **Marina Katnić-Bakaršić** and **Nirman Moranjak-Bamburać**.⁵⁵⁷

It is important to note that feminists gathered around *Women's Studies Žarana Papić* actually managed to develop a high-quality programme. In parallel with the implementation of women's studies and under the same project, Nirman Moranjak-Bamburać and journalist **Angelina Šimić** launched *Patchwork*, the first feminist magazine in BiH.⁵⁵⁸ All these activities led to the start of preparations for the official launch of the post-graduate programme. The initiative was launched within the Centre for Interdisciplinary Post-Graduate Studies, which functions at the level of the University in Sarajevo, and the programme was officially launched in the academic year 2006/2007, when it enrolled the first generation of students. To date, 3 generations have completed the study, and the first generation was admitted to PhD study in the academic year 2013/2014.

Jasna Bakšić-Muftić, **Nirman Moranjak-Bamburać**, **Jasminka Babić-Avdispahić**, and **Nejra Nuna Čengić** with Zdravko Grebo were initiators and leaders of the implementation of this idea. These women

555 Mlinarević, G. and Kosović, L. (2011) p. 134

556 Potkonjak, S. et al. (2008) *Između politike pokreta i politike znanja: Feminizam i ženski/rodni studiji u Hrvatskoj, Bosni i Hercegovini i Sloveniji*. Stud. ethnol. Croat., vol. 20, Zagreb, p. 86

557 Babić-Avdispahić, J. (ed.) et al. (2004) *Izazovi Feminizma*, Sarajevo: IF Bosnae

558 Mlinarević, G. and Kosović, L. (2011) p. 134

599 Ibid

are also distinguished BiH theoreticians, whose work set the foundations of contemporary BiH feminism. Apart from these, the following theoreticians from BiH also played active roles in the programme implementation: **Marina Katnić-Bakaršić, Jasmina Husanović, Ugo Vlajsavljević, Asim Mujkić, Damir Arsenijević, Nebojša Jovanović, Zilka Šiljak-Spahić, Lejla Somun-Krupalija, Ajla Demiragić, Sveltana Đurković and Olivera Simić,**⁵⁵⁹ and academic tutors **Gorana Mlinarević and Lamija Kosović.**

The programme was nominally supported by the Gender Equality Agency in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and by the University in Sarajevo. Unfortunately, financial support again came from international donors – Swedish and Norwegian governments. Upon completion of the project financed by these governments, Gender Studies was not further supported by the University or relevant ministries. Instead of the existing Masters programme, PhD study was introduced, as the continuation of the project, while the Masters study is currently closed. The lack of financial support for Gender Studies evidently demonstrates the passive attitude of the University in Sarajevo, not only towards issues of gender equality, women's rights and rights of sexual and gender minorities, but towards the entire scientific opus that has been recognised by universities throughout Europe not as one, but as several separate academic disciplines.

*(Public) universities in Bosnia and Herzegovina – stuck in reforms related to the Bologna process, weakened due to lack of funding and poor criteria in selection of teaching staff – are characterised by an ambivalent attitude towards gender/feminist education and research.*⁵⁶⁰

Notably, the Religious Studies programme⁵⁶¹ that was also established within the Centre for Interdisciplinary Post-Graduate Studies at the University in Sarajevo in the school year 2007/2008 experienced a similar bureaucratic fate to Gender Studies. This Programme was also closed after two generations of Masters in Religious Studies, some of whom became active and visible theological feminists in BiH.

The most distinguished feminist theoreticians and scientists have already been mentioned above. The following are a few sentences dedicated to a theoretician that made the most important progress in the development of feminist theory in BiH.

560 Karapetrović, M. (2014) *The View from Semi-periphery – About Feminism and Gender Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, in: Young Women in Post-Yugoslav Societies: Research, Practice and Policy, Institute for Social Research in Zagreb, Human Rights Centre, University of Sarajevo, Zagreb and Sarajevo, p. 61

561 Religious Studies were founded in 2006 by an agreement between UNSA and Arizona State University. In the same year, seven persons including Zilka Spahić Šiljak, spent a semester at the ASU to prepare the curriculum.

Nirman Moranjak Bamburać was born in Sarajevo in 1954, where she graduated from the Slavic Languages and Literature Department. She obtained a Masters degree at the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb, where she successfully defended her PhD thesis *Metatext and Metatextuality – Problems of Aesthetic Function*. Her paper was later published in the form of a book *Metatekst* (1992) which, at the time of publishing, was a pioneering work in the countries of the former Yugoslavia, and it quickly sold out. Shortly later, the book was reworked and supplemented with several new analyses about important writers of world literature, such as Borges, Nabokov and Eco, and published as a book entitled *Retorika tekstualnosti* (2003). Nirman Moranjak Bamburać PhD, was a full time professor at the Faculty of Philosophy and the Academy of Performing Arts of the University in Sarajevo. She taught literary theory and critique, and narratology at the Comparative Literature Department of the Faculty of Philosophy. She taught theory of acting and direction at the Academy of Performing Arts. She was one of the founders and professors at the newly launched MA programme of Gender Studies in Sarajevo. Nirman Moranjak Bamburać published the following books: *Metatekst* (1991), *Retorika tekstualnosti* (2003), *Izazovi feminizma* (2004) as co-author with J. Babić-Avdispahić, J. Bakšić-Muftić and M. Katnić-Bakaršić, she edited almanac *Bosnien-Herzegovina: Interkultureller synkretismus* (2001), writing the introduction and bibliography. She published around 60 studies and articles in BiH, Croatian, German, Dutch and Hungarian magazines.

Lesbian Activism in Bosnia and Herzegovina – the Need for Articulation

Nearing the end of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, numerous gender-sensitive processes began. Apart from peacemaking work, the opening of academic programmes and lobbying for legislative amendments, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, intersexual and queer activists started to gather formally.

The LGBTTIQ movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina recorded its beginnings in 2001, when the establishment of a BiH lesbian-gay association was initiated. However, the first official LGBT association in Bosnia and Herzegovina was only formed in 2004 – the Q Association. The Q Association was active for almost 6 years. **Svetlana Đurković, Slobodanka Boba Dekić, Emina Trumić and Alma Selimović** and her closest collaborators worked with the community directly, organised festivals, published manuals and worked on the enhancement of the LGBT population in BiH. The Q Association left an important mark on the LGBT community in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 2009, the Equilibrium Association was established in Banja Luka, and in 2010, the Sarajevo Open Centre dedicated a special human rights programme to LGBT activism. The association Okvir also started functioning in 2011 and has worked with the LGBT

community in Sarajevo. The Banja Luka Association of Queer Activists was launched in 2013.⁵⁶²

All of these initiatives are linked with the LGBT movement. Unfortunately, apart from an informal initiative that was quickly shut down (Viktorija in Sarajevo) and a lesbian programme by the feminist organisation CURE, lesbian activism does not exist in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a separate movement. Evidently, lesbians as a doubly-vulnerable category – as women and a sexual minority – are still not sufficiently empowered in society to be able to separately organise themselves and provide support to one another. Regardless of the fact that similar organisations exist in neighbouring countries and that lesbians from these countries have frequent and good cooperation with organisations in BiH, there has been no significant initiative for articulating the lesbian movement in BiH to date. On the other hand, there has been an evident lack of interest amongst the women's movement in such initiatives – apart from the CURE Foundation, not a single women's organisation practically deals with these issues. What it more, women's organisations rarely support even formal initiatives, such as petition signings and press releases on the violation of lesbians' human rights. Interestingly, even donor organisations that initiate processes in Bosnia and Herzegovina, guided by their own policies and priorities, have not shown any interest in strengthening the lesbian movement in BiH.

When it comes to transgender and transsexual women in BiH, the situation is practically the same. Although transgender and transsexual women face numerous additional problems in BiH society, such as violence, lack of understanding, rejection and discrimination, there are no adequate legal solutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the implementation of basic human rights of trans women, nor any significant initiatives. As a result of the above, trans women are completely marginalised in the society and only able to act from dissident positions.

The non-existence of space for discussion and particularly for action clearly testifies to the unsafe environment and lack of understanding for members of sexual minorities. Until the women's movement clearly announces that it stands behind all women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including those that are clearly placed on the periphery and exposed to the significant pressure of social stigmatisation, we will not be able to talk about the development of the third wave of feminism in Bosnia and Herzegovina – how can the third wave rhetoric be developed if we, women, are still afraid of being in a relationship with those of us who are pushed aside from society, even after the war and all the monstrosity that it brought? How can we discuss feminism in general, if we do not have the courage to support or at least understand different positions of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

562 More about LGBT activism in BiH in *Čitanka LGBT ljudskih prava*, Sarajevski otvoreni centar, Sarajevo, 2012

There are many important female activists that should be mentioned in this publication. However, as long as the gap between the enacted Anti-Discrimination Law and its implementation is so wide, and as long as LGBTTIQ activists are exposed to attacks, it is not safe to mention any names. For this reason, I will only re-emphasise the importance of supporting lesbian activism initiatives, and appeal to all activists to get engaged on the implementation of the human rights of the most excommunicated outcasts among us.

Roma Women and the Struggle for Violence-Free Life

As members of another minority group, Roma women, together with lesbian and disabled women, lie on the margins of BiH society. Generally, members of the Roma community in Bosnia and Herzegovina still constitute one of the most marginalised groups in society, which makes Roma women susceptible to discrimination on two levels – as women and as members of the Roma population.

Although the socio-economic situation is difficult for most citizens of BiH, the Roma population is on the social margin. It is beyond question that over 65% of Roma people have no roof over their head, 70% has no access to health care or social protection, over 90% of Roma is unemployed, and Roma children drop out of mandatory elementary schools due to poverty. If we add prejudice and discrimination against Roma to all of the above, it is hard to belong to the Roma community. Roma women are discriminated based on their affiliation with the Roma ethnic minority, based on sex and their social background or status.⁵⁶³

Jeopardising rights to violence-free life, multiple discrimination, difficult access to the right to education, high unemployment rate, social and especially political marginalisation - these are some of the problems that Roma women are facing on a daily basis, and the public agencies and institutions do not deal with them, or do so only superficially, despite the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina participates in the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, and will preside over the final cycle of the Roma Decade (1 July 2014 – 30 June 2015).

The situation is not much better in the civil sector, especially considering the fact that programmes for the enhancement and equality of Roma women are rare and largely fragmented. There are only a few Roma NGOs with programmes focused on the rights of Roma women and

563 *Romkinje za život bez nasilja: odgovor institucija na nasilje u porodici*. Prava za sve, Sarajevo 2011, source: http://www.rightsforall.ba/publikacije-bs/docs-bs/Romkinje_za_zivot_bez_nasilja-BH.pdf (June 30, 2014)

tackling discrimination and/or violence against women. Roma women leaders who attempt to influence the enactment of laws and policies about the status of Roma and/or women in BiH are rare and even those initiatives that exist are indirect and concealed. Unfortunately, even feminists and female and male fighters for gender equality only recently started to think and talk about the problems of Roma women.

Hedina Tahirović Sijerčić – a national Roma coordinator - is a distinguished fighter for the rights of Roma women, who emphasised the issues of external discrimination and violence, and internal division among Roma, stressing the positive and negative effects of the Roma Decade in BiH: from focusing on the status of Roma in BiH and European societies to increasing division between Roma and non-Roma populations.⁵⁶⁴ However, to avoid any misconceptions, the position of the national coordinator was not initiated by local politicians. On the contrary, CARE financed this position within the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, expecting the state to recognise the importance of this work and offer Tahirović Sijerčić permanent employment. Unfortunately, there are no indications that this will actually happen. This fact indicates that any progress in the issue of Roma status, and particularly Roma women, is very unstable and mostly made under external pressures. Hedina Sijerčić was born in 1960 in Sarajevo, where she graduated in journalism at the Faculty of Political Science. She worked as the first female Roma journalist and TV producer in BiH. She then moved to Toronto in Canada, where she worked as a teacher in the Toronto District School Board, and as editor of the first Canadian-Romani newsletter “Romano Lil” (1998–2001). She is currently Professor of Romani language, culture and literature at the Faculty of Philosophy of the University in Zagreb, department for Indology and Far East studies. A writer, translator and journalist – she wrote 16 author’s works, and enrolled in PhD study in Leuven in Belgium. Mrs. Tahirović Sijerčić won the Best Promotion reward for presentation of her book *How God Created Roma* at the 21st International Book Fair in Sarajevo. In 2010, she received an award for the best literary work, a book of poetry *Ašun, haćar dukh* [Listen, Feel the Pain], and the international award for poetry *Zlatno pero Papusza*, Tarnów, Poland.⁵⁶⁵

Indira Bajramović was born in 1968 in Jajce. Although an economic technician by vocation, she is currently an activist and President of the Association of Roma Women *Bolja budućnost* Tuzla. She is also engaged in the secretariat of the Equality Forum, and a Board member of the BiH Helsinki Committee of Human Rights and Management Board of the RING network. She is a candidate for Councillor at the Municipal Council Tuzla on behalf of the Association of Roma Women *Bolja budućnost*. Through her own activities and activities of the association of Roma women, she

564 Source: <http://www.oslobodjenje.ba/vijesti/bih/hedina-tahirovic-sijercic-bh-koordinatrica-za-rome-dekada-je-pokrenula-lavinu> (June 30, 2014)

565 Source: http://magoriabooks.com/authors/hedina_sijercic/ (June 30, 2014)

successfully cooperated with many state institutions and NGOs. On the initiative of the Association, the Ministry of Health has thus organised a joint action Week of Roma Health Care in Tuzla Canton for the last five years. This action allows all Roma men and women to take medical examinations and perform tests in outpatient clinics in Tuzla Canton, with or without health insurance. During the years of activism in the field of Roma women's rights, she discovered the biggest problem to be the daily struggle against Roma men who view Roma women's activism as a threat. Bajramović and her colleagues established another nine organisations with programmes focusing on the fight for Roma women's rights. These organisations gave birth to the first Roma women's network *Uspjeh*.⁵⁶⁶

Cyber-Feminists – The Beginnings of a Sub-Culture

In the last decade of the 20th century, a feminism sub-movement – cyber feminism - was created as a direct influence of the development of technologies, IT revolution and increased access to technologies. The first feminist theoretical paper was written in 1984 – an essay by Donna Haraway *A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Eighties*. In the essay, Haraway creates a cyborg figure as an ironical political myth, serving feminist appropriation of technology. Cyber-feminism is based on the idea that technology is a space where binary gender and sex divisions can be decomposed and deconstructed. Given that social development brings increasing dependence on technology, this directly affects the development of culture, art and change in social state of mind. Cyber-feminism starts with the utopian idea of the internet as a space free of any social constructs. Although the death of this movement has already been predicted, when it comes to the BiH context, we can say that there is still a need for such a movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina – cyber-feminist Selma Kešetović feels that there is still fear of technology in BiH society, and that there are still development opportunities in the country from this movement. Unfortunately, despite the great effort invested in research of this feminist form, I can only single out a few names of Bosnian cyber-feminists.

Selma Kešetović is a feminist, writer and author from Tuzla. She is the author of novel *Mihael* and *Bog ima miris vanilije*. Her theoretical work is mostly focused on researching deconstruction and construction, with the emphasis on post-modernist overcoming of the historic interpretation of bodily determination and the method of realising desire as the remainder of subjectivity. She completed an MA programme in Gender Studies (Centre for Interdisciplinary Post-Graduate Studies at the University in Sarajevo). She describes herself as a feminist, liberal, fag, cyborg fairy.⁵⁶⁷

566 Source: <http://data.zenskaposla.ba/node/26> (June 30, 2014)

567 Source: http://www.malosutra.org/magazin/index.php?option=com_k2&view=itemlist&

Her texts can be accessed on two blogs.⁵⁶⁸ **valentina pelizzer** is a feminist and director of OneWorldSee organisation, which actually strives towards the creation of a civil society network in the virtual space.⁵⁶⁹ She is also a feminist activist in BiH. One of her distinguished campaigns is *take back the tech*.

Leila Šeper is a feminist, cyber-activist and political activist. Her biggest contribution to cyber-activism is her work on ženskaposla.ba portal. She has organised numerous workshops on cyber violence, security, identity etc. She focuses on the use of new technologies, aiming at achieving positive social change, and especially advocates for the use of free and open tools and programmes, working on their promotion. Leila respects the blog as a form of expressing one's own position and opinion, and is active on social networks. She currently writes about topics related to the political situation, and has been a voice of protest on social networks.

The most recent media initiative is **KRIVA - Feminist Media Production** – a project which creates multimedia contents and, with its feminist policies, opens space for marginalised ideas and practices in society: it openly talks about sex, sexuality, gender, culture, art and marginalised social movements and activism.⁵⁷⁰ The initiative was launched by **Berina Džemailović**, **Sadžida Hadžić**, Nemanja Popović and Danilo Marković.

Artists – Opening of Women's Own Spaces

Contemporary art may not be the most profitable profession in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but it is a productive form that has yielded significant success, much of which can be attributed to women artists. Perception of art in contemporary BiH society, like in other countries in the region, is not nearly on a satisfying level – only rare intellectuals still find art interesting and stimulating, and general public interest is practically non-existent. The obvious evidence of declining interest in art is that almost all cultural institutions struggle to survive, there are practically no budget allocations for culture, and many cultural institutions are currently closed. The lack of interest in art led to a situation where we effectively have no artistic criticism, art theory discourse is at the minimum production level and often targeted only at the community within which it is produced.

Of course, there is an entire ideological-nationalist apparatus, which is trying to reduce culture and art production within their political

layout=category&task=category&id=54&Itemid=32 (July 10, 2014)

568 Sources: <http://arhitekta.wordpress.com/> and http://www.malosutra.org/magazin/index.php?option=com_k2&view=itemlist&layout=category&task=category&id=54&Itemid=32 (June 30, 2014)

569 Source: <http://oneworldsee.org/content/mission> (June 30, 2014)

570 Source: <http://www.krivazine.com/> (June 30, 2014)

agendas, which can be indirectly blamed for the disastrous state of affairs in art (and other spheres of life). Although this publication will not theorise and problematise the politicisation of art, it is important to note that this is one of the important factors that affect the general position of cultural institutions nowadays.

Regardless of the alleged lethargy and lack of interest in art, and of ideological postulates around it, a substantial number of women artists have appeared in various artistic spheres since 1995. However, before I discuss these women, it is very important to emphasise the difference between women artists in general and those whose work is saturated with feminist critical positioning. Accordingly, theoreticians and historians of art Bojana Pejić and Sarita Vujković differentiate two terms in their book – feminist art and women’s art. The authors define feminist art as one in which the authors clearly identify themselves and position their works within feminist policies, and women’s art as one in which, logically, the authors do not present themselves in a way to advocate for feminist values, regardless of the fact that their work can be clearly positioned as such.⁵⁷¹ Unfortunately, it is obvious, and Bojana Pejić and Sarita Vujković agree, that the majority of BiH women authors do not define themselves as feminists, nor do they position their work in this way. The reasons for this of course lie in the dominant anti-women and anti-feminist rhetoric of BiH society, but also in the fact that previous artists never identified themselves with feminism, which in a way deprives new generations of artists of the theory models on which they could build and upgrade their positions. Unfortunately, regardless of the artistic practice of the past, young artists are nowadays left to create and set their theoretic, political-feminist models on their own. Another research shows that many artists presently do not think about the critical position of feminism and unfortunately, they are not sufficiently enlightened to determine what feminist engagement is.

Respondents were asked to explain how feminism influenced their work. In their answers, women artists said that they did not live in an environment with a pronounced influence of feminism and that they rarely thought about its impact on their work. Although they view themselves as human rights defenders, they mostly do not think of themselves as feminists.⁵⁷²

When it comes to contemporary art in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the immediate post-war period is marked by the works of **Alma Suljević, Šejla Kamerić, Dunja Blažević, Gordana Andelić Galić, Maja Bajević**

571 Vujković, S. (2010); Pejić, B. (2012) *Microstories: konteksti savremene ženske umjetničke prakse nakon dvijehiljadite*, Banja Luka: Muzej savremene umjetnosti Republike Srpske

572 *Ženski glasovi u izvedbenim umjetnostima Zapadnog Balkana 1990-2010*, NOVA – Centar za feminističku kulturu Podgorica

and **Danica Dakić**. Their creation is saturated with experiences from the war, or linked with war in other ways – refugees, treatment of *others*, violence etc., which is also the case with the younger generation of women artists. We could talk about each of these artists for days. However, due to the limitations of this book, I will be satisfied to mention the following: to emphasise that each of these women had exhibitions outside of Bosnia and Herzegovina and that their works were noticed on the international artistic scene, which enabled each to build an international artistic career; and to refer to further reading and strongly recommend further research.⁵⁷³

Newer generations of women artists are clearer in their political-feminist articulation – e.g. **Adela Jušić**⁵⁷⁴ is one of the founders of the Association for Culture and Art CRVENA, an organisation with feminism and gender equality as defined spaces for action. Apart from Jušić, there are also **Lala Rašić**⁵⁷⁵, **Nela Hasanbegović**, **Emina Kujundžić**, **Lejla Čmajčanin** and **Sandra Dukić**.⁵⁷⁶ *Crvena* is an association for culture and art, established on 8 March 2010. It is an organisation that brings together artists, curators, musicians, activists, with a mission to affirm existing and create new spaces for cultural and artistic production in BiH and worldwide,⁵⁷⁷ and to improve women's position in culture and art. Although a relatively young organisation, *Crvena* has implemented several important projects that position it as the leading organisation that connects feminism, activism and art. One of the most important project by Crvena is *What Has Our Battle Given Us?*, where authors Adela Jušić, Lana Čmajčanin, Leila Čmajčanin, **Andreja Dugandžić** and **Danijela Dugandžić Živanović** are using exhibitions, lectures, discussions and actions in public space to map the 100 years of the struggle for gender equality, focusing particularly on the activities of AFŽ.⁵⁷⁸ *Bring In Take Out Living Archive Project*⁵⁷⁹ is a pioneer initiative to archive feminist art in the post-Yugoslav space and it is implemented by the curator team Red Min(e) d⁵⁸⁰ established within Crvena. The platform gathers the community of

573 Šejla Kamerić: <http://sejlakameric.com/>, Alma Suljević: http://bs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alma_Suljevi%C4%87, Gordana Anđelić-Galić: http://bs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gordana_An%C4%91eli%C4%87-Gali%C4%87, Maja Bajević: <http://performingtheeast.com/maja-bajevic/>, Danica Dakić: <http://www.danicadakic.com/>

574 Source: <http://adelajusic.wordpress.com/> (July 1, 2014)

575 Source: <http://lalarascic.com/> (July 1, 2014)

576 Borjana Mrđa: <http://borjanamrdja.info/> Irma Markulin: <http://www.irma-markulin.com/>, Irena Sladoje: <http://www.cee-art.com/bosnia-herz/sladoje-irena.html>, Lejla Čmajčanin: <http://www.lanacmajcanin.com/> and Sandra Dukić: <http://www.sandradjukic.com/>

577 Source: <http://crvenared.wordpress.com/crvena/> (July 16, 2014)

578 Source: <http://www.crvena.ba/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/CRVENA-PORTFOLIO.pdf> (July 16, 2014)

579 Source: <http://bringintakeout.wordpress.com/> (July 1, 2014)

580 Source <http://bringintakeout.wordpress.com/about-red-mined/> (July 1, 2014)

artists whose work contributes to the promotion of contemporary art of the region, but also creates new curator practice methodologies upon feminist principles.⁵⁸¹

PitchWise – is the first festival of engaged women's art in BiH. The festival is organised by the **CURE Foundation** and strives to connect feminist artistic production. The festival arose from the need to occupy abandoned and neglected space and transform it into a place of encounters that will bring together socially engaged female artists, activists, theoreticians, feminists and all of those interested in women's issues in BiH and the region.⁵⁸²

Starke is an electro cabaret band from Sarajevo, which criticises and highlights the ironies in BiH reality in its texts, with a special reflection on the use of technology. With their name, texts and scene performance, Starke abandon common musical conduct forms and, in this respect, significantly deviate from the usual matrices and musical styles in BiH. Although the band never had any significant performances on the mainstream scene, it is still one of the most important bands in the articulation of alternative feminist music directions. The members of Starke are Andreja Dugandžić, **Jelena Milušić** and **Jasmina Mameledžija**.

Dunja Blažević is one of the most important women to mark the creation of artistic space in BiH. From 1971 to 1980, Dunja was the director and editor in chief for programmes of the Student Cultural Centre of the University in Belgrade – the first centre for the promotion of art and new media in the former Yugoslavia. From 1980 to 1991, she was the editor in chief of a visual art programme on Belgrade Television.⁵⁸³ Although she started her career in Belgrade and continued it in Paris, since 1996 Dunja has been the director of SCCA (Soros Centre for Contemporary Art), founded by the Open Society Fund of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since 2000, SCCA (Sarajevo Centre for Contemporary Art) has acted as an independent, non-profit professional organisation.⁵⁸⁴ SCCA is one of the most important contemporary art institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Apart from the work and development of SCCA as an institution, Dunja is a distinguished art theoretician and producer for contemporary art and new media, and curator. One of her notable projects is the *Miraz exhibition*, which arose from the project *Women's Legacy – Contribution to Equality and Culture*.⁵⁸⁵ From 2004 to 2007, she supervised the interdis-

581 Source: <http://www.crvena.ba/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/CRVENA-PORTFOLIO.pdf> (July 16, 2014)

582 Source: http://www.fondacijacure.org/index.php?do=article&article_id=492 (July 16, 2014)

583 Source: <http://www.erstestiftung.org/gender-check/bosnia-and-herzegovina-dunja-blazevic/>

584 Source: <http://scca.ba/about-scca/> (July 1, 2014)

585 More about Dunja Blažević: <http://www.erstestiftung.org/gender-check/bosnia-and-herzegovina-dunja-blazevic/>, <http://balkans.aljazeera.net/vijesti/zensko-nasljedje-doprinos-jednakosti>

ciplinary regional project *De/construction of Monuments in Bosnia and Herzegovina*.

Apart from Dunja Blažević, a range of young and talented women work in SCCA⁵⁸⁶. During 1998, SCCA established another department – for video, TV and film production, pro.ba. As with the SCCA, one of the pro.ba founders is an extraordinary woman, **Amra Bakšić-Čamo**. Bakšić-Čamo is a successful film producer, working for CineLink, Sarajevo Film Festival project, teaching at the Academy of Performing Arts in Sarajevo, and acting as President of the BiH Association of Film Workers, which makes her one of the most important women in the world of BiH film.⁵⁸⁷

Film is currently the most popular form for artistic expression in the world and, owing to the already canonised position of media, with which film closely cooperates, its chance to communicate with the audience of various profiles is increasing daily. In this way, it can easily become a place for the entry of dominant forms of discourse, which can use this medium to convey different positions to the audience, packing them in different film expressions. With film's rising popularity, it is crucial to recognise the importance of analysis of political influence on film narration, particularly in the context of gender and sexuality. This is not least in the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina where film as an artistic form is currently one of the most popular forms of art. When it comes to film, this artistic form clearly *suffered* the biggest international success (Oscar for the best foreign film for *No-Man's Land*, and Golden and Silver Bears on Berlinale for films *Grbavica* and *An Episode in the Life of an Iron Picker*), making it the only artistic form in Bosnia and Herzegovina that enjoys some popularity and interest. Nevertheless, the development of film is not analysed in BiH in any respect, which allows the misogynous patriarchal positions of ruling neo-nationalist policies to be directly reflected in film. However, due to lack of criticism of film and society in general, these problems are simply overlooked or set as a normal context of social discourse. On the other hand, an increase is evident in the number of women involved in film work who analyse the specificity of war and post-war women's identities.

Apart from women producers, directors enjoy the greatest power on a film set. Significant women have also appeared in this segment of art since 1995. Primarily, there is **Jasmila Žbanić** who won Grand Prix on Berlinale with her film *Grbavica*. *Grbavica* deserves to be mentioned in this edition, as an artistic intervention that problematises issues of women – as victims of sexual violence in war. This came as one of the few public interventions in this issue. Regardless of political manipulation by current governments of both entities,⁵⁸⁸ it remains one of the rare public attempts to talk about problems that victims face.

586 Source: <http://scca.ba/team/> (June 18, 2014)

587 Source: <http://www.bhfilm.ba/udruzenje.php?kat=1&clan=77> (July 6, 2014)

588 More in Husanović, J. (2010) *Između traume, imaginacije i nade: Kritički ogledi o kulturnoj produkciji i emancipativnoj politici*, Edicija REČ, Beograd

Apart from Žbanić, **Aida Begić**,⁵⁸⁹ is director of two feature films, several short films and documentaries, and **Ines Tanović** is a script writer and director.⁵⁹⁰

Literature

This section summarises women's experience of creative work and its effects within education systems and the generation of knowledge, from which women authors are excluded, and emphasises literary poetics of women authors belonging to contemporary literature of Bosnia and Herzegovina – **Nermina Omerbegović** (1964), **Tatjana Bjelić** (1974), **Aleksandra Čvorović** (1976), **Šejla Šehabović** (1977), **Tanja Stupar-Trifunović** (1977), **Adisa Bašić** (1979), **Lamija Begagić** (1980) – the so-called literature after genocide, as understood by Arsenijević.⁵⁹¹ Contemporary and other selected women authors are often listed in textbooks without any particular order or meaning. In terms of their active periods or concepts they treat in their work, they do not belong in some of the chronologies in which they are included. They are regularly subsumed under literature for children, the category in which they are most often awarded, since it is believed to be best for a woman author to be either a children's writer or, on the other hand, a women's writer, never simply a fellow literary author who is not studied as a literary author in general.

Classification of female authors within BiH academic discourses may map the distortion of discourses, building the positions of power that decide the woman's place, and may reveal that universities are deeply misogynous and nationalistic, and therefore exclusivist. However, irrespective of the official canonical and institutionalised forms of literary classification, contemporary women's prose and poetry as *a literature of difference* intertextually builds on models of previous female literary authors, creating new literary and emancipative policies. Women authors of the period did not choose the novel, but rather poetry and story, to confront the post-war situation and its consequences; it is, therefore, interesting that the resistance to a great story was advanced not only through the structure of the text itself (the plot and character development) but also through a small form of narration. Today, in contemporary Bosnia and Herzegovina, *it is women authors that mostly write critical and emancipatory literature. They scrutinise the ideological given in a most direct way and, at the same time, openly and explicitly raise their voice both for women and, for the first time in BiH literature, for homosexuals, thus creating a*

589 Source: <http://www.bhfilm.ba/udruzenje.php?kat=1&clan=75> (June 19, 2014)

590 Source: <http://www.bhfilm.ba/udruzenje.php?kat=1&clan=13> (June 18, 2014)

591 See: Arsenijević, D. (2012) *Ljubav nakon genocida* in Sarajevske sveske, 39-40, Sarajevo: Mediacentar, p. 75-89. He here includes Ferida Duraković, Jozefina Dautbegović and Marina Trumić, in the period of 1990s and SFRJ.

social space for them all.⁵⁹² In other words, *such policy has a potential to cause changes in BiH today by challenging and redefining, to use Sinfield's term, 'credibility criterion' of the dominant.*⁵⁹³

A traumatic encounter with the ravages of the war and the concept of trauma is, with these authors, articulated by *ironically questioning stereotypes and embracing the trauma, not as a source of self-victimising pleasure but as the deepest and most precious experience we have.*⁵⁹⁴ In their literary concepts, contemporary BiH women writers have abandoned the boundaries of reading from angles – literature need not only be feminist. This does not mean they have distanced themselves from feminism; quite the contrary, they will not be subsumed under one reading, nor under women's literature alone, but under literature in general.

A hundred years of women's history in Bosnia and Herzegovina, seen as a hundred years of women's literature or women's creative literary work, represents a situation where women's writings left an indelible trace in literature and literary theory, but still remained epistemologically excluded from the very universal notion of literature and everything it implied and accepted in society or within the text. The notion still belongs to male writers, to men, as when we think of BiH or South Slavic literature, the concept always refers to great names such as Andrić, Selimović, Krleža, Ćopić or, more recently, upholders of their poetics, Kovač, Ibrišimović, Pekić, Karahasan and Jergović; women are somehow excluded from all of this. They are excluded from literary nights and promotions, from canons and anthologies; they are intertextually excluded from the overall experience of world and domestic literature; they are not considered serious enough, while their books are perceived as a side literature, a subcategory to the official male contemplative literature, whether scientific or literary. All the female authors (literary authors, poetesses, writers or publicists) singled out in this overview of women's literary work in the past hundred years have not had collections of their work published by publishing companies, which usually publish collected literary works, but only those of male writers in a few editions. This remains the case even today, when we have a clearly articulated feminist strategy within literary discourse and female literary authors winning international awards and being translated into more than twenty different languages. Women's literature is excluded from primary and secondary school curricula and from compulsory reading for studies of literature and literary theory, as well as from scientific and cultural institutes such as the Museum of Literature and Performing Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although this Museum has worked for

592 Arsenijević, D. (2006) *Prema politici nade: poezija i postratni period u BiH* in Na tragu novih politika: kultura i obrazovanje u BiH, Tuzla: centar za istraživački, stvaralački i građanski angažman „Grad“, p. 275-299

593 Ibid.

594 Ibid.

53 years, having collected 67 literary and 17 theatrical collections with over 20,000 exhibits, literary collections mostly relate to the creative work and lives of male writers; BiH female writers are not included in the material of the above institution, which testifies to a discriminatory value imperative of literary work and its musealisation. Such a trend actually sends a message that women as authors are not necessary or serious enough for classification, musealisation and the study of history of BiH literary work.

In South Slavic literary environments, male writers are directed to one another, they polemicise with one another, measure against one another, enchant one another, approve of one another, write long public letters to one another and dedicate their literary works to one another. They never dedicate anything to women, not even when they write love poems. If a rare man occasionally dares to, then a poem is dedicated to an initial. [...] In South Slavic literary environments, male writers do not quote women, even renowned foreign women. They always refer to renowned foreign men. [...] In South Slavic literary environments, it is mostly men that are engaged in literature. Men are managers of publishing companies, editors, jury members, members of editorial boards, compilers of anthologies, textbook authors, literary magazine editors, teachers of national history at faculties, authors of the history of local literature, literary critics, members of literary associations and their presidents, literary columnists and reviewers. If a woman does assume a position in literary life, the reason behind it is often found in her loyalty to the world ordered according to men.⁵⁹⁵

Namely, there are three types of texts that women write which, in terms of the narrative structure and topoi they treat in their texts, correspond to the terms: women's, feminine and feminist.⁵⁹⁶ The term *women's text* is simply a text written by women, mostly for women, as female authors are mostly read by women, with men allegedly seldom reading such literature. Even though such texts are not infrequently without a particular literary and artistic value, they still write out a certain political position, as they are texts written by women, mostly for women. This implies a sort of awareness of the peculiarity of women's position that, by virtue of its own existence, strives to represent a patriarchal discourse within literary work as mimicry and wordplay, not as a natural given. The *feminine text* surpasses the distinction of the women's text as it has a better articulated political intention of representing women's experience, to juxtapose it to predominant ideas and canonisations. The *feminist text* has a clear strategy of questioning the methods, objects, goals or principles of the mainstream patriarchal canons, using deconstruction strategies to question the self-evident understanding of patriarchy and literature itself. These concepts help us clarify the poetics of literary text of BiH female authors, realise to what extent they question the existing patterns of power,

595 Ugrešić, D. (2001) *Život je bajka*, Zagreb: Konzor

596 See Grosz, E. (1995) *Space, Time, Perversion*, New York & London: Routledge

power of knowledge in the text or in society, and to what extent they agree to these patterns.

It should certainly be borne in mind that the division cannot always be understood in this way, since interpretations of the literary text do not always necessarily match these categorisations, or the clearly defined borders between them, which makes this categorisation just one of many possible categorisations, rather than a definitive or exclusive one, as literature as a form of expression or simply a *text* in a Barthian sense surpasses characteristics that can be exclusively reduced to sex, gender, nation, sexual orientation, etc. Literature seen as a text is separable from its female/male author and all her/his characteristics, as such characteristics are irrelevant to scholarly interpretation, whereas analyses perceiving literary texts from angles – whether national or other – do not actually enrich knowledge but rather reduce it and epistemologically impoverish literature. On the other hand, literature must sometimes be seen in the context in which it appear; failing to acknowledge the conditions of their creation, many literary works would be dismissed as worthless, particularly with regard to mapping some sort of a creative beginning, or, in this particular context, women's creative work.

Theatre

Contemporary BiH women directors disrupt the historical continuity within which the profession of theatre director is a male job, by striving to win positions that have been ideologically denied to women. Women directors create personal dramatic experiences, deconstruct the self-evident conception of the theatrical tradition, and create new poetics and emancipatory politics within theatrical expression. With the appearance of female directors on the theatre stage of post-Yugoslav BiH and with their subverting engagement, theatre direction ceases to be understood as a solely male profession.

Tanja Miletić Oručević, university professor and theatre director, born in 1970 in Sarajevo. Miletić Oručević was educated in Sarajevo, Mostar and Poland. She is engaged in theatre and radio direction, lecturing and pedagogical work in the field of acting, and in translating scholarly papers in the field of theatre studies. She writes and publishes theatre studies on contemporary BiH and South Slavic drama. Her most important plays are: Jean Genet: *The Maids* (BNP Zenica), Mark Ravenhill: *Shopping & F***ing* (MESS Sarajevo), Nikolaj Koljada: *The Hen* (NP Tuzla), Gina Moxley: *Danti-Dan* (Pozorište mladih Sarajevo), Džemaludin Latić / Hasan Džafić: *Srebrenica Inferno* (BNP Zenica), Sarah Kane: *Cleansed* (MESS Sarajevo), Maksim Gorky: *The Lower Depths* (BNP Zenica), Ibrahim Kajan: *Katarina Kosača* (MTM Mostar) Irfan Horozović: *Priče iz šadrvanskog vrta* (Festival Dionysia Rome) Bertolt Brecht: *Baal* (Faculty of Humanist Sciences Mostar), Almir Imširević: *Kad bi ovo bila*

predstava (Fakultet humanističkih nauka Mostar). She worked on seven radio-novellas produced by the Federation Radio. She won the first award in the BH Radio 1 competition for her drama *Ćamil i ja* based on prose by Šejla Šehabović.

Selma Spahić, theatre director, born in Foča in 1985. Spahić's plays have been staged in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Croatia, Montenegro, and the United Kingdom. Her theatre work includes staging drama classics, contemporary international and BiH drama texts, as well as documentary performances. Her performances have won awards at festivals in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the post-Yugoslav region, and participated in some of the most important European festivals, such as *Neue Theater Stücke aus Europa* in Wiesbaden, Germany. Since 2010, she has been the selector of the Future MESS programme for young female and male directors, and since 2012 she has been the head of the artistic programme of the MESS International Theatre Festival in Sarajevo. She lives in Sarajevo. Her plays are characterised by social engagement, questioning policies and patterns of creating subjectivity and experience from the position of post-Yugoslav generations. Spahić attempts to represent and examine the experience of a generation that could do nothing in the heat of collective nationalist paranoia when the former FRY collapsed and ethnically clean regions were created. She examines relationships and relations, trying to bridge a traumatic gap created by the collapse of a joint cultural space – a space of which this generation was deprived.

Another woman director active today, whose work has strong emancipatory potential, is **Lajla Kaikčija** (1976). Having graduated from the Sarajevo Academy of Performing Arts, Kaikčija began to work with the Bosnian National Theatre in Zenica, where she was also the Art Director in 2008/09. She directed a number of plays, with particularly interesting texts and staging related to the dramas *Play* by S. Beckett, and *Zatvorenih očiju*, by feminist writer April de Angelis.

Kaća Dorić, actress and writer, is yet another important figure whose work is significant.⁵⁹⁷

Sevdah as an Art Form

The fascination with Sevdah, traditional Bosnian love song, with renewed popularity in Bosnia and Herzegovina, began with **Farah Tahirbegović**, a literary author and theoretician. Her work on Sevdah was theoretical and explorative – she published a monograph of Zaim Imamović - but also artistic – together with Emina Džinić, Erol Hadžimušović and Benjamin Begović, in 1995 she founded a band called Dertum, through which they explored various possibilities and rearranged Sevdah songs, adding jazz

⁵⁹⁷ We recommend the interview with Kaća Dorić, source: <http://www.gracija.ba/novost/10616/vazno-je-znati-da-te-tijelo-nece-izdati-> (July 2, 2014)

variation. Notwithstanding her premature death, Farah Tahirbegović made an incredible impact in her field as well as in literature. It is impossible to talk about Tahirbegović without mentioning her engagement in literature – she was an executive editor and editor for public relations in the Buybook publishing company, as well as a writer and literary critic. In Buybook, she edited a number of books, launched new editions, such as *Sufistan*, collecting titles related to Sufism, as well as *BuyFeminaBook* within which the book entitled *Zaboravljene vladarice u svijetu Islama* (Forgotten Rulers in the World of Islam) was published.

Other artist continued to adapt Sevdah songs to the “modern ear”, primarily in jazz tones, which resulted in the reanimation of Sevdah as a very popular form. One very important author and performer is **Amira Medunjanin**, who expanded her interest in *sevdah* to the field of theory and research. Nowadays, Medunjanin is one of the most important performers, credited with *sevdah* being performed on the most popular music stages in the world.

This chapter lists only some women of importance in BiH art. Each evidently has an exceptional artistic career, and many managed to change the international perception of BiH artistic discourse through their work. Yet, regardless of their exquisite work, these women still have not solved the major problems – partly because they are engaged in this *unprofitable profession* and partly because they are women.

*Example: no women-artist since the war has managed to solve the problem of working or accommodation premises (insurmountable bureaucratic and administrative obstacles to obtaining construction or remodelling permits), not even through lists for assigning studios within professional associations.*⁵⁹⁸

Although the situation with regard to art production is very favourable, most women artists, unfortunately, are still trying to secure basic working conditions. Sadly, in the current system it is hardly possible to earn a living being engaged in art that does not correspond to official policies but, rather, analyses and questions these policies. Therefore, most artists also attempt to build careers beyond Bosnia and Herzegovina – given the current absolute lack of interest in art, they can find neither the audience nor the minimum profit to sustain themselves.

On Women Who Died to Achieve Something for the Rest of Us

In November 2004, on the 27th night of the month of Ramadan, twenty-one-year old Olena Popik, Ukrainian, mother of a three-year old child, was

598 Blažević, D. (2011) *Da li žensko pitanje još postoji*, in: *Dolje ti je rijeka, dolje ti je pruga*, Buybook, Sarajevo, p. 20-21

brought to and left outside the Mostar Hospital. She was left outside the hospital by men who earned money off her till her last breath. She died of AIDS, syphilis, pneumonia, overdose and tuberculosis.

Ferida Duraković

Olena Popik, Ukrainian national, is one of the most horrifying cases of people trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina. She was brought to BiH, where she was kept in several towns, forced to offer sexual services. In 2004, she was admitted to the Mostar Hospital in a severe condition, where she died a few days later. The official cause of death was tuberculosis, syphilis, hepatitis C and AIDS. The brutality of this case shook the entire region and received enormous media attention. At the end of the proceedings, out of four suspects only two persons were sentenced – one to two years and the other to one and a half years of imprisonment. The responsibility of the state is analysed in various reports, evaluations, etc. On the other hand, women's non-governmental organisations used this case to initiate the process of changing legislation – women's organisations were mobilised and primarily working on raising awareness of trafficking in people, trying to remove the stigma around the victim. The organisations were also opening service centres and safe houses for victims of trafficking, lobbying for them to become the first place where victims are taken after being arrested (or, in rare occasions, when victims managed to reach the police themselves). Thus, a safe place would be provided for victims and, unlike in previous practice, they would not be escorted for interviews to the very same persons who often use their services. Enormous lobbying and efforts on the part of women's non-governmental organisations as well as pressure from international institutions have helped break the chain of trafficking in people. From the country of destination, Bosnia and Herzegovina has soon become a country of origin for people trafficking. Although this problem is yet to be solved, it is far less prominent nowadays than it was in November 2004.

Sanela Redžepagić, an opera singer from Bosnia and Herzegovina, is a woman who achieved significant success on the international music scene. Redžepagić was originally from Zenica but built her career in Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. During 2007, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. A few months later, in 2008, Redžepagić died aged 37. On the webpage of the Sanela Redžepagić Foundation, established by her family after her death, features the following:

Young opera singer Sanela Redžepagić lost her life due to an inadequate diagnosis and late treatment at the Sarajevo hospital. With the help of the Salvatore Maugeri Foundation, she was transferred to a hospital in Pavia, Italy, whose staff was incapable and uninformed. She was referred to Pavia for surgery, after a round of chemotherapy administered in Sarajevo.⁵⁹⁹

599 Source: <http://www.fondacijasanelaredzepagic.org.ba/index.php/ciljevi-i-zadaci> (July 12,

Today, the Foundation educates women on the problem of breast cancer, raising awareness and encouraging women to undergo screenings, as well as financially supporting women who need treatment. It also helps women during diagnosis and treatment in order to reduce the possibility of misdiagnosis.

Both these women are only some of those who died due to certain mistakes and omissions within the system. Despite the fact that certain rights of all women are nominally advocated for, these two examples demonstrate that new space is open on a daily basis, which requires awareness raising and efforts towards women's human rights. The issue of trafficking in people had overlooked by the media before the Popik case. Even after this, an analysis of the media presentation of Olena Popik shows that she is often depicted as a woman of low morals who fell ill owing to her lewd life, unlike honest users of her services, who are now suffering due to illnesses that the evil woman transferred to them. The Popik case is still an example of the stereotypical and patriarchal nature of BiH public discourse towards women; the very media headings relating to the case are a clear indicator of this: *A Ukrainian woman infected dozens of persons in BiH with HIV; While police officers arrest and release prostitutes and foreign thieves, the state has no money to build a collective centre for foreign nationals...*

Whether it concerns victims of trafficking in people, misdiagnosis or inadequate treatment, it is clear that even today, just as one hundred years ago, women are still unable to exercise all their rights and face discrimination with regard to access to services. It is a fact that many women die waiting for a number of these services to improve – Popik while she was waiting for the state to recognise the fact that there is trafficking in people in BiH, Redžepagić owing to an inadequate and slow system of health-care, as well as many other women not mentioned here, who truly are victims of this system. This chapter had no intention to refer to death in order to talk about a disastrous condition regarding the rights of women in BiH, since this is not the case today – we are witnesses to the fact that things are moving ahead. But, unfortunately, while writing about many such women, one comes to realise that many had died prematurely and it was impossible not to dwell on this fact.

General Remark on the Time in which we Live

The sensory perception of women as a disruptive noise or murmur, as something that cannot exist outside the national discourse, places the discursive context in which Bosnian society develops only in the early stages of emancipation, in a progressive and evolutionary time. While these activities – and many feminist activists – strive to provide hope for women's re-emancipation, in the current climate of nationalist politics, femininity

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is pushed to the margins. The social conditions in which struggle for equality is taking place are far from ideal, despite the context in which emancipation should be inevitable. Unfortunately, nowadays emancipation takes place only in the areas that are essential for the development of the state or meeting the requirements imposed on citizens by neoliberal order. Emancipation is interpreted in line with the definition offered by Rosi Braidotti, who says that full emancipation is a shift that questions existing social settings, and not one that simply involves women in pre-set patriarchal values.

If emancipation is about adapting to the standards, measures and values of a society, which was for centuries dominated by men, the acceptance of the same material and symbolic values of the dominant group, then emancipation is not enough. We must reject a simplified idea that we can compensate for centuries of exclusion and disqualification of women by a sudden state-sponsored integration of women into labour force, the symbolic institutions and symbols of representation. Allowing women in, giving them a few seats in the previously segregated clubs is not enough. What the newcomers need is to be authorised to redefine the rules of the game, not only to make a difference but also to make that difference significant.⁶⁰⁰

We must not forget Olena Popik, whose death rescued Bosnia and Herzegovina from the jaws of human traffickers and ultimately opened the discussion in Bosnia and Herzegovina about this problem. We should not forget Žarana Papić, Nirman Moranjak – Bamburać, Farah Tahirbegović and all other women who are no longer with us and who launched emancipation and contributed significantly to the development of culture, rights and improvement of women's conditions in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Following the Dayton Agreement, politically, Bosnia and Herzegovina continued to develop deep nationalist ideologies, whereas socially, it developed extreme trash. Therefore, this publication mainly deals with women who stood outside that culture, women who tried through their contributions, even from the periphery, to change the patriarchal state of mind. Exercising rights, lobbying for changes in the law, articulating the women's movement, peace activism, progressing gender studies, fighting against trafficking, etc. are all processes that women in Bosnia and Herzegovina have initiated (and many of them completed) in only twenty years. There is a lot of room for emancipation and there are many things that need to be changed. However, it is clear that women today are slowly conquering that space and we can only hope that their struggle will be clearly documented in the history of the Women's Movement.

600 Braidotti, R. (1991) *The Subject in Feminism in Hypatia* 6.2, YSTOR, p. 155-172

Finally, writing about the modern age brings along a certain discomfort. I thought about this text for days – how to shape it without forgetting all those women who over the past two decades or so did something important for emancipation. Now, at the end of this text I know that I left out the majority of these women – because in every small community, in every city there were hundreds of women who did extraordinary things and who managed to push the boundaries, at least for a while. Any activist who operated in any of the organisations did a great deal, and there are an estimated 150 active women's organisations in the country. My conscious decision was not to talk about individual women activists because there is no official database, and therefore I would have to make a selection. I was not willing to take that responsibility. Consequently, I opted for mentioning those that were already mentioned in some of the existing publications and focusing on women in other segments of society. I deliberately wrote about women who are well known and recognised today, who, you might think, need not be written about. However, based on lessons learned from the past, I realised that it is better to write things down, because the next generation might already think that there was not a single woman theoretician, artist or indeed any significant women's movement in our time. For that reason, this text is methodologically different from other texts and instead of revealing memories, it tries to rescue these memories from oblivion.

INSTEAD OF A CONCLUSION

We end this book with a speech Professor Dr. Zlata Grebo gave at a conference organised to mark the 10th Anniversary of the signing of the Beijing Declaration. The conference, organised by *Women to Women*, took place in Sarajevo, from 25 to 27 November 2005. With this ending we want, above all, to show our respect for Zlata Grebo, one of the most significant scientific workers in Bosnia and Herzegovina, for her thoughts and endless efforts, and to the Association *Women to Women*, for their solidarity and sisterly kindness in sharing this speech with us.

Women's Civil Scene in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The social status of women is a topic widely present in all discussions about trends in society and its development.

On this occasion, we are trying to answer the following questions:

- What have women achieved through their participation in the past social events;
- Through their participation in the war; and
- Where are women today?

Their path has been undoubtedly marked by significant achievements of a new status of women, but this happened only after many halts and new questions. In my view, this meeting is special, among other reasons, because it considers the issue of women's status in the period since 1919. Unfortunately, we seldom speak about it, so we have possibly disregarded some of the important developments and achievements in the status of women in society at that time. Under the current circumstances, when we are faced with many social and economic problems, especially through the spokespersons of nationalism and fascism, we should recourse to an argued discussion and the struggle for freedom in general, aware that freedom is integral and that it cannot be as long as there is any restriction – be it national, religious, gender/sexual, political, economic, etc. Our reality proves it: Bosnia and Herzegovina has represented and still represents a complex social, cultural and economic context – meaning, this was not only so in the past but also at present. Maybe one can ask the question - Is it possible to speak of a unique position of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

Today, at the beginning of the millennium, we look back at the last century. There are at least two reasons for this:

- First, because some of us lived through that period and are witnesses and participants of the events that occurred - these generations are becoming smaller in numbers.
- Second, because some turbulent processes took place in these areas at the time. Last century was marked by wars, shifts of different social systems and forms of the state with all the peculiarities of its internal

system, the struggle of our people for freedom, and national and social emancipation. This is when our women began to actively engage in socio-political life. They recorded their first employments and political engagements.⁶⁰¹ One cannot ignore the activities of women's cultural, educational and humanitarian associations, usually bearing national prefix, and their importance in working with women.

The beginning of the twentieth century is marked by a remarkable struggle of Muslim intellectuals for the education of female youth (Safvetbeg Bašagić, Dr. Hamdija Karamehmedović and others). For example, in the 20th session of the National Council in 1910, a requirement was made to enable Muslim women to attend the state Girls' Colleges.

To that end, there was an interesting debate from 1911 between Dr. Hamdija Karamehmedović and Sofija Pletikosić, who wrote under the pen name Safija-hanuma, about the education and emancipation of Muslim girls. Sofija Pletikosić (Safija-hanuma) asserted: *Should your Muslim children go to schools, the dark days will come to be, for you, for them and the entire nation.* Dr. Karamehmedović fiercely reacted to [Pletikosić's] views and expressed his regrets that these and similar views were published in *Muallim*, the magazine of religious instructors and Association of religious teachers and imams.⁶⁰² These examples show that the struggle for emancipation of women took place not only within the broader framework of Bosnian-Herzegovinian society, but also within the Bosniak Corps, and amongst women themselves. These are the efforts that we need to keep in mind, especially because in the past we often tended to accept the stereotype of backwardness of Muslim women, despite the fact that they mainly graduated from Maktabs [religious schools] and state schools, so-called *rušdije* etc. Calling these efforts to mind is an attempt to save them from oblivion.

If I were to make a rough periodisation of the Women's Movement in our country, I would, tentatively say that:

- The first period covers the time until the end of World War I. We already said a few words about that;
- The Second period would encompass the time until the Second World War and the Peoples Liberation Struggle and the 1914-1945 Revolution;
- The third period covers a period from 1945 until the nineties of the last Century;

601 See: Bajić, N. (1950) *Uloga žene u socijalističkom pokretu u Bosni i Hercegovini*, p. 1-10; Perić, D. *Borba žene za socijalizam u okviru radničkog pokreta Jugoslavije*, p. 1, Republička konferencija za društvenu aktivnost žena, Sarajevo; Istorijski arhiv KPJ, tom II, Beograd

602 See: Safije-hanume (1911) *Pisma u obranu muslimanskog ženskinja* issued by Muallima, Islamska dionička tiskara, Sarajevo; Karamehmedović, H. (1911) *Odgovor na pisma Safije-hanume*, naklada Zemen, Bosanska pošta; Safije-hanume (1911) *Polemika o emancipaciji žene – u obranu muslimanskog ženskinja*, the response to Hamdija Karamehmedović and others, Naklada spisateljske tiskare V. Tomčić i dr., Opatija

- The fourth period includes, perhaps the hardest and bloodiest period of our history, from the nineties of the last century to the present.

Each of these periods has its importance and specificity. I hope I have not made too great material errors and if I have, I hope that you will understand. I had in mind Bosnia and Herzegovina with its historical borders, with all the specifics of its existence. I considered Bosnia and Herzegovina within its historical borders and with all of its specificities. In each period, women were making a step forward - sometimes more slowly, sometimes faster. Wars were common and women were not spared. The war of 1914 - 1945 was marked by mass participation of women in the armed units and many other tasks. This was also the case in the last war of 1992-1995. Women effected *superhuman effort with a lot of spirit*. The largest improvement in the status of Bosnian women was achieved in the period from 1945 to the nineties of the last century. Early in the post-war years one needed to overcome general backwardness in many aspects of daily life in the war-ravaged country - for example nutrition, housing, the fight against various diseases, including infectious diseases. Demographic indicators suggest that significant progress was made in this regard. This progress was reflected in a reduced mortality rate - particularly the mortality rate of infants and women of childbearing age - the extension of life expectancy, changes in population structure, for example in the area of education.

According to the 1991 census, the illiteracy rate remained, largely, a characteristic of the older generations of women. However, the higher the educational level, differences between the genders within education become more apparent in favour of men.⁶⁰³ It is important to point out that in this period there was a notable increase in employment amongst the female population.⁶⁰⁴ All of this shows that positive results were achieved in solving everyday problems. Formally, a step forward was made. Many legal barriers that earlier led to discrimination against women in society were removed. This was already effected by a decision made in the meeting of the State Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Bosnia and Herzegovina [ZAVNOBIH] in Mrkonjić Grad in 1943, and subsequent statutory decisions.

Women of Bosnia and Herzegovina were active participants in global conferences (Helsinki, Mexico, Nairobi, Beijing), and many international meetings. Social evolution resulted in many transformations in society, families and women themselves. The most reliable indicator of social affirmation and equality of women in society is her education and employment, her participation in the sphere of labour and decision-making. Without wider social intervention, we would, certainly, further deepen the differences between men and women.

The period which we talked about a bit more is the period that I am,

603 See: Statistički godišnjak BH 1980 p. 63 and Statistički godišnjak 1985 p. 64

604 See: Statistički godišnjak 1991 p. 64, 65

as a participant of many events, best familiar with and the closest to the present. We look back at this time not only to see the main features thereof but also to learn from the experience and assess what would be best to do today. Both the recent past and the present undoubtedly have their specificities.

The war years are remembered by the brutalities that occurred in this region. Women were affected by it – on a scale and in a way more brutal than ever before - rape, killing of their loved ones, expulsion from their homes and homeland. Many stories were told about these events – true and severe.

During and after the war, many national and religious associations were established, as well as many non-partisan and non-governmental organisations and state institutions, whose programmes dealt with women's issues, their status in society and in the family. Perhaps we can assume that excessive organisation does not necessarily contribute to more efficient solving of the problems at hand, and that conclusions from many conferences do not always reach those to whom they refer or those responsible for their implementation. However I am convinced that all these efforts were not in vain.

Please note that my knowledge is based mainly on what has been published in the means of information. Perhaps we lack the activities in solving concrete problems of our everyday life, and hence the results that could be expected. Existential problems are huge and affect the entire population, including women, especially in less developed areas, as well as refugees and returnees, and some socially vulnerable groups (e.g. the Roma population, the unemployed, orphans, etc.). Empirical research, both earlier and latest studies, confirm that there is a discrepancy between declared attitudes and the actual situation in society. At the same time, this speaks of awareness, which is hard to change, both in society and in women.⁶⁰⁵ The entire social development shows to its holders, by virtue of its historical logic, that social relations do not change through appeals made to the centres of political power and that only by assuming the role of the subject in social processes can one achieve factual changes in her situation. New generations bring a new strength and new responses to the challenges of the time. I am convinced that they will persist in this endeavour.

Dr. Zlata Grebo
Sarajevo, 25 November 2005

605 Carol Mann warns in *Žena u ratu*: ...women are victims of peace, just as they are of war. They get immediately forgotten in post-war periods and their experiences are not heard... it is of particular importance to speak about various forms of victimisation of women, and about survival and resistance strategies. *Revija slobodne misli*, br. 39, 2003, p. 4

A Note on Rosa Luxemburg⁶⁰⁶

Modern feminism is slightly over two centuries old. The term is even younger, so when historians refer to older periods they often use the term *protofeminism* [feminisms before feminisms]. It is clear already that feminism insists strongly on precision and self-limitation, which speaks of its long struggle to enter the accepted political vocabulary, scientific terminology and the history of ideas. In a situation of constant questioning and introspection from the inside and permanent denial and silence from the outside, it might actually be easier to define feminism as any political movement, circle and situation that produces the idea of gender equality, promotes women's qualities and celebrates women's contribution to the development of humanity. (...)

The grotesqueness of the 20th century anti-feminism is second only to the horror of reprisals against women. Instead of generalisation, it may be worth recalling some specific examples. Rosa Luxemburg, the iconic leftist who was largely censored in the Sovietised history of the labour movement, embodied all the political goals and strategies of feminism of the early 20th century: wide range of ideas, superior intellect, sensitivity to social injustice, living in accordance with political ideals, unequivocal feminist behaviour and thinking, pacifism, revolutionism and resistance to ideological constraints. She spent many years in prison, first because of her participation in the 1905 Russian Revolution and then because she opposed World War I in Germany. She left behind an exciting polemical, theoretical and literary work. After a failed attempt at revolution in Berlin, soldiers killed her and her colleague Karl Liebknecht and dumped their bodies in a canal. This outcome suited many *international leftists* as much as German militants. Therefore, instead of being pathetic, let us emphasise the quality of consistency. It is important to note that the cult of Rosa Luxemburg in the 20th Century was fostered mainly by *irregular* leftists, anarchists, critics of Stalinism, utopians, environmentalists and ... feminists. (...)

Let us conclude, then, with needs: In order to acquire citizenship, Luxemburg married a German worker. Any woman feminist today, along with alliance with all those who want to determine their sexuality on their own, has a strong need for a still rare member of the species, documented in the past, and yet much desired in the future: a man feminist.

A Note on the Vacuum Cleaner⁶⁰⁷

The vacuum cleaner is one many *tools* of the 20th century designed to help women to spare time for other tasks. Manipulation is more than obvious: surrounded by a bunch of home appliances, which were supposed

606 Slapšak, S. (2001) *Ženske ikone XX veka, Biblioteka XX vek*, Beograd

607 Ibid.

to afford her more time for herself, a modern woman not only spends almost as much time as before on household chores - taking into account the time spent in learning how to handle the appliances - but is also required to keep up with technological advancements and market development (repairing and replacing outdated appliances, competing with neighbours). Indeed, on top of that, she is required to look impeccable, have career and take care of family. (...)

Among the infernal machines of women's subjection the vacuum cleaner has a special place. It has the closest contact with dangerous filth. The sphere of *filth* in most cultures we know belongs to women, who are also, in most cultures, less *clean* than men. An ambiguous form of traditional vacuum cleaner, which reminds us of the concealed functions of female body, entails the cultural complex of male fears of female sexuality. On another level of stereotypical images, the vacuum cleaner lies in the category of mysterious instruments of women's competence, as had previously been a *witch's broom*. A being between the two worlds - the filthy and the clean - and capable of coping with both, a woman with a vacuum cleaner or broom (the cleaner) has a special status in the public space. She has special knowledge and, though devoid of femininity, she has other capabilities. Wasn't Nela Eržišnik, a famous comic character of the Yugoslav socialist culture, the oracle who, leaning against a broom, managed to tell, in plain language, otherwise abstruse local dialect, the truth which others feared - even to the ruler himself, Tito? In an extremely successful Slovenian film *U leri* [Idle Running], a cleaner - a Bosnian woman - is the only one who managed to clearly point out to the hero, in her own dialect and with her usual magic supplements - coffee and a cigarette - the reality of his life situation. They both have their own little rooms, mysterious spaces in which they tell their *truths* surrounded by cleaning agents, in the Grotto of Sibylla between the rooms and cabinets of *normal* members of society. The professional cleaner belongs to the European literary and cultural tradition of servants who are smarter than their masters. As a woman, however, this character is also marked by a disturbing, gender-based ritual tradition, which is associated with witches: sexual unattractiveness and usually old age, which is compensated by knowledge, technique and reminiscence. It is no coincidence that such a mythical handmaid is often defined as a *foreigner*, the other, by definition. Her main ability, which borders on successful divination, is the reading of simple conditionalities, *natural* truths, which others, laden with culture and social codification, are no longer able to see.

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Oblivion, memory and women are the three main terms that determine this book and we need to explain these terms for the book to be read as we envisaged it. *Oblivion* is the pre-constructed refusal to remember what has happened, suppressing and deleting the traces of life. *Memory*, in terms of re-inscribing events in time and space, by writing, is one of the tactics of the resistance to the oblivion regime. *Women* are defined through the words of Gorana Mlinarević: *When I talk about women and women's political agency, I do refer to essentialist or biological terms, but the political agency that is potentially emancipatory in terms of resistance to the patriarchal system. When I talk about women, I talk about women as an analytical category.*

Foreword, Jasmina Čaušević

Conceived, written and published only four years later, *Women Documented* gives us a dynamic, and more optimistic picture of the development of women's and gender history in/of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thanks to the efforts of both academia and civil society organisations, new segments of Bosnian history are progressively explored, and women's and gender studies are gradually expanding. However, before reading a book like this, it seems legitimate to ask *why* women's and gender history of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a topic deserving to be studied. What makes Bosnia and Herzegovina an heuristically interesting case study is connected to the impressive series of political breaks experienced by this region in approximately one century.

Introduction, Fabio Giomi