

**FEMINISM AS COUNTERDISCOURSE IN YUGOSLAVIA
IN TWO DIFFERENT CONTEXTS**

By

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Abstract

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
1. Background and History	11
2. The Emergence of <i>Neofeminizam</i> in Yugoslavia in the 1970s and 1980s.....	20
2.1 <i>Neofeminizam – First Conference (1978), Main Topics and Major Figures</i>	21
2.2 <i>Individual Approaches to Feminism – Drakulić, Iveković, Ugrešić</i>	30
2.3 <i>Neofeminizam and its Place in Relation to Other Counterdiscourses</i>	43
3. Feminism in the New Nation States	48
3.1 <i>New Challenges for Feminism in the early 1990s</i>	48
3.2 <i>The Rape Discourse in the Wartime Period</i>	54
3.3 <i>The "Witch-Trial"</i>	60
3.4 <i>Redefining Yugoslavia in Retrospect – from Erwartungshorizont to Erfahrungsraum and the other way round (Drakulić, Iveković, Ugrešić)</i>	72
Conclusion	89
Appendix I.....	93
Appendix II.....	94
Bibliography.....	96

Introduction

The second wave of feminism, emerging from the mid-1960s on, has functioned as a counterdiscourse in each society wherever it appeared. While counterdiscourses, in the sense of a mode of speech and a system of thoughts contradicting the ruling one, in general, have played a significant role in totalitarian regimes in Eastern Europe and feminism could have been one of these, the ideas and claims of the second wave feminism in Western Europe are absent from the intellectual history of most East European countries. The only exception is the former Yugoslavia, where in the early 1970s feminist groups started to emerge and work. However, while later in most East European countries the democratic transitions of 1989/90 opened up the space for feminist discussions as well, the Yugoslav history of feminism took a different turn, which is not surprising, considering the history of the country in the early 1990s.

In this thesis I examine two periods of feminism in the former Yugoslavia and in its successor states. The first period in focus is the time of the emergence of the movement, the late 1970s and early 1980s, and then, following a short overview of the events of the late 1980s, the second period to look at is the early nineties, that is the time of the birth of the new nation states, the break-up of Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav wars.¹ The analysis is directed to two phenomena: the major elements of the feminist discourse of the age, published in debates, manifestos, scholarly articles and literary works, and on the activity and career of three significant figures of Yugoslav feminism, three Croatian authors: Slavenka Drakulić, Rada Iveković and Dubravka Ugrešić. Since, as we will see, feminism in the 1970s-1980s was thinking in terms of Yugoslavia and the three authors claim a Yugoslav identity, albeit in different ways, the inclusion of elements from the

¹ I avoid the use of the term "Balkan wars". The reason for this is in accord with the argumentation of Maria Todorova. The specific concept of "Balkan violence" is confronted with the European one, and is of course more cruel, barbarian, etc. Moreover, the term "Balkan wars" does not differentiate between the Yugoslav successor states and other countries, who had nothing to do with that war. Cf. Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (NY and Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997), 137.

history of feminism in the other republics is necessary and the use of the term "Yugoslavia" in the title is justified.

The literature on the topic so far has been diverse and fragmented. There are some early texts about the beginnings by scholars who were themselves present at the beginning of the movement, by Barbara Jancar (Barbara Jancar-Webster later on) and Sabrina Ramet.² Barbara Jancar even wrote a very informative book about women's role in the partisan movement and in the Second World War (WWII), mostly based on fieldwork and oral history, thus revealing aspects of the beginnings which would not be available any more, since the book was written in the late 1980s.³ By authors like Jasmina Lukić, Celia Hawkesworth⁴ and Andrea Zlatar there are texts both in Serbo-Croatian and English on the appearance and success of the women's writings in the late 1970s, which with this number of remarkable authors was a new phenomena in South Slavic literatures. However, these articles and books do not embed the literary phenomena into a broader political or intellectual history, since they are literary historical works focusing on those aspects of the writings.⁵ In the thesis, I place these literary text into the (feminist) political context. The discussion on the second period I examine is even more fragmented and consists of various articles about new feminist groups⁶ and about the wartime mass rapes,⁷ but probably also due to the closeness

² See Barbara Jancar, "The New Feminism in Yugoslavia," in *Yugoslavia in the 1980s*, ed. Pedro Ramet (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1985), 200-223; idem. "Neofeminism in Yugoslavia. A Closer Look," *Women & Politics* Vol. (8)1 (1988): 1-30; idem. "Women in the Yugoslav National Liberation Movement," in *Gender Politics in the Western Balkans, Gender Politics in the Western Balkans: Women and Society in Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav Successor States*, ed. Sabrina P. Ramet (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State UP 1999), 67-87 and Sabrina P. Ramet, "Feminism in Yugoslavia," in *Social Currents in Eastern Europe: the Sources and Meaning of the Great Transformation* (Durham-London: Duke UP, 1991), 197-211; idem., 1999.

³ Barbara Jancar-Webster [Jancar], *Women & Revolution in Yugoslavia 1941-45* (Denver, Colorado: Arden Press Inc., 1990).

⁴ Also the translator of several works by Dubravka Ugrešić into English.

⁵ Celia Hawkesworth, "Croatian Women Writers 1945-95," in *A History of Central European Women's Writing*, ed. Celia Hawkesworth (London: Palgrave MacMillan-UCL, 2001); Jasmina Lukić, "Women-Centered Narratives in Contemporary Serbian and Croatian Literatures," in *Engendering Slavic Literatures*, ed. Pamela Chester and Sibelan Forrester (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1996); Andrea Zlatar, *Tekst, tijelo, trauma: Ogledi o suvremenoj ženskoj književnosti* (Text, tear, trauma: Essays on contemporary women's literature) (Zagreb: Ljevak, 2004).

A remarkable gesture of the volume edited by Hawkesworth about "Central European women's writing" is that while Croatian literature deserves a place in it, the other countries of the former Yugoslav federation are left out.

⁶ Lepa Mladjenovic [Mladenović] and Donna M. Hughes, "Feminist Resistance to War and Violence in Serbia," in *Frontline Feminisms: Women, War, and Resistance*, ed. Marguerite R. Waller and Jennifer Rycenga (New York: Garland Publications, 2000) 247-274; Cynthia Cockburn, "The Anti-Essentialist

of the events, none of these is a comprehensive history of the discourses present in the period and none of them brings it together and compares it with the 1970s and 1980s. Moreover, since the statement that there is no one single stream which we could call feminism, there are only feminisms, if individual authors, their approach and the changes of this approach are examined and compared to other individual records, that reveals other aspects of the history of *feminism*.

Therefore, this thesis relates the changes, similarities and differences in the discourse of feminism in Yugoslavia in the 1970s-80s and in the early 1990s, with special focus on the work and the story of three post-Yugoslav authors, Slavenka Drakulić, Rada Iveković and Dubravka Ugrešić and their position in the discursive space of a country/countries changing borders, regimes, standpoints. The questions around which the thesis is concentrated will combine the problem of autobiography and the political in literature, the effect of the interpretation of history on the writing of literary history and on forming literary canons, and the role of ideology in personal life, public life and writing.

Methodology and Theories Applied

Methodologically, besides the basic techniques of discourse analysis and deriving from the complex nature of the topic of my investigations, I use several linguistic approaches, such as the "interference theory" of Max Black, conceptual theories like Reinhart Koselleck's *Begriffsgeschichte* and Michael Freedman's conceptual approach to ideologies, the reader-response theory of Hans-Robert Jauss, and texts of Joan W. Scott, Susan Sniader Lanser and Philippe Lejeune on autobiography and the representation of experience. Since the theories of Black and Jauss are applied in specific cases and only in some chapters, I discuss these at the point where they

Choice: Nationalism and Feminism in the Interaction between Two Women's Projects," *Nations and Nationalism* Vol. 6. No. 4 (2000): 611-629; etc.

⁷ Volumes on this topic: Alexandra Stiglmayer, ed., *Mass Rape: The War against Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, trans. by Marion Faber (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, c1994); Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović, ed., *Women, Violence and War: Wartime Victimization of Refugees in the Balkans*, trans. by Borislav Radović (Budapest: CEU Press, 2000); Svetlana Slapšak, ed., *War Discourse, Women's Discourse: Essays and Case-Studies from Yugoslavia and Russia* (Ljubljana: ISH - Fakulteta za podiplomski humanistični študij, 2000); Vesna Kesić, ed., *Women Recollecting Memories: The Center for Woman War Victims Ten Years Later* (Zagreb: Center for Women War Victims, 2003).

emerge. However, a short overview of the other approaches is necessary in this introductory part.

My approach to discourse and its analysis is influenced by authors like Terrel Carver, Paul Ricoeur and, of course, Michel Foucault. As Carver writes, the very basis of the new approach to discourse is the linguistic turn, and since we do not believe any more that language represents some "truth beyond itself", the analysis of texts and language is the only source we are left with in our investigations.⁸ Other schools under the influence of the linguistic turn, especially deconstruction, teach us that language is inherently metaphorical and meanings are never transparent, so the careful reading of textual works is necessary.⁹ However, besides the linguistic approach, when looking at the power relations structuring discourse, Foucault embeds this analysis into a broader context of social and institutional phenomena.

Foucault, who interprets discourse in its relation to power and the production and possession of knowledge, is also the one who introduces the concept of *counterdiscourse*. He differentiates between the ruling discourse and the discourses of those who are usually spoken-for. When they start to speak for themselves, they produce a discourse which stands opposing the ruling one, that is a counterdiscourse.¹⁰ The discourses in this thesis are especially remarkable, since the ruling discourses of the two periods, that of the communist party state and that of the nationalist government at war, are against any alternative discourses already, which, of course, challenges and motivates the alternative discourses to emerge.

The cases examined here are special also since, on the other hand, feminism, coming from its primary concerns, always goes against the mainstream

⁸ Terrel Carver, "Discourse Analysis and the 'Linguistic Turn'," *European Political Science* Vol. 2. No. 1 (2002): 50.

⁹ Cf. Paul de Man "Semiotics and Rhetoric," in *Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979) and Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans. by Barbara Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, c1981).

¹⁰ Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault, "Intellectuals and Politics," in *Language, Counter-Memory, and Practice*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1977), 205-217.

discourse, stating that “gender divisions of work, pleasure, power, and sensibility are socially created, detrimental to women, and, to a lesser degree, to men, and therefore can and should be changed.”¹¹ This apparently implies a constant social criticism, as long as the power relations carrying inequality are not changed. This interpretation of Ruddick I will use in this thesis as a core definition of feminism, supplemented by the element she did not mention, which is the affirmative declaration of a person, group or organisation of being feminist. This will be important in the case of several women’s groups in the early 1990s, like the mothers’ movement, as well as in the case of the party state. For example, the latter has gender equality on its agenda, but apart from its definition of gender equality, the importance of it compared to other issues and the way its implementation was planned, the party state never declared itself feminist.

A further important author contributing to the discursive approach is Paul Ricoeur, who, in his unreadably long *Time and Narrative*, emphasises the narrative nature of history and the reconstructive rather than descriptive characteristic of history, similarly to fictional narratives.¹² Ricoeur’s approach, with the comparison of history and fiction and the emphasis on narratives, leads to the discussion of personal narratives, such as autobiography. Autobiography becomes crucial in my investigations as a genre between the literary and the historical, as a genre which “designates an aesthetic as well as a historical function”, what implies the “possible convergence of aesthetics and of history”,¹³ and moreover, it gives the individual voice, which is crucial in order for the counterdiscourse to be effective.

The need for the individual voice derives from the most frequently emerging pitfall of the strategy of counterdiscourse. As Joan W. Scott writes, the common idea, even shared by some feminists too, “is also to universalize the identity of women and thus to ground claims for the legitimacy of women’s history in the

¹¹ Sara Ruddick, *Maternal Thinking: Towards a Politics of Peace* (Boston, Mass.: The Women’s Press, 1989), 234-235.

¹² Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, Vol. 3., trans. by Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, c1983-1985).

¹³ Paul de Man, “Autobiography as De-Facement,” in *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (New York: Columbia UP, 1984), 67.

shared experience of historians of women and those women whose stories they tell."¹⁴ Scott continues: "In addition, it literally equates the personal with the political, for the lived experience of women is seen as leading directly to resistance to oppression, that is, to feminism."¹⁵ This is more harmful than useful, since it essentialises women and overemphasises the materiality of their bodies, or as Denise Riley is quoted by Scott: "it masks the likelihood that ... [experiences] are accrued to women not by virtue of their womanhood alone, but as traces of domination, whether natural or political",¹⁶ so after all "it is not the individuals who have experience, but subjects who are constituted through experience."¹⁷

From this point of view the attempt to represent women's experience as unified and transparent is really dubious, as it happens in several feminist texts. Though seemingly this unified common experience allows the representation of women as one group and legitimises women's history, for example, by placing this legitimacy in the shared experience, it also hides the workings of domination behind the framing of this experience and the "necessarily discursive character of these experiences as well."¹⁸

When speaking about the representation of experience, autobiography and authorship in the case of feminist texts, the categories of Susan Sniader Lanser are helpful. Lanser differentiates the authorial, the personal and the communal voice, each of these representing "a particular kind of narrative consciousness".¹⁹ The authorial discourse, besides being hetero- and extradiegetic, public and "potentially self-referential",²⁰ also "reproduces the structural and functional situation of authorship."²¹ Lanser attributes an *authoriality* to this type of narrative

¹⁴ Joan W. Scott, "The Evidence of Experience," in *Feminist Approaches to Theory and Methodology: An Interdisciplinary Reader*, ed. Sharlene Hesse-Biber, Christina Gilmartin and Robin Lydenberg (New York and Oxford: OUP, 1999), 88.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, 89.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, 89.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, 83.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, 88-89.

¹⁹ Susan Sniader Lanser, "Toward a Feminist Poetics of Narrative Voice," in *Fictions of Authority: Women Writers and Narrative Voice* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell UP, 1992), 15.

²⁰ *ibid.*, 15.

²¹ *ibid.*, 16.

consciousness, which authoriality enables the writer herself or himself "to engage, from 'within' the fiction, in a culture's literary, social, and intellectual debates."²²

As opposed to this "structurally 'superior'" voice, the personal narrative voice is an autodiegetic (Genette's term) one, meaning a first person narrator who is at the same time same time also the main character, the protagonist of the narration. Structurally, for example in the terminology of Genette, the personal narration and autobiography are indistinguishable, their difference is resolved only by Lejeune's *autobiographic pact* or *truth pact*.²³ While the authorial voice opens the arena for women authors to fight their place in the literary and cultural scene, the personal voice risks the repetition of traditional gender relations in literature, where women are excluded from men's world and can speak/write only about themselves, their female world. On the other hand, since male writers have created female voices, according to Lanser the "arena of personal narration may involve a struggle over which representations of female voice are to be authorized."²⁴ In the sense that futile discussions about authenticity and other similar issues could emerge, this is really a danger, but if the *truth pact* is accepted, these problems are dissolved.

Lanser's category of the communal voice reflects on the problem of collective experience and collective action deriving from a shared experience. According to her definition, it is "either a collective voice or collective voices that share narrative authority".²⁵ However, this is a complicated issue, especially since it is rather underdeveloped in Western narrations, while if we are speaking about texts produced within the Western discourse, it makes sense to remain within those frames. As Lanser argues, since the frames of narration were established by "white,

²² *ibid.*, 17.

²³ Philippe Lejeune, "The Autobiographical Pact," in *On Autobiography*, trans. by Katherine Leary (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, c1989), 3-30. Besides the names, the realisation of the pact is granted by paratexts, that is by texts which are on the threshold of the literary work itself: genre, subgenre (these two usually on the cover), foreword, title, series title, blurbs, illustrations, book covers, the portrait of the author on the cover, etc. According to Genette, who in 1987 wrote a whole book on paratexts, even the book reviews, comments, advertisements, interviews and gossips can count as paratexts. Gérard Genette: *Seuils*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1987. English edition: Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: CUP, 1997).

²⁴ Lanser 1992, 18-19.

²⁵ *ibid.*, 21.

ruling class men" whose "I' is already speaking with the authority of a 'hegemonic we'",²⁶ this communal voice was not needed. On the other hand, as Scott also points out, there are several traps in terming more women as a group and referring to them as a community. Since "it is possible to represent female community without communal voice," and "it is difficult to construct communal voice without constructing female community", there is always a possibility that a "single author appropriate[es] the power" of this plurality.²⁷ In which case, it is not the community who speaks, but one single author who imagines that community somehow and "gives a voice" to it, which does not bring us closer either to the experience of a certain group or to the ways in which this experience is shaped, as Scott prefers and suggests.²⁸ This is why here, in this thesis I find it unavoidable to show individual voices which are sometimes representative and characteristic for a certain group's discourse and sometimes go against it.

Also, this is how conceptual theories become crucial for the analyses of this thesis. The individuals speaking and writing are parts and producers of a counterdiscourse with a specific set of concepts, which concepts at the same time are usually also concepts in other discourses too. In Koselleck's definition, concept is different from words, since "[s]ocial and political concepts possess a substantial claim to generality and always have meanings [...] in modalities other than words",²⁹ and "concepts are thus the concentrate of substantial meanings."³⁰ Besides their ambiguous nature, concepts also have a strong temporality, effecting the political and social space of experience (*Erfahrungsraum*) and horizon of expectation (*Erwartungshorizont*), which by the concept embody past and future.³¹ This happens so that "the space of experience, open toward the future, draws the

²⁶ *ibid.*, 21.

²⁷ *ibid.*, 22.

²⁸ Scott 1999.

²⁹ Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time*, trans. by Keith Tribe (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, c1985), 83.

³⁰ *ibid.*, 84.

³¹ *ibid.*, 270.

horizon of expectation out of itself" and redoubles "past and future in one another in an unequal manner".³²

For feminism, as for other ideologies with a goal of social change to be achieved, the horizon opened up towards the future means also the fulfilment of that definite meaning of a certain concept which they are aiming at. Michael Freeden's conceptual approach to ideologies interprets concepts within ideologies, stating that it is the ideologies which select the meaning and establish networks of meaning.³³ Within the networks, meanings also influence each other and depending on the ideology, some of them are of course more central than other ones, this is why there are core concepts and peripheral ones in each ideology.³⁴ Freeden himself also applies his approach to feminism, as a new ideology with a certain agenda but which, together with the green political thought, is "trying to escape the morphological and interpretative constraints of the older established ideologies".³⁵

At the same time, since these ideologies had a very specified agenda, it is a question if they are able to "exhibit a *full* spectrum of responses to issues [...] that political systems need to resolve".³⁶ In his chapter about feminism, Freeden specifies its core concepts, the most central one considered "gender in politics or the power relations between male and female".³⁷ This statement is in consent with the core definition of Ruddick I also chose as the root interpretation of feminism valid in this thesis, though depending on the discourse-counterdiscourse relations, as we shall see in the followings, the concepts in focus here will vary from the gender-class relations through revolution to the nation and Yugoslavia.

³² *ibid.*, 275-276.

³³ Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 54.

³⁴ Michael Freeden, "Concepts, Ideology and Political Theory," in *Herausforderungen der Begriffsgeschichte* (Challenging the history of concepts) ed. Carsten Dutt (Heidelberg: Winter, c2003), 57-58.

³⁵ Freeden, 1996, 485.

³⁶ *ibid.*, 486.

³⁷ *ibid.*, 491.

The Trajectory of this Text

Following the introduction, the first chapter will embrace the history of feminism in the 1970s and 1980s. The first subchapter provides the background and the pre-history with the brief history of women's movements in the 20th Yugoslavia, the partisan movement and the gender policy of the communist state. The second one deals with the appearance of the new feminism, its major ideas and representatives. The state's reaction to the new discourse is also discussed here, as well as the relationship of feminism to the activity of other dissent circles, especially, to the Praxis group and the MASPOK. The third part will look at the work of Slavenka Drakulić, Rada Iveković and Dubravka Ugrešić in detail, giving a broadened version of the ideas discussed in the previous subchapter and showing on the example of the three authors three possible forms of feminism in the age.

The second big chapter is about the early 1990s and about feminism in the new nation states, where feminism faces new challenges and reacts on them. A short overview presents the most important new feminist groups formed in the new democracies and their relations, within and between the new states. Since in wartime, the gender relations are sharpened and turn more easily into oppositions and in addition, the absence of a single party state ruling the discourse, the palette of feminisms is rather colourful in the age. A major part of the chapter, the second subchapter is dedicated to the issue of mass rapes and the "witch-trial", where the three authors in focus, together with two other women writers, are accused of "raping Croatia". This second chapter, due to the diversification of the discourse itself, requires a more precise linguistic approach, that is how the theories of Black and Koselleck come into the picture. The last subchapter here is the discussion of the personal narratives of the three authors, their reactions to the new situation.

In the conclusion, I summarise the two periods in detail, with special attention to the relationships of feminism and individual feminists to the state, both in Yugoslavia and Croatia, as well as to the West and Western feminism. The changes in the feminist discourse will also be examined.

1. Background and History

In the following I examine gender relations, focusing mainly on their origins in South Slav societies, their transformation during the Second World War, the preservation and alteration of these during the reign of Tito and the challenges posed by the “new feminism” of the late 1970s. It should be noted in advance that when speaking about gender relations, the focus usually shifts from both sexes mostly to women. The reason is that since the major question is the gender equality of men and women, women always seem to be more interesting, as they happen to be less equal.

The number of women engaged in the resistance and anti-fascist movements in the partisan times is already enormously informing: out of the 800.000 partisans fighting in the People's Liberation Army and Partisan Detachments of Yugoslavia (*Narodno-oslobodilačka vojska i partizanski odredi Jugoslavije*), 100.000 were women. Those involved in the Anti-Fascist Front of Women (*Antifašistički front žena – AFŽ*) counted around 2.000.000. Out of these, 600.000 were carried off to concentration camps (German, Italian, Hungarian, Bulgarian, Ustaše), where around 282.000 of them died. In the course of fighting, 2.000 women reached an officer's rank and many of them were elected members of the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia. After the war, 91 women were accorded the honour of National Hero.³⁸

The stories of these women participating in the partisan movement are celebrated and commemorated in several books and interviews, most of them in Serbo-Croatian. In English, Barbara Jancar-Webster published several valuable articles and a book dedicated to the topic. She also conducted interviews with former partisan women, mostly high-ranking officials, in the 1980s. In the discussion of the partisan period, I largely rely on this exhaustive book, especially

³⁸ Data based on the *Leksikon Narodnooslobodilački rat I revolucija u Jugoslaviji 1941-45* (Belgrade: Narodna knjiga, 1980). Jancar 1985, 205.

since it mixes the approach of an American academic, knowing well the contemporaneous feminist discourse and the answers of the former partisans before the 1990s, being still within the discourse of the federal communist state. These recollections provide a different approach and different type of information, than numbers do, which principally prove the high participation and sacrifice, but do not reveal anything about its meaning. Many partisan women believed that they found liberation in the war; indeed, they did reach a high level of equality that has probably never returned again.

In the course of the war, partisan women fought together with men, “motivated by the spirit of self-sacrifice”. Equality on the front meant “the camaraderie of hard fighting and shared living”, which was supplemented and bolstered by the ban of “immoral” relationships.³⁹ In this sense, equality was based on the denial of bodily difference and the shading of female sexuality, what made it possible that these women did not feel themselves being treated as sexual objects. Furthermore, for many of them, the sign of “true equality was the gun”,⁴⁰ which enabled them to express similar physical force as men did.

Apart from women fighting on the front, male professions or activities became open for women who stayed behind, as most men were in the army and many of them were already dead. Those who joined the AFŽ or the Communist Youth Movement (*Savez komunističke omladine Jugoslavije* – SKOJ) or became members of the party has been involved in educational and administrative activities. Some of them worked as doctors in partisan hospitals. However, traditional female work gained special appreciation, as washing or sewing were not simply domestic work any more, but service done for those fighting on the front and thus contribution to the war effort.⁴¹

The latter two phenomena were not Yugo-specific, rather wide-spread in most countries affected by the war. Differences were generated mostly by the new,

³⁹ *ibid.*, 207.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, 207.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, 207.

post-war orders. While in most Western countries the aim was the reconstruction of the “normal”, pre-war gender relations, in the new communist countries gender equality became a central issue.

The equality of men and women is declaratively important for communist ideology. In Yugoslavia, however, the emancipation of women had additional, or even prevailing support from the partisan times. Marx’s sentences: “Jeder, der etwas von Geschichte weiß, weiß auch, dass große gesellschaftliche Umwälzungen ohne das weibliche Ferment unmöglich sind. Der gesellschaftliche Fortschritt lässt sich exakt messen an der gesellschaftlichen Stellung des schönen Geschlechts”⁴² are valid in the case of Yugoslavia, and the state indeed made efforts to maintain and continue war-time achievements, mostly due to the presence of partisan women in high administrative positions.

For many women, the motivation to participate in the partisan movement and to join the Communist Party during the second world war was the promise of equality propagated by Marxism–Leninism. Yugoslav women imagined the conditions of women in the Soviet Union as ideal, though most of them had never been there personally.⁴³ Their blind impressions were bolstered by the statements of the First International Conference on Working Women, held in Moscow in 1920. The most urgent aims of the Conference were the following: to bring women out of the home into the working world, to end the traditional household organisation which kept women in subservience, to provide equal educational opportunities for women, to mobilize women into political work and to provide adequate working conditions “to satisfy the particular needs of the female organism and [...] the needs of the woman as mother”.⁴⁴

⁴² In translation: “Anyone who knows anything about history, knows also that huge social transformations are impossible without the female ferment. The social progress is exactly measurable on the social status of the fair/gentle sex.” Quoted in Rosemarie Nave-Herz, *Die Geschichte der Frauenbewegung in Deutschland* (The history of the women’s movements in Germany) (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 1997), 86.

⁴³ Ramet 1999, 92.

⁴⁴ Jancar 1985, 201.

Sharing their aims, the AFŽ and the KPJ (*Komunistička partija Jugoslavije*) worked together on the implementation of these principles in legislation. It is important to note that, although the ideological background is rooted in the Moscow Conference and after WWII Tito's vision was to establish a new Yugoslavia along the Stalinist model, the process was under the control of the AFŽ high officials. Their first act was to extend the suffrage to women.⁴⁵ Their work was in close cooperation with the KPJ and in 1950 the AFŽ absorbed into the National Front's "Women's Section" (*Ženska Sekcija Narodno Fronta*).⁴⁶ This absorption and the practical end of the AFŽ as self-managing organisation was a result of a longer centralising process of the Central Committee's regular criticism. In 1950, at the Third AFŽ Congress, Tito himself expressed his disapproval of the AFŽ, mostly because of its "concern only for women and women's issues".⁴⁷ As he saw its activity, the AFŽ disregarded the first task, i.e. "the building of 'our Socialist country'".⁴⁸

The explanation provided by Vida Tomšič, a national hero from WWII, Minister of Social Politics between 1945-46 and holder of other important positions later on, makes things even more clear. According to her, "this action was necessary because otherwise women would have become separated from 'the unified political life' and would have been led to the mistaken belief that 'women needed to fight on their own to win their rights and social position, that these were their own and not society's problem.'"⁴⁹ Tomšič points out a crucial idea concerning women's de jure and de facto equality: for the regime, it was one problem among many other problems waiting to be solved. This led to the consequence on behalf of the Fourth AFŽ Congress in 1953 that by the new legislation "the question of

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, 208.

⁴⁶ Jancar-Webster 1990, 165.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, 165.

⁴⁸ *ibid.*

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, 166.

women's inclusion in society has been resolved once and for all." Meaning that the task of the AFŽ has been completed and their existence is not justified any more.⁵⁰

The "question of inclusion of women in society" was explicitly addressed already in the 1946 constitution:

Women enjoy equal rights with men in all spheres of state economic and social life. Women are entitled to a salary equal to that of men for the same work, and enjoy special protection in the labour relationship. The state particularly protects the welfare of mother and child by establishment of maternity hospitals, children's homes and day nurseries, and by ensuring the right to paid leave before and after confinement.⁵¹

In the spirit of the constitution, women were supposed to become liberated both in the private and the public spheres. The constitution guaranteed women political rights (both active and passive), access to education, equal wages and equal right to work, the latter two stipulations being also demands of the of the 8th March 1857 demonstration of the textile workers in New York, the anniversary of which became the "International Women's Day." In addition, it also granted women, for the first time, access to welfare institutions, which freed them of several traditional gender obligations.

Probably the most important fundament of gender equality concerns the regulations on women's self-determination concerning reproduction. Although in the early 1950s there was a stream of restrictions in the practice of abortion in the countries of the East bloc, in Yugoslavia abortion was banned only for one year, from 1951 to 1952. In this period, the law provided for the prosecution both of *the person performing the abortion* and of the woman undergoing it. In 1952, federal authorities legalised abortion "for medical, legal, social and related reasons". These conditions were reconfirmed in 1960. In 1969, a resolution adopted by the Assembly of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (*Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija*), established that "families enjoyed the right to determine for

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, 165.

⁵¹ Ramet 1999, 94.

themselves how many children they wished to have."⁵² In 1974, the fourth constitution of Yugoslavia reinforced this liberal policy.⁵³

Besides formal equality under law and the guarantee of women's reproductive rights, women were granted additional legal rights. For example, instead of maternal leave, parental leave was codified. In this way, another symbolic but meaningful right was provided to women: they could retain their maiden name after marriage, if they wished. Concerning the rules of patriarchy, this was a milestone on the way to independence.

The party also conducted a considerable propaganda in favour of gender equality, in the form of films, printed media and party statements also.⁵⁴ However, these messages coming from above did not influence, for example, the content of schoolbooks, which reinforced traditional roles in the family, picturing women as mothers in the kitchen, fathers as playing football, etc.⁵⁵ Slavenka Drakulić herself wrote several critical articles on schoolbooks, for example about one on "sexual education".⁵⁶ Later on, this phenomenon became one of the targets of feminists' criticism. It can thus be concluded that real equality was still not gained and the symbolic is only one aspect, and one of the reasons of it.

After the initial post-war "boom" of women's representation in work, politics and education, in the mid 1950s these numbers started to drop again. However, it has to be added that the number of women in work or politics decreased compared to the immediate post-war times, but not compared to the pre-war period. Immediately after WWII, women's employment grew to 47 percent, dropped to 25 percent in 1954, and rose to approximately 35 percent during the 1970s.⁵⁷ Women's representation in the party membership was dropping continuously. The situation in education was definitely better: the number of women enrolled to

⁵² *ibid.*, 96.

⁵³ *ibid.*

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, 95.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*

⁵⁶ Slavenka Drakulić-Ilić, "Spolni odgoj i seksizam. Marijan Košiček: *Spolni odgoj. Školska knjiga*, Zagreb, 1972" (Sexual education and sexism. Marijan Košiček: *Sexual education. Textbook*, Zagreb, 1972). *Žena*, Vol. 37. No. 1 (1979): 65-70.

⁵⁷ Jancar-Webster 1990, 167.

universities showed a steady increase, also due to the widening of mass education in general. Women's illiteracy was an urgent matter to solve: in 1931, for example, 54.4 percent of the female population over the age of 10 was illiterate, compared to the 32.2 percent of the male population. This proportion was reduced to 1961 to 28.8 percent⁵⁸ and to 14,7 in 1981. However, it was still three times bigger among women than among men, out of whom only 4,1 percent were illiterate in 1981.⁵⁹

The glass-ceiling syndrome – prevailing in the field of politics also, where active political rights in one party state did not really mean any liberty, and the less average wage rates were signs that the “women's question” was not totally resolved and full gender equality was not achieved. A survey published in the journal *Politika*⁶⁰ and described by Ramet presents the same conclusion.⁶¹ During the survey, Yugoslav women were asked if they had achieved equality. The answers were diverse: many refused to answer, many expressed confusion about the notion of equality itself, some said that socialism has fulfilled its promise and others denied that they had achieved anything even close to equality either at the workplace or at home. One week later, the same question was posed to men, which means that men were asked if they think Yugoslav women achieved equality. The interviewees almost unanimously agreed that women were not equal and some respondents even added that “that was the way it should be”.

The perception of the population about the half-successful emancipation process is explained by the leading Yugoslav politician and sociologist Stipe Šušar in the following sentences: “Our ideal is that woman would be the architect of society on an equal basis with the man. Woman's contribution to the development of society is much greater than indicated by female presence in decision-making positions.”⁶² This idea is in accord with the concept of unpaid labour, as dealt with by Marxist feminists. The concept covers the domestic work done by women, which

⁵⁸ Ramet 1999, 95-96.

⁵⁹ Ramet 1991, 199.

⁶⁰ *Politika*, 15th March 1981 and 22nd March 1981. Quoted in *ibid.*, 199.

⁶¹ Ramet 1991, 199-200.

⁶² Quoted in Ramet 1999, 90.

serves as the basis both of society and of the economic system, though remains without financial and mental appreciation and restitution. By also transferring women into the world of paid work, the problem of the free work done by them, already in the form of a "second shift" was neither resolved nor compensated for. Also, the work done in the background might be "on an equal basis" in energy invested, but is not on equal basis in its appreciation or as far as self-representation is concerned.

A clear sign of the unresolved "women question" were growing rates of abortion and divorce. As Jancar phrases: "these are more indicative of women's reaction to their changed circumstances than is their participation in the formal organs of power".⁶³ Sociologist Vjeran Katuranić interprets these as a "revolt against patriarchal authority".⁶⁴ It should also be taken into consideration that, for many women, the new social order also brought along social insecurity. Yugoslavia's transformation from a traditional agrarian society to a modern industrial one happened rapidly: the population of interwar Yugoslavia's was 80 percent rural, while in 1978, 70 percent of the population lived in urbanised surroundings. Apparently, this had a great influence on women's lifestyle also, as family structures were also transformed.

In this part of the Balkans, rural life was typified by *zadrugas* or *zadruga* (in plural), "a social and economic land-holding unit of traditional South Slav society in which land was held in common by the extended family, with succession and inheritance also in common".⁶⁵ One may suppose that these structures were basically and inherently patriarchal. This is by and large true, but the dominating role of the grandmothers alters the picture to a certain extent.⁶⁶ Traditional structures allowed a certain mobility for women since the new wives, fully incorporated into their husband's families, had a chance to "achieve their power not by virtue of being wives but as the result of becoming mothers and, eventually,

⁶³ Jancar 1985, 204.

⁶⁴ Quoted in *ibid.*

⁶⁵ Jancar-Webster 1990, 226.

⁶⁶ Simić 1999.

grandmothers”, thus to “legitimate their status within their husbands’ kinship groups by giving birth to sons”.⁶⁷

In his article about the traditional Yugoslav family, Andrei Simić concerns situations in which the relationship between husband and wife approached a greater equality. This came as a result of an “interplay of sex and age”, since as men grew older, they lost much of their aggressiveness and also, of their vitality, while women declined in their sexual attractiveness.⁶⁸ As in the case of the ban on “immoral relationships” in partisan times, this means that gender equality can be achieved only if bodily difference and sexual desires can be eliminated somehow. Nonetheless, this is not only impossible in most cases but also undesirable, since gender equality should not mean sexual neutrality. This is why the propagation of women’s physical strength in the 1950s was mistaken, not only for the sake of equality. However, body and sexuality became topics in the clash between the older partisan generation of women and the representatives of the new feminism.

As *zadruga* were a typically rural family network, the sudden urbanisation process broke these up into nuclear families. Women achieved, and also had to face, a new type of freedom, as they left the paternal tutelage already before marriage. A seemingly small, though in fact significant element of how these old structures lost their authority was the regulation mentioned above, which allowed women to keep their maiden name after marriage, indicating that they do not have to become dependent on the new family. However, women in this new situation also had to face social insecurity and uncertainty.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ *ibid.*, 14.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, 20.

⁶⁹ Jancar 1985, 204.

2. The Emergence of *Neofeminizam* in Yugoslavia in the 1970s and 1980s

It seems at the moment that Yugoslavia was the only country in the East Bloc, which had a coherent feminist movement, beginning in Zagreb and Belgrade, officially with the foundation of the organisation *Žena i Društvo* (Woman and Society) in 1978, within the frames of the Croatian Sociological Society. In this chapter I will discuss the context in which the movement came into being, by looking at the history of women and gender relations from the Second World War. I assume that the partisan activity of the Yugoslav National Liberation Movement gave later ground not only to a special position of the Yugoslavs in the negotiations with Stalin, but also had a major influence on post-war gender relations. This, with the greater intellectual freedom from the beginnings, provided by independence from the Soviet Union and the legacy of the war were the two major factors enabling the emergence of the feminist circled throughout the federal state in the 1970s and 1980s and were enhanced by the silent liberation of speech after 1972.

Not surprisingly, this feminist movement had to take a counter-position within an authoritarian society – however, feminist ideas usually do not enjoy a warm welcome in any society. In the second part of this chapter, I will put this “neofeminist” movement in a historical and discursive context, as one with origins from the early 20th century and placed in the context of other counterdiscourses in the Yugoslavia of the day. The question arises, if the new feminism was able to step into dialogue with other oppositional traditions in the federal state, especially with those in Croatia, since the three authors the thesis is concentrated on are from there. The most significant ones, the *Praxis* group and the groups around the Croatian Spring will fall in the scope of my comparisons, with special focus on the criticism on behalf of the state and the SKJ.

The name “neofeminism” designates that the movement – though it is equivocal if the phenomenon can be called a movement at all – had already had a

past when it appeared *again*. This “past” is the presence of several women’s organisations at the turn of the century and in the inter-war period. In this sense Yugoslav feminism follows Western feminism’s line of history, at least in the periodization of Julia Kristeva, with a first and a second wave.⁷⁰

2.1 Neofeminizam – First Conference (1978), Main Topics and Major Figures

Reflecting on the problems of women and on the unfulfilled realisation of gender equality appeared the new feminist movement in the 1970s. In 1976, after the International Year of Women 1975, the Marxist centres organised a conference in Portorož, Croatia, which was basically the first event when feminism was debated, though the meeting was open only for those directly invited.⁷¹ This was followed by another conference in the inter-university centre in Dubrovnik, where the first Women Studies course was held.⁷² After this came the first big international conference with the participation of women from England, Italy, France, Poland, Hungary and the entire Yugoslavia in 1978.⁷³ The venue of the event was the Students’ Cultural Centre in Belgrade, the title was “Drug-ca žena: žensko pitanje – novi pristup”,⁷⁴ that is “Comrade-ess women: women’s question – new approach”. The main organisers of the conference were Žarana Papić and Dunja Blažević, the major issues were manifold, embracing the women’s movements of the time, psychoanalysis, women’s identity and women in culture, the relations of woman, capitalism and revolution.⁷⁵ The most famous guests from abroad were Alice Schwarzer, Christine Delphy, Dacia Maraini⁷⁶ and Hélène Cixous.

⁷⁰ Julia Kristeva, “Women’s Time,” trans. by León S. Roudiez, in *The Kristeva Reader*, ed. Toril Moi (Oxford: Blackwell, [1986] 1996) 187-213.

⁷¹ Andrea Feldman, “Uz dvadeset godina neofeminizma u Hrvatskoj” (To twenty years of neofeminism in Croatia). *Kruh i ruže* No. 10 (Winter 1999): 8.

⁷² Žarana Papić, “Women’s Movement in Former Yugoslavia,” in *What Can We Do for Ourselves? East European Feminist Conference*, ed. Marina Blagojević, Daša Duhaček and Jasmina Lukić (Belgrade: Center for Women’s Studies, Research and Communication, 1994), 20.

⁷³ *ibid.*, 20.

⁷⁴ Feldman 1999, 8.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, 8.

⁷⁶ Drakulić 1995, 42.

However, although the new feminists' major concern was the position of women in Yugoslavia, the reputation of the conference on behalf of the pro-regime media was rather negative.⁷⁷ This attitude characterised the later reactions too, the party state accused the new feminists of importing some corrupted Western ideologies with no relevance for the self-managing Yugoslav society. It is true that the new feminists were influenced by the second wave of Western feminism and they admittedly read the basic texts of the Western feminists of the 1960s, like Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics* (1969) or Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), as well as Simone de Beauvoir or representative authors of the French post-structuralist feminists of and around the *Tel Quel* circle, but at the same time they focused mainly on the problems present in the country and were different from their Western comrades.

An apparent difference between the Western, predominantly American feminism in the 1960-70s and the Yugoslav one decade later is that while the former had an obvious movement behind and was able to mobilise women quite soon after the beginning, the one in Yugoslavia, particularly that in Croatia, was mostly an intellectual one. Mobilisation of women was possible only later, first in the 1980s and then later in the war period, in Slovenia, against the mandatory military service of women and the restriction of reproductive rights. Looking at its main representatives, Yugoslav neofeminism was ideologically rather diverse. Out of those involved later in the "witch-trial", Vesna Kesić, Rada Iveković and Slavenka Drakulić (Drakulić-Ilić, by then), the latter two are also in the focus of this thesis, took part intensively in the work of the society *Žena i Društvo*. Dubravka Ugrešić, the third author in the focus of this thesis, was not actively working together with the feminist circle, though she was both personally and intellectually related with many of the main figures. However, in order to gain a full picture of the complexity of the ideas prevailing in *Žena i Društvo*, other three names should be mentioned,

⁷⁷ A collection of these can be read in: Dragica Vukadinović, ed., *Drug-ca: retro presarijum za oktobar, novembar i decembar 1978* (Comrade-ess: retrospective press collection on October, November and December 1978) (Belgrade: Asocijacija za ženske inicijative, 2003).

that of Vjeran Katunarić sociologist's, Lydia Sklevický historian's and Blaženka Despot, anthropologist and sociologist's. Katunarić was labelled by Jancar-Webster, as a sign of surprise, a "male neofeminist",⁷⁸ but later in an interview for the feminist journal (founded in Zagreb in 1993) *Kruh i ruže* he refused to be called a feminist.⁷⁹

The two major forums and collections of the main issues and articles of Yugoslav neofeminism, apart from the individual work of these authors, are a collection of essays published under the title *Žena i Društvo. Kultiviranje dijaloga* (Women and Society. Cultivating the Dialogue) in 1987 and a debate on the pages of the official journals *Žena* and *Naše teme*, in which some feminists (Iveković and Drakulić) and several SKJ-people participated. On the other hand, feminist articles were allowed to be published in the most mainstream and popular magazines and journals, from the weekly *Danas* through *Žena* (published by the Croatian Women's Union / Savez žena Hrvatske) to the tabloid magazine *Start*. The feminist articles took place amongst long essays about social, economic and political issues in Yugoslavia and abroad (*Danas*), the translations of the latest work of Jacques Derrida (*Pitanja*), articles about working hours, number of children and wages of weavers and metal-worker women (*Žena*) and colourful news about Princess Diana, movie stars, nude photographs of women (*Start*).

Of all media publishing feminist texts probably *Start* is the most peculiar and very well characterises the intellectual variegation, resulted from the spiritual freedom from the second half of the 1970s: interviews with Gloria Steinem, Noam Chomsky, Susan Sontag or Erica Jong (all by Drakulić, meaning good contacts for her international career)⁸⁰ were mixed with all the already mentioned themes. This

⁷⁸ Jancar 1988, 12.

⁷⁹ The explanation of Katunarić: "I am disturbed by its homosocialism. [...] While male sexism includes women, this excludes men. [...] I am not aware of any feminist organisations in which there is male participation." Vjeran Katunarić, "Nisam feminist niti to namejeravam biti" (I am not a feminist and I don't intend to be one"), interview by Kristina Zaborski, *Kruh i ruže* No. 9 (Summer 1998): 34-35.

⁸⁰ Blurbs by Steinem and Walker are on the covers of the English and American editions of the books of Drakulić. Cf. Slavenka Drakulić, *Balkan Express: Fragments from the Other Side of the War*, parts trans.d by Maja Soljan (London: Hutchinson, c1993); *Holograms of Fear*, trans. by Ellen Elias-Bursać (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Co., 1992); *How We Survived and Even Laughed* (New York: Harper Perennial, [1992] 1993).

also means that the ideas of the new left in the West, American feminist literature or the local feminism could reach a broad audience throughout the country. The neofeminists, while criticising the whole society for being patriarchal, took a Marxist starting point, trying to approach the problem from the failure of the party state in the realisation of gender equality – a fact admitted even by the SKJ Central Committee in 1980, reflecting on the figures on women’s employment.⁸¹

One of the most interesting authors, with an overt criticism on the establishment’s achievements and on the system itself is Vjeran Katunarić. In his book, *Female Eros and the Civilisation of Death* (*Ženski eros i civilizacija smrti*), based on Freud and Marx – something we have seen before in the work of the Frankfurt School, though Katunarić turns several times (already in his title, for example) to Marcuse also –, Katunarić investigates the disadvantaged position of women in the new, communist society. In his view, patriarchy is maintained, and resulting from the half-done emancipation, families became atomised.⁸² As he writes, totalitarianism maintains and institutionalises patriarchy in the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries – but does not mention Yugoslavia among them.⁸³ Which apparently does not mean that Yugoslavia was an exception, since the whole work of Katunarić focuses on the Yugoslav situation.

According to the other most important Marxist thinker, Blaženka Despot, self-managing socialist Yugoslavia could have been an exception. While the first Marxist regimes were étatist and authoritarian, not permitting alternative power relations and division of labour, Yugoslavia’s alternative type of socialism “does away with the traditional consciousness/nature, man/woman, authority/oppression dichotomy.”⁸⁴ Despot still trusts the Yugoslav system, turning the order in emancipation upside down and arguing that the emancipation of the working class can happen via the emancipation of women. Patriarchal consciousness suppresses

⁸¹ Ramet 1991, 200

⁸² Vjeran Katunarić *Ženski eros i civilizacija smrti* (Female Eros and the Civilisation of Death) (Zagreb: Naprijed, 1984), 233-238.

⁸³ *ibid.* 223-225.

⁸⁴ Jancar 1988, 22

both men and women, while the pluralism of interests (Kardelj)⁸⁵ would allow the settlement of the gender inequality.⁸⁶ This opinion is exceptional and new, as Despot argues for the liberation of both sexes and does not look exclusively on women, as most feminists of the age did. Also, in her view, patriarchal consciousness is characteristic of both men and women, and since it is a reminiscence of feudalism and capitalism, never challenged and changed. This is also in contrast with the view of the former partisan women in leading political positions in the party state, who, like the former partisan and national hero Anka Berus in an interview,⁸⁷ blamed the younger generation of women for returning to the old patriarchal consciousness and passivity, while they (the partisan women) had conquered the equality once already.⁸⁸

Despot is a philosopher who wrote about various topics, mostly concerned with society, like the "humanity of the technical society" or about the "ideology of productive forces", but in spite of the fact that feminism was only a small segment of her work, her achievement was an elaborate approximation of feminism to the Marxist reading of Hegel and the other way round. She stated that the overlooked theme of Hegel (by Marx and Marxists) is woman, the nature of woman. She criticises Marx for leaving nature, gender, woman's sexuality and the reality of work essentially un-abolished.⁸⁹ The results are visible in the Yugoslav society, where the revision of gender relations means only the social care system built on the "working mother" and which system at the same time also constructs the working mother. Whereas, in terms of the Hegelian scientific premise, to confine a woman to her natural biological role is racism, since reducing a human being to his or her biology means the denial of his or her historicity.⁹⁰ Despot is also critical on the present

⁸⁵ *ibid.*

⁸⁶ Blaženka Despot, *Žensko pitanje i socijalističko samoupravljanje* (The woman question and socialist self-management) (Zagreb: Cekade, 1987).

⁸⁷ Jancar 1990, 174.

⁸⁸ About this, see the interviews Jancar conducted with former partisans during a long fieldwork in Yugoslavia in the 1970s-1980s. Jancar 1990 and Jancar 1985, especially Jancar 1985, 206-208 and Jancar 1990, 174.

⁸⁹ Gordana Bosanac, "Blaženka Despot," *Kruh i ruže* No. 16 (Autumn/Winter 2001): 7.

⁹⁰ Despot 1987, 42 and *idem.* "Žensko pitanje u socijalističkom samoupravljanju" (The woman question in the socialist self-management), in *Žena i Društvo* 34-35.

state of self-management. According to her, its patterns are still "based on the old forces of production." Women are on the lower levels of the hierarchy, they do not have time for self-management, for educating themselves, for getting involved in politics. Moreover, "self-managers beat their wives, too, a proof of the old relationship to nature."⁹¹ The issue of domestic violence, though not in the form of organised campaign yet, is present on the neofeminist forums, not only by Despot, who does not even place it in the centre of her work, but also by Sklevický or Vesna Kešić.⁹²

Although in most cases direct attack on the party state was avoided by the new feminists, the SKJ's reaction was unequivocally rejective. For the state, there was no woman question any more, since the emancipation of women was fulfilled for once and for all and if there are problems, these have to be solved through the official networks of the party's women's organisation. Their objections are well known and easily guessable. In their view, the new feminists were simply importing a bourgeois ideology from the West, posing women's emancipation above the class struggle (though the latter would solve the former), and by taking it out of the scope of the party's activity, de- and apoliticising women.⁹³ After the media reactions in 1978, the next larger discussion happened in 1982, when the SKJ seemed to be willing to discuss the problem, published in the journal *Žena* in full with the title "Social consciousness, Marxist theory and women's emancipation – today" (*Društvena svijest, marksistička teorija i emancipacija žena – danas*), was built around the class question. Stipe Šuvar called here feminism "one of the forms of conservative social consciousness".⁹⁴ Branka Lazić, the new president of the Conference for the Social Role of Women in the Development of Yugoslavia (*Konferencija za aktivnost i ulogu žena u društvenom razvoju Jugoslavije* – the

⁹¹ Despot 1984, 37.

⁹² Lydia Sklevický, "Kad žena kaže 'NE' to znači 'NE!'" (If a woman says "no", it means "no!"), *Kruh i ruže* No. 10 (Winter 1999): 22; Vesna Kešić, "Žene o ženi" (Women on women), *Kruh i ruže* Nr. 10 (Winter 1999), 28.

⁹³ The title essay of Drakulić counts six "deadly sins of feminism", apart from those mentioned above, it is "love for power", "extra-institutional activity" and "elitism". Drakulić-Ilić 1984, 102-111.

⁹⁴ "Društvena svijest, marksistička teorija i emancipacija žena – danas" (Debate) (Social consciousness, Marxist theory and women's emancipation – today), *Žena* Vol. 40. No. 2-3 (1982): 71.

name itself is remarkable) reminded in a speech on the foreignness of these ideas, "imported from developed, capitalist countries", to Yugoslavia, "a socialist, self-management society".⁹⁵ Most participants of the debate were women, mostly representing the official party-opinion and referring to the leading man politicians, first of all to Kardelj, as the ultimate authorities.

The "Western-import" accusation is not a simple issue. By this, what is preliminary meant is of course the feminism from the United States, where the movement had the greatest mobilising force. The Western improvements of the movement and the academic work of feminists were of course discussed and represented, like in the extensive article of the Belgrade sociologist Žarana Papić and Lydia Sklevický.⁹⁶ Here the authors give an extensive overview about the latest ideas in anthropology, being at the same time very critical on its previous male-dominated "gender-blindness" of the field, which of course contributed to the maintenance of gender inequality and stereotypes on women. As they write, "male anthropologists do the research, they interpret the phenomena [...] the male anthropologist is thus twice as much an outsider: outsider in the new culture and outsider in 'women's world'".⁹⁷ At the same time, they present the latest feminist approaches to anthropology, among them Margaret Mead and that Gayle Rubin, whose research gave basis to the improvement of the theories of such names like Joan Scott and Judith Butler.

About the Western, especially American movement itself, the reactions were less unambiguous. Though it stood of course as an example, the basic history, ideas and problems of it were already presented in 1976 on the pages of *Žena*, in the transcript of Gordana Cerjan-Letica.⁹⁸ Also that year she published a further article, where she gives a more critical summary of the various forms in which feminism appeared in the United States in the 1960s. Cerjan-Letica is critical on

⁹⁵ Quoted by Drakulić-Ilić 1984, 102.

⁹⁶ Papić, Žarana and Lydia Sklevický, "K antropologiji žene" (To the anthropology of women), *Revija za sociologiju* No. 1-2. Vol. 10 (1980): 29-45.

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, 32.

⁹⁸ Gordana Cerjan-Letica, "Američki feministički pokret" (The American feminist movement), *Žena* Vol. 34. No. 5 (1976): 60-65.

those smaller women's liberation-type of groups, who, according to her, with their performances and other public actions represent only a spectacle of feminism. Her criticism is in accord with the mixture of admiration and criticism from the directions of Marxism. The other most important stream in feminism, which was predominantly theoretical, the French post-structuralist approaches, were mostly represented by Rada Iveković, who, as it will also be shown in the next subchapter, subjected these also to a Marxist reading and at the same time used the French authors for a criticism on Marxism.

After the first international conference in 1978, both Sklevický and Drakulić⁹⁹ give accounts on the "Western feminists", not only the debates, but also their attitude, behaviour, appearance. Sklevický and Drakulić also mention the complaints of their guests on the Belgrade conference about the "street behaviour of men", though for Drakulić in her retrospective recollections, this was not a real problem, whereas Sklevický interprets it as a sign of patriarchalism, of everyday humiliation of women.¹⁰⁰ Looking at the origins of the Western second wave feminism, Sklevický asks the question if feminism is necessarily of Western origin, an ideology of the Western middle class. To refute this presupposition, she cites Dragolja Jamević, an academic from 19th century Croatia, with remarkable writings on women's position in society, and to refute not only the spatial but also the ideological relationships too, lists the names of Clara Zetkin, Aleksandra Kollontaj or Eleanor and Laura Marx.¹⁰¹

A further proof for these arguments are Sklevický's articles on feminist history in the South Slav countries, showing that there was feminism in Yugoslavia already in the interwar period, and women's organisations had been founded even earlier.¹⁰² Which obviously means that the representation of women's issues was

⁹⁹ Slavenka Drakulić, "Egy keleti feminista Nyugaton. Feminizmus és demokrácia" (An Eastern Feminist in the West. Feminism and Democracy), trans. by Dóra Pusztá, 2000, 1995. No. 5. 42-45.

¹⁰⁰ Sklevický 1999, 17.

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*, 22.

¹⁰² Lydia Sklevický, "Antifašitička front žena - kulturnom mijenom do žene 'novog tipa'" (Antifascist Women's Front - with cultural change towards a "new type" of woman), *Gordogan*, Vol. 6. No. 15-16 (1984) and *idem.*, *Konji, žene, ratovi* (Horses, women, wars) (Zagreb: Ženska Infoteka, 1996).

not a communist invention, and neither was feminism a Western import. However, there was a clear difference between groups promoting solely economic rights (communists or women in the trade unions) and those integrating also political and social rights into the agenda. Demanding political rights apart from suffrage brought along the accusation of being “radical” or “feminist”. Since women in organisations advocating a broader scale of rights came from the upper-class and were educated, for whom independence was important, they were labelled “feminists” both by their contemporaries from the party and in the new Yugoslavia by the former partisan women. On the other hand, women in the biggest organisation, in the Women’s Alliance had their own aversion for communists. When the SKJ women’s sections’ representatives, like Mitra Mitrović, initiated meetings and cooperation with the Alliance, it worked well only until it turned out that they were communists, then the Alliance withdrew from the cooperation.¹⁰³

Therefore, although Sklevický and Jancar build on the history of the first wave of feminism in Yugoslavia in order to prove one main argument, namely that feminism is not a Western import, it also reveals the ideological complexity of the situation. All of the interwar groups considered themselves women’s organisations, representing women’s interests for instance, but most of them distanced themselves from being called “feminist”. The communist women called the bourgeois ones feminists, which implies that in spite of the achievements of Sklevický in showing the presence of feminism in Yugoslav history, this history also supports the SKJ’s position towards Yugo-neofeminism as an ideology of, if not necessarily Western, then bourgeois origin.

The mixture of ideas and motivations of women engaged in any political activity influenced the partisan movement also. As Jancar writes, based on her interviews conducted with nineteen leading women partisans: “Women shared the common experience of unsatisfied nationalist hopes. In interviews with the women partisans, one of the primary reasons given for joining the communist party and for

¹⁰³ Jancar-Webster 1990, 24-25.

participation in the National Liberation Movement (Narodni Oslobodilački Pokret – NOP) was the Party’s and NOP’s position on the national question.”¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that the interviews were done in the 1980s, so the judgement of the respondents necessarily modified and became narrativized, moreover, all of them belongs to a certain privileged group. On the other hand, it has never been a secret that the *National* Liberation Council (Antifašističko Vijeće *Narodnog* Oslobođenja Jugoslavije) had *national* aims, though it is a question if what “nation” meant here, as the concept of nation was surrounded by ambiguities and constantly debated by that time and it cannot be clearly decided if the motivation of the single persons participating was a federal or a national one. It is for sure that the declaration of the Central Committee about national self-determination in 1935 was decisive for them.¹⁰⁵

While particular national interests were not totally absent from the partisan women, at least in the case of the respondents of Jancar – representing the mainstream –, it did not characterise the new feminism at all. The neofeminists believed in the internationalism of feminism and they relied on their fellows/comrades in the other member states. However, as Jancar remembers the beginnings, Serbian woman scholars she met in Belgrade by the time were joking that feminism had not yet corrupted Serbian women, unlike those in Croatia.¹⁰⁶ But apart from such reactions, which do not have any real national relevance and are more the expression of the usual aversion to feminism, nationalism does not appear around *neofeminizam*.

2.2 Individual Approaches to Feminism – Drakulić, Iveković, Ugrešić

In an interview, given twenty years after the beginnings of the movement to the journal *Kruh i ruže*, Rada Iveković emphasises that all the women involved in the

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*, 16.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ Jancar 1985, 209.

movement were individual subjects with their own personal motivation for joining the feminist circle.¹⁰⁷ Beyond their background, personal experience and field of interest, this is also represented in their approach to and definition of feminism. In this part of the thesis I look at the work of three women who were all important figures for Yugoslav feminism, even if one of them was not member of the first feminist circles. On their examples it is visible that neither women's experience nor feminism as such can be universalised and at the same time the aspects of the manifold Yugoslav feminism reveal themselves in more detail.

Besides the feminist affiliations, a common feature of the three authors is their achievements both in the field of fiction and theory. Rada Iveković, Indologist and philosopher, also wrote a novel with a very personal voice, with the title *Sporost-oporost* (Slowness-roughness).¹⁰⁸ Slavenka Drakulić, beginning her career as a journalist, three years after the publication of her feminist essays, *Smrtni grijesi feminizma* (Mortal sins of feminism), came out with the novel *Hologrami straha* (*Holograms of Fear*) and then, a year later with a further one, *Mramorna koža* (*Marble Skin*).¹⁰⁹ The case of Dubravka Ugrešić is a bit different from the other two authors considering the publishing activity too: though she was also a literary scholar, working on Russian formalism, her first two books were children books. The books which brought her the recognition as a new voice in contemporary literature, *Štefica Cvek u raljama života* (*Steffie Speck in the Jaws of Life*), *Život je bajka* (*Life is a Fairy Tale*)¹¹⁰ and *Forsiranje romana reke* (*Fording the Stream of*

¹⁰⁷ Rada Iveković, "Što je to feminizam?" (What is feminism?), interview by Vivijana Radman, *Kruh i ruže* No. 9 (Summer 1998): 37.

¹⁰⁸ idem., *Sporost-oporost* ([Slowness-roughness] Zagreb: Grafički zavod Hrvatske [Biblioteka Zora], 1988).

¹⁰⁹ Slavenka Drakulić, *Holograms of Fear* (Translated by Ellen Elias-Bursać. NY-London: W.W. Norton & Co., 1992. First published: *Hologrami straha*. Zagreb: Grafički zavod Hrvatske [Biblioteka Zora], 1987; idem., *Marble Skin* (Translated by Greg Mosse. NY: Harper Perennial, [1994] 1995.) First published: *Mramorna koža* Zagreb: Grafički zavod Hrvatske [Biblioteka Zora], 1988; Slavenka Drakulić-Ilić [Drakulić], *Smrtni grijesi feminizma. Ogledi u mudologiji* ([Mortal Sins of Feminism. Essays on Testicology] Zagreb: Znanje, 1984).

¹¹⁰ Dubravka Ugrešić, *Štefica Cvek u raljama života* ([Štefica Cvek in the Jaws of Life] Zagreb: Grafički zavod Hrvatske [Biblioteka Zora], 1981) and *Život je bajka* ([Life Is a Fairy Tale] Zagreb: Grafički zavod Hrvatske [Biblioteka Zora], 1983). In English both published in: Dubravka Ugrešić, *Lend Me Your Character*, trans. by Celia Hawkesworth and Michael Henry Heim (London: Dalkey Archiv Press, 2005).

Consciousness),¹¹¹ were published only following her first collection of short stories and her book on Russian formalism.

In the categories of Susan Sniader Lanser, what happens here that authors with an authorial voice, as writers with journalistic, academic and literary background start to write personal narratives. The personal voices tell a personal narrative, the "formation of the experience of an individual", the one Joan W. Scott argues for.¹¹² On the other hand, the personal narratives are not always necessarily autobiographic, moreover, the reader is left usually insecure about it. The relations between the theoretical or journalistic work of the authors and their fictive texts play some role in the game of the fictive-referential ambiguity, since all the theoretical texts discussed here are about women's body, women's writing and women's relation to language.

The issue of women's writing became more and more central in the Yugoslav literary discourse too. From the late 1970s on texts were published about women writers who were perceived as exemplary figures in world literature, like Marguerite Duras, Sylvia Plath, Doris Lessing, Simone de Beauvoir, Virginia Woolf, Alice Walker,¹¹³ and women's writing in general,¹¹⁴ with topics such as the subversive nature of women's writing, female subjectivity and the issue if there is something like "women's writing" at all. As Jelena Zuppa argues, with the avant-garde women have started to search for linguistic expression of their presence in history, through a search for their own sexuality and imagination.¹¹⁵ Drakulić, Iveković and Ugrešić took less part in the theoretical discussions on women's achievements and

¹¹¹ idem., *Fording the Stream of Consciousness*, trans. by Michael Henry Heim. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1993.

¹¹² Cf. Scott 1999 and the "Introduction" of this thesis.

¹¹³ Among others by Ingrid Šafranek, Anita Kontrec, Ljiljana Gjurgjan, Slavica Jakobović, Jasmina Lukić, Jelena Zuppa, Rada Iveković. Jasminka Pešut, *Ženska perspektiva – odabrana bibliografija: Radovi autorica 1968.–1997.* (Women's perspectives – selected bibliography. Works by [woman] authors 1968–1997) (Zagreb: Centar za Ženske Studije, 1998), 17, 23, 31, 34, 50.

¹¹⁴ Slavica Jakobović, "Upit(a)nost ženskoga pisma" (Women's writing in question), *Republika* No. 11-12 (1983): 4-6; Ingrid Šafranek, "Ženska književnost i žensko pismo" (Women's literature and women's writing), *Republika* No. 11-12 (1983): 7-28; Jasna Tkalec, "Žensko pismo – da ili ne?" (Women's writing – yes or no?), *Žena* Vol. 45. No. 3 (1987): 72-73.

¹¹⁵ Jelena Zuppa, "Žena pisac i součenje s vlastitim položajem žene" (The woman as author and the confrontation with her position as a woman"), *Žena* Vol. 38. No. 6 (1980): 52.

possibilities in literature, but their works of fiction showed that the questions raised have their place in the local scene too.

Nevertheless, in spite of their absence from the strictly literary discussions of the usual topics, the theoretical texts of especially Rada Iveković and Slavenka Drakulić about feminism tackle some issues which can also be related to their fictional work. For Iveković, the academisation of women's studies (it was in the mid-1980s first, when part of the discipline has been renamed gender studies and the whole field divided into gender studies and women studies) was in the centre. Her approach was deeply influenced by the French post-structuralist feminists, first of all by Luce Irigaray, which signals a deeply theoretical interest and the language-centeredness of her approach. Her approach is similar to that of Irigaray in *Speculum de l'autre femme* in 1974, who approaches the history of philosophy as a discourse which has always oppressed and excluded femininity. This means that any women writing and speaking in this discourse is necessarily imitating the masculine language, thus a need for a feminine language emerges. Iveković combines the post-structuralism of Irigaray with Marxism in her work.¹¹⁶ One of her first essays, first published in 1981 about the woman question in the history of philosophy, ends with the conclusion that Rosa Luxemburg, though she was not devoted to the woman question as such, based on the way she fought for the working class and for the revolution in her time, we can suppose that she would fight for the women's movement today (in 1981).¹¹⁷

In one of her texts, which combines all the aspects mentioned above: Irigaray's French post-structuralist approach to feminism, its re-reading from the direction of Marx and the implications for action, Iveković extensively speaks about the relationship between nature and culture and the place of women in these

¹¹⁶ Rada Iveković, "Filozofija Luce Irigaray" (The philosophy of Luce Irigaray), *Republika* No. 7-8 (1985): 80-94.

¹¹⁷ idem., "Studije o Ženi i Ženski Pokreti" (Studies on women and women's movements), in *Žena i Društvo. Kultiviranje dijaloga* (Women and Society. Cultivating the Dialogue), ed. Rade Kalanj and Željka Šporer (Zagreb: Sociološko društvo Hrvatske, 1987), 27.

realms.¹¹⁸ This difference between the sexes is reflected in language and as much in language, as much in thinking too. Therefore, new language is needed, which, compared to the traditional one, may seem to be “distorted, eccentric, incidental [...] like bad poetry”.¹¹⁹ But it is so only in the shade of the idea of a neutral, objective science and scholarship, “propagated by the dogmatic Marxists”, which idea is built on a vague interpretation of Hegel and maintains the binary models of subject–object, history–nature, male–female, etc. With the new language, a new philosophy should also come. This new philosophy is not focused exclusively on the universal, the particular and the personal should be taken seriously and should play a significant role, in order to create a space for female philosophy.¹²⁰ Interestingly enough, Iveković sees this change in the disappearance of the metaphysical and the emergence of the material. For French feminists, like Irigaray, Julia Kristeva or Hélène Cixous, the materiality of the female body is also a key to the finding of a new language, though and since it is of opposite nature. These three authors of course interpret the body and its role for a new language rather differently, and Iveković also gives a further interpretation. She equals the feminine with materialism and cites the matrilineal societies in India as examples. However, a higher philosophy is needed to exceed this old opposition of a female materialism and male idealism.

The only philosophy Iveković finds capable of this is Marxism, or at least this is the only one which contains the possibility for transgression, since up to the time of the birth of the text it did not fulfil its capabilities. The only exceptions are the Frankfurt School and some Marxist Women Studies projects.¹²¹ This subversive potential of Marxism, having resolved the “abstract division between history and nature” is also discussed by Blaženka Despot,¹²² but the problem and the possible

¹¹⁸ idem., “Tudni és cselekedni – válaszáton a nők / Znati i moći: žene u procjepu” (To know and to act: women at crossroads), trans. into Hungarian by Iлона Sirkó, *Létünk* No. 5 (1982): 737-748.

¹¹⁹ *ibid.*, 378.

¹²⁰ *ibid.*, 379.

¹²¹ *ibid.*, 741.

¹²² Blaženka Despot, “Women and Self-Management,” *Socialist Thought and Practice. A Yugoslav Monthly*, March 1981, 35.

solutions for the binary thinking emerges by most authors already discussed, for example in the anthropologic essay of Lydia Sklevický and Žarana Papić.¹²³ The consequences of this for the movement are that in their “strategy”, women cannot go into party politics (not as if this had been very lively in a party state), but should find their way in the form of a movement. In their practice, women have to take on a “human” function, meaning that “woman” as such does not exist yet, what we conceive as woman is the construct of patriarchy, so it is impossible to teach her about female nature.¹²⁴ The subversive effect of this formation of the undefined human, idiosyncratic femininity is clear. Women’s movement is necessarily international, since the women of the world have still more practical and theoretical problems in common with each other, which cannot be overwritten by climate or local politics.¹²⁵

Considering theory, Drakulić is as far from Iveković as possible. Probably the most famous (and loudest) Yugoslav feminist, even today, was publishing essays and articles in journals and bi-weeklies like *Danas* and *Start*, and most of these were published later in a volume with the title *Mortal Sins of Feminism. Essays on Testicology (Smrtni grijesi feminizma: ogledi o mudologiji)*. Drakulić’s target is patriarchalism as such, prevailing in the Yugoslav society. Her criticism on totalitarianism is not against totalitarianism which preserves patriarchy, but patriarchy is totalitarianism itself. What she calls *testicology (mudologiji, out of muda, meaning “testicle” and logos, as language and law)*¹²⁶ consists of sexism, traditionalism and totalitarianism. Totalitarianism as principle “has its roots in the biological theories about the purity of race” and “determines the place of women in the society and in the family, according to her possibilities and abilities, and in relation to the indisputable position of men”.¹²⁷

¹²³ Papić and Sklevický 1980, 35.

¹²⁴ Iveković 1982, 744.

¹²⁵ *ibid.*, 745.

¹²⁶ Drakulić-Ilić 1984, 64.

¹²⁷ *ibid.* 67.

The target of this attack is clearly not the party state, but an even greater evil, though in the description of Drakulić, it is totally ungraspable. It could probably be compared to the post-structuralist concept of discourse, in the idiomatic system of Drakulić, without the theoretical underpinnings of the former. Which does not mean, still, that the latter lacks all merits: in her many times shrill-tongued, but more often witty and ironic comments on society Drakulić is able to touch the spot, like in her essay "Why do women like fairy tales?"¹²⁸ or in her account on the first international conference in 1978 in Belgrade, where the Yugoslav feminist first met their Western fellows.¹²⁹ However, these texts tackle on cultural issues in general and not on the state and its ideology.

A text by Drakulić standing more in a Marxist tradition is written in 1980, about women and sexual revolution.¹³⁰ Drakulić here refutes that sexual revolution did happen. First of all, the basis of her argumentation is based on the criticism of the concept itself: revolution means radical change affecting the entire society, and this did not happen. Women receive only the freedom patriarchy allows them to get, following the rules of male sexual behaviour. In this version, "sexual revolution" means mostly promiscuous relationships, moreover, it is restricted to bodily pleasures.¹³¹ After her considerations, the conclusions of Drakulić are that human beings in their sexuality are influenced more by culture than by their body, that women's sexuality is not only a reply on men's, it has its own features and that in Western culture sexuality is defined by reproduction, which means that man's orgasm is necessary, while woman's is not. After all, sexual revolution did not bring along real freedom for women, this sexual revolution is "revolution on the bridle".¹³² Moreover, following the practice of several other feminists of the age in their criticism on mass media, Drakulić also mentions that this image of "sexual

¹²⁸ Drakulić-Ilić 1984, 33-45.

¹²⁹ Drakulić 1995, 42-45.

¹³⁰ Slavenka Drakulić-Ilić, "Žena i seksualna revolucija" (Women and sexual revolution), *Dometi* No. 13. Vol. 2 (1980): 45-50.

¹³¹ *ibid.*, 46.

¹³² *ibid.*, 49.

revolution" is maintained by the press and other mediums, who present it as a phenomenon independent of social change.¹³³

Similar argumentations can be read by many authors, for example in an article five years earlier by Jasenka Kodrnja, who presents most of the arguments of Drakulić. According to her too, the aim of the sexual revolution is an essential change between the sexes, which has not come yet but the slogan is exploited by the consumerist press. However, for Kodrnja, the fulfilment of sexual revolution is emphatically a step towards the liberation of *man* [*oslobađanju čovjeka*].¹³⁴ While the source for Drakulić is the American Shere Hite, who wrote several books about sexuality for a broader audience, Kodrnja abides by the Marxist discourse and the Frankfurt School re-readings of it, with references to Marcuse, and besides him, Zygmunt Bauman and Ágnes Heller. The remnant of the Marxist approach by Drakulić is her valorisation of the term "revolution", which indeed contributes to her argumentation, even if it is not too genuine. On the other hand, her emphasis on the effects of this revolution on women gives a stronger feminist tone to her text and makes it different at the same time.

This approach to female sexuality became well-wrought and deeply present in her fictional work, in two novels published in two subsequent years, in 1987 and 1988. The novels, *Holograms of Fear* and *Marble Skin*, brought along success for Drakulić, with several reprints within a few years time. As Jasmina Lukić writes, Slavenka Drakulić was the first author in Yugoslav literature who has brought female sexuality into the discourse,¹³⁵ from a woman's point of view. The first novel, *Holograms of Fear* is the story of a woman, a first person narrator of Lanser's personal narrative, who has to face a kidney transplant.

¹³³ *ibid.*, 46.

¹³⁴ Jasenka Kodrnja, "Seksualna revolucija (Marginalije na temu)" (Sexual revolution. [Marginalia to the topic]), *Revija za sociologiju* Vol. 5. No. 3 (1975): 53.

¹³⁵ Lukić 1996, 236.

The author/narrator tells her story from the bed in the hospital, where she is laying alone, her family being far away.¹³⁶ In her very vulnerable position she is thinking about her mother and her own almost grown-up daughter (Lukić calls this a triple mirror,¹³⁷ which brings into play Irigaray's *Speculum de l'autre femme*), her best friend who committed suicide, her childhood and family, while in the meantime other women appear around her, supporting her in the sensitive situation. This signals "the narrator's awareness of belonging to the female world",¹³⁸ which also brings along the idea of a female community, a recurrent issue in the entire oeuvre of Drakulić, a sometimes more (*Holograms*), sometimes less (*How We Survived*)¹³⁹ successful endeavour. In addition, the emphasised presence of women and the lack of male characters who would be enabled to have either a seeing or a speaking position, that is who are neither focalisers¹⁴⁰ nor narrators, prevents the author/narrator of experiencing her own body as an object of someone else's desire.

This is not only due to the centrality of her illness, which of course also de-sexualises the female body, usually the object of desire. Or rather: this is not *primarily* because according to the conventions illness (or pregnancy) would de-sexualise the female body, but because the narrator herself has a very conscious relationship to her own body and the relationship of the own body to other women's bodies. The resistance to objectivation is that can have a liberating force on the female readership of the novel.

The second work of fiction, *Marble Skin* focuses even more strongly on a mother–daughter relationship. The daughter, the narrator of the novel, is a sculptor, whose sculptors all resemble the same female nude, her own mother's. From the narration slowly unfolds an incestuous story about the mother's husband

¹³⁶ A later novel, *Kao da me nema* (As if I wasn't there) has a similar beginning, with a heroine starting her narrative while laying on a hospital bed. However, in their innovation and literary merits the two books cannot be compared. About this novel, I write in Chapter 3.

¹³⁷ Lukić 1996, 237.

¹³⁸ *ibid.*, 236.

¹³⁹ Slavenka Drakulić: *How We Survived and Even Laughed*. NY: Harper Perennial, [1992] 1993. I also write in detail about this book in Chapter 3.

¹⁴⁰ Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, 2nd ed., trans. by Christine van Boheemen (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, c1997) 150.

and the sculptor/narrator/daughter. The bodies of the mother, the daughter and the stepfather (who, if we believe Bettelheim, is not even *stepfather* – but shall we believe him?) and the wooden sculptures with marble skin and emptiness inside step into dialogues with each other, since it seems, language is not able to mediate between the characters, especially between the mother and the daughter. As the illness in the case of *Holograms*, so does the profession of the daughter in this novel ensure a more conscious awareness of the characters of their own body.

This is apparently an effect of French post-structuralism, in theory cultivated more by Iveković, in a writing practice by Drakulić. Although this philosophical stream was very much present and widely published in the Yugoslavia of the 1970s, in the case of the feminists, it was definitely the feminist stream of Irigaray, Kristeva and Cixous which influenced the feminist streams. By this, I would never want to suggest that the work of the three most famous French feminist thinkers apart from Simone de Beauvoir, would say the same, but it can maybe said that their concept of the maternal is a program for the search for and creation of a new female subjectivity, what is also attempted in the two first novels of Drakulić *and* in the only pre-war fictional work of Rada Iveković, in the novel *Sporost–oporost*. In the book, the reader meets again a mother–daughter relation with all its complicities, from the daughter’s perspective, where the father stands for the authoritarian patriarchy. The author’s biography also has an authoritarian father, as Iveković herself tells that in the interview of *Kruh i ruže* from 1998.¹⁴¹ For her, this father figure and the oppression of her mother by him was one of the personal motivations for becoming a feminist.

The feminism of the literary works discussed so far lies in the subversive potential of a new approach to the body and the subjective female voice speaking. However, the feminism of the literary program of Dubravka Ugrešić is to be searched elsewhere. Her oeuvre up to now can be divided clearly into a pre-war and a post-war period, and in the pre-war period she did not take part in political

¹⁴¹ Iveković 1998, 37.

discussions in any way, neither in the form of essayistic journalism nor of any feminist activity. However, her writings were still quite reflexive on women's issues and in particular on the gender of the author, though more in an experimental and playful way, like in her short novel (or "patchwork novel") *Štefica Cvek*, in the short stories of *Život je bajka* and in the novel *Forsiranje romana reke*.

Although Ugrešić did not participate in the feminist discussion on women's writing and her dissertation was written on three Soviet-Russian male authors, Jurij Trifonov, Valentin Rasputin and Andrej Bitov, all belonging to the 1970s modernist, state-supported stream of prose of the Soviet Union – not a very women-centred approach –, it is not only in her fictional work where she reflects on the feminine in literature.¹⁴² In an article, presenting the work of the Russian writer Ludmila Petrushevskaya [Ljudmila Petruševska], Ugrešić calls her work "a paradigmatic women's prose". According to her, this is a first person narrative close to the Russian *skaz*, a mode of narration basically characterised by the presence of a narrative consciousness, while thematically this new women's prose is limited to the everyday life of women.¹⁴³ The work of Petrushevskaya is highly appreciated by Ugrešić here and this definition of women's writing returns in more of her works of fiction too.

The lack of the feminist activity and intention did not "protect" the author from the feminist readings of her works. And indeed, the potential for feminist interpretations is very much there in these texts. Jasmina Lukić reads one of the brightest short stories of *Život je bajka*, "Lend me Your Character", as an answer for the question posed in the essay of Sarah Gilbert and Susan Gubar, "Is the pen a metaphorical penis?".¹⁴⁴ The texts of Ugrešić tell of a deep and wide knowledge of literary theory and sometimes read like examples of a perfect textbook for literary theory, feminist versions included. While the narration is not that personal type,

¹⁴² Dubravka Ugrešić, *Nova ruska proza kretanja u ruskoj sovjetskoj prozi 70-ih godina* (New Russian prose movement in the Russian-Soviet prose of the 1970s) (Zagreb: Liber, 1980).

¹⁴³ Dubravka Ugrešić, "Surovo žensko pismo" (Brutal women's writing), *Republika* Vol. 44. No. 5-6 (1988): 164.

¹⁴⁴ Lukić 1996, 231.

which we have seen in the fiction of Drakulić and Iveković, the reader is always made sure that the gender of the author *does* matter. Nevertheless, in the spirit of the 1980s' postmodernism, practiced with mastery by Ugrešić, the author as an element of the literary game or the fictional space itself is a problem, so the only solution is some play around the topic.

In the spirit of the newly upcoming postmodernism, the first books of Ugrešić are full of intertextual references, marked and unmarked quotations, both in form and in language. Many of these opens again towards feminist readings, like the recurrent allusions to Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and *Madame Bovary* (both in *Štefica* and *Forsiranje*), but the most striking one which relates to one of the most important issues on the agenda of *neofeminizam* is the references to popular culture. Several feminist authors published critical texts on mass culture, especially that addressing primarily women, like magazines or trivial romance. An example is the already discussed article by Drakulić on the role of mass media in maintaining a false image of gender equality and sexual revolution or another one from the same year by Dunja Blažević on women's magazines, which are addressing women as mothers and wives, but Blažević is also critical on the commodity-fetishism of these magazines.¹⁴⁵

Ugrešić chooses a different approach: *Štefica* is a mockery on female popular culture, where the hopeless heroine is looking for advice among her friends and in these magazines for her problems of how to be beautiful, successful and how to catch a man, first of all. The critical stance of the author/narrator towards the popular genres is expressed by the refusal of the "fake" ending of the story of *Štefica*, where she falls in love with a millionaire film director or by the advice of the magazines which do not solve the horrible troubles of the poor heroine. On the other hand, the author/narrator has a sympathetic voice with her heroine and her attempts to fulfil her dreams and become the ideal woman of the magazines, which

¹⁴⁵ Drakulić 1980; Dunja Blažević, "Idealna žena" (Ideal woman), *Književne novine*, 25 March 1980, 45-48.

is also a more understanding position towards the other women who are also among the readers of her book. So, unlike most feminist critics, for example Blažević, Ugrešić is not purely critical towards mass culture here, though does not hide her witty opinion either.

While the novel is about writing a novel about an ordinary young woman and the title bears the name of this young woman, Štefica Cvek or in English, Steffie Speck, the central character or the real heroine is the narrator/author herself. It is she whose mind the reader is continuously allowed to look into. It is her struggles with the feminine genre, the trivial romance, which the reader follows from the first ideas till the finished text. Although we do not know anything about her private life or everyday problems, neither about her body or sexuality, she, the narrator/author is looking for her idiosyncratic voice and her own place in literature, in the literary canon.

Similar game with the narrative voice and the gender of the narrator is displayed in the short story "The Kreutzer Sonata". The situation is known for the readers from Tolstoy's short story: passengers sit in a closed cabin of a train and one tells a story about his wife to the other. The text of Tolstoy, an author whose work is widely discussed, sometimes praised, sometimes criticised from a feminist aspect, gives strong opinion about women and their place in society. The story by Ugrešić is repeated, apart from the ironic ending, when it turns out that the passenger with the tragic narrative was a pickpocket and the story was serving only the goal of distracting the other passengers attention. However, in this case, when a man confesses his tragic affair with an unfaithful woman, the narrative situation of the confession is valid only when the narrator to whom he tells the story and who is present in the moment of the narration, is a man. So, the author, who is a woman with the name Dubravka Ugrešić creates a narrator, who is a man, in order to be able to create a character who would tell his story to another male, the narrator, who then can narrate the story of this other men, and the story will be written by the author with the name Dubravka Ugrešić. This is a very complicated

situation, beyond doubt. Its strength is also in the complexity, since by these narrative solutions the texts of Ugrešić manages to warn the readers in a subtle way, without throwing it into their face that the gender of the author and the narrator *matters*.

This type of writing is subversive and feminist in a different way than the theoretical texts of Iveković or the novels of her and of Drakulić. The authorial voice directs the attention of the reader to the personal one, thus first creating a place for itself in the androgynous literary space and then warning that there is a personal option for speaking too. The authors discussed here all play around the possibilities of having a personal female voice and giving voice to the female subject, in philosophy, literature, sexuality too. Their counterdiscursive position is created not only by what they say about equality and women's rights, but also by their terminology and narrative strategies: in theory, they often use Marxist terms, but these terms are reinterpreted from and embedded into feminist theories and programs. In literature, Marxism is less present (if at all), but the self-positioning in a mainstream and malestream space also contributes to a counterdiscursive stance which is at the same time also dialogic and its capability for dialogue derives from the shared elements and its own position.

2.3 Neofeminizam and its Place in Relation to Other Counterdiscourses

As described above, primarily in the first subchapter, the neofeminists were aiming at a counterdiscursive position, but as it can be seen also above, they were looking for a common platform of discussion and debate with the official communist one. This is a characteristic *neofeminizam* shares with the two major oppositional phenomena appearing almost a decade before the self-organisation of feminists in the country, that is the *Praxis* circle both in Belgrade and Zagreb, but mainly in Zagreb, and the MASPOK. In spite of the crucial differences between them, the SKJ's argumentation against these groups resembles to a predominant extent in

each case, attacking the lack and seeking to disqualify the “truly” Marxist standpoint of them. Whatever the new feminists, the *Praxis*-philosophers and the major characters of the Croatian Spring stood up for, despite their totally different and clearly expressed standpoints, the reactions of the SKJ are rather similar and schematic in each case.

Considering the relation of *neofeminizam* to *Praxis*, the lack of reference is more surprising from a theoretical perspective, since a profound re-reading of Marx necessarily involves considerations of the gender relations. Some authors of the journal *Praxis* had some interesting remarks on the issue, though understandably, not as their primary concern. On the basis of the two extensive monographs on the Yugoslav revisionist Marxists,¹⁴⁶ the most fascinating theory on women was presented by the Belgrade philosopher Mihailo Marković.¹⁴⁷ He treated women together with other groups when asking the question if there are “any moral rights that belong to individuals simply by virtue of being members of groups rather than by virtue of being persons”.¹⁴⁸ However, Marković makes a distinction between group differences stemming from inequalities in economic and political power, like the case is with the classes, the disappearance of which “has only indeed a liberating effect” and between groups with “mere natural differences”, such as nation, race, sex. The former must be abolished, but the latter is part of “the existing wealth of cultures, life styles”.¹⁴⁹

Compared to the “gender or class first?” discussion between the neofeminists and the party communists, it seems that according to Marković those factors which make women less equal are not merely “natural”, but also social, and while no one would/should question biological difference, the “sex-linked masculine and feminine social roles” (i.e. gender, in its pre-Judith Butler sense) are to be

¹⁴⁶ David A. Crocker, *Praxis and Democratic Socialism: The Critical Social Theory of Marković and Stojanović* (New Jersey: Humanity and Sussex: Harvester, 1983); Gerson Sher, *Praxis: Marxist Criticism and Dissent in Socialist Yugoslavia* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1977).

¹⁴⁷ It should be noted here that later in the 1980s Marković turned more and more towards Serbian nationalism. He was one of the authors of the memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts of 1986 and later he became vice president of Milošević in the Socialist Party of Serbia. He was in this position till 1995.

¹⁴⁸ Crocker 1983, 128.

¹⁴⁹ Marković quoted by Crocker 1983, 130-131.

contested.¹⁵⁰ Nevertheless, it is not the ideas of Marković, which are innovative, but their presence in the *Praxis*-discourse is significant, as context for neofeminism.

The Croatian Spring (*Hrvatsko Proljeće*) was even less possibly an ideological or practical predecessor of *neofeminizam*. In spite of its diversity, partly due to dominance of the students and the radicals, partly to the "special report" of the "newly cleansed Central Committee" with the aim of proving the "nationalistic deviation on the part of the deposed party fraction",¹⁵¹ it became characterised by its nationalism, and the efforts of the party reformists' were faded by the party-interpretation. Compared to the party conservatives, "ideas expressed by students and intellectuals around *Matica [h]rvatska* revealed strong remnants of *bourgeois identity, the rejection of revolutionary principles* or, at best, their tendentious use for *nationalistic purposes*", as can be read the study of Ivan Perić, reflecting the SKJ's standpoint.¹⁵² Though, as also Marko Zubak remarks, the report of Perić cannot be read as unbiased,¹⁵³ nationalism was clearly present in the radical fraction, who interpreted the nation and the class as parallel categories, and equated the Croatian nation with the exploited class. Their demands for a national bank and a national army "speeded up the suppression of the Croatian Spring and helped its opponents reduce it to its nationalistic constituent".¹⁵⁴ This nationalism turned the *Praxis* group definitely against the movement and made it impossible for the party reformists, like Miko Tripalo or Savka Dabčević-Kučar, to approach Croatian Spring from the point of emphasising that communists have not managed to settle the national question for once and for all, as the case of Croatia showed. For them, national equality would have been an essential component of a democratic society.

Failure of the communist Yugoslav state in realising self-management, equal representation of national interests and women's emancipation, the main issues

¹⁵⁰ Crocker 1983, 132.

¹⁵¹ Marko Zubak, "The Croatian Spring: Interpreting the Communist Heritage in Post-Communist Croatia," *East Central Europe*, Vol. 32 (2005): 200.

¹⁵² quoted in Zubak 2005, 200-201. (emphasis added – Zs. L.)

¹⁵³ *ibid.* 201.

¹⁵⁴ *ibid.* 210.

promised by the partisan war and by the break-up with Stalin, were revealed by the *Praxis*, the Croatian Spring and *neofeminizam*. Although this does not bring the three groups closer to each other. *Praxis* philosophers and the major figures of the Croatian Spring had the opportunity to communicate, but their ideological distance weakened them both, pushing the *Praxis* onto one platform with the party conservatives¹⁵⁵ and drawing the picture of extreme nationalism about the Croatian Spring. This prevented the foreign historians to see the MASPOK as “a reform-seeking social movement”,¹⁵⁶ and this picture did not improve, when the former radicals from the party, Hrvoje Šošić, Šime Đođan and Marko Veselica joined Tuđman and his politics. At that time, in a new political setting, the neofeminists openly confronted the nationalists and their clash reached its peak in the “witch-trial”, discussed in a further chapter of this thesis.

However, in the 1980s the neofeminists were not looking for allies, they wanted to negotiate with the party. The charge of being apolitical from the side of the partisan women and the SKJ can be interpreted as partly true, inasmuch in their primary concern with women they disregarded the problems raised by other critics of the system. On the other hand, they were feminists, so focusing mainly on women is the inherent and most basic elements of their existence. Moreover, since *neofeminizam* came almost a decade later than *Karađorđevo* (November 1971), and quite a few years later than the dismissal of the Belgrade philosophers from the university, the other two groups did not bear any relevance for them, neither only theoretically nor strategically. However, since the liberation of the intellectual discourses was a result, more precisely, a balancing act for the harsh punishment of the *Praxis* professors and the MASPOK members, as well as the reform section of the party, the activity of these two opposition circles paved the way for the feminists. As “late-comers”, it was not long after their appearance that they had to face new challenges in the already dissolving Yugoslavia, which also meant that

¹⁵⁵ A “regrettable” event according to Marko Zubak, but a sheer necessity, deriving from their dogmatism, according to Ante Čuvalo. Zubak 2005, 205-206 and Ante Čuvalo, *The Croatian Nationalist Movement 1966-1972* (New York: Columbia UP, 1990), 144-145.

¹⁵⁶ Zubak 2005, 202.

while until the break-up the issues were shared by feminists from the republics, the war and nationalism brought along different conflicts and made their cooperation and joint action more difficult, if not impossible. This led to the loss of significance of many works by them, like in the case of Despot or Katunarić, and probably due to her wartime publishing activity, also to the growing popularity of the work of Drakulić. At the same time, for her and for Iveković, their previous activity as the main representatives of Yugoslav neofeminism more or less defined their space of action in the Tuđman era also.

3. Feminism in the New Nation States

The second part of this thesis examines the position of feminism in the early 1990s in Yugoslavia and/or its successor states. I will give an overview of the new aims and issues of the feminists, especially of the feminist groups founded and changed, and the socio-political environment which strongly influenced their activities and messages. Since the war has radically changed the discourse of the early 1990s, and the feminist organisations were forced to react on this agenda, the predominant part of this overview will take stock of the war and the discourse about and around the mass rapes committed most of the time by the enemy's army in each state. I will examine this discourse and the trope of rape, which also returns in the story of the three authors in the focus of this thesis, since Slavenka Drakulić, Rada Iveković and Dubravka Ugrešić were among the five feminists involved in the "witch-trial". After the discussion of the rape discourse and the debate on the "witch-trial", including its implications for feminists in the successor states, I will also give an overview of the changes in the feminist discussions of the three authors. Then, since one of the accusations levelled at the three authors was treason against Croatia, due to their obsession with Yugo-nostalgia and Yugoslavism, I will analyse the changing concept of Yugoslavia in their wartime work.

3.1 New Challenges for Feminism in the early 1990s

After the exciting late 1970s and early 1980s, the theoretical-academic side of Yugo-feminism became less active, while the new stream emerging was more engaged in activism. The new women's organisations, with a claimed feminist agenda, were focused primarily on violence against women, especially domestic

violence.¹⁵⁷ The first SOS Hotline for women and children (SOS Telefon za žene i djecu žrtve nasilja osnovana udruga) was established in Zagreb in 1987-88, setting the agenda not solely for the discussion of the problem: the establishment of the SOS Hotline also meant the introduction of gender based violence committed in the homes, by male members of the family, against women and children, into the discourse. The establishment of the Hotline was a gesture towards society that the problem exists and the home, the primary place where in a public-private opposition women and children predominantly belong to, carries the possibility of endangering them.

The Women's Lobby (Ženski LOBI), an association for the representation of the political opinion of women was founded in the same year, also in 1988 in Zagreb. The creation of the same organisations in Belgrade came a little bit later, but the Women's Lobby in Belgrade (founded in 1990) immediately took a strong stance against nationalism. Before the elections they even issued a call to voters, telling them not to vote for nationalist, fascist, militant parties. Considering the results of the elections, this attempt was not very successful, but the Lobby had a role also in the wartime and their contacts and political presence was established by this action. In addition to the Lobby, the other political force on the Serbian scene in 1990 was the ŽEST,¹⁵⁸ Ženska Stranka (Women's Party). They were mostly concerned with discrimination against women, improving the lives of women, contributing to the democratic transition and promoting tolerance among nations.

Further important organisations founded in Croatia were the group Kareta (1990) and the Sklonište (Shelter), later called Autonomna ženska kuća (Autonomous Women's House), for providing shelter for battered women and children (1990). Later on, in 1991 and 1992 the Ženska Infoteka (Women's Infoteka)¹⁵⁹ and the Centar za žene žrtve rata (CZŽŽR – Centre for Women War

¹⁵⁷ Major sources for women's organisations and their mission, activities and history: <http://www.zenstud.hr/>, <http://www.zinfo.hr/>, <http://www.womengo.org.yu/>, <http://www.awin.org.yu/home.htm>, <http://www.zeneucrnom.org/>; Mladjenovic and Hughes 2000.

¹⁵⁸ The noun *žest* also means "alcohol".

¹⁵⁹ <http://www.zinfo.hr/> (Accessed 22 May 2007)

Victims)¹⁶⁰ were also established. The Women's Lobby incorporated most of these associations and together with the Belgrade Women's Lobby organised several demonstrations against the war. However, dissatisfied by the effectiveness of these women's groups, the Belgrade feminists soon founded the group Women in Black (Žene u crnom – since the English expression is widely used and the group exists worldwide, I will use the English name here), inspired by the Israeli group with the same name.¹⁶¹

There are a few issues of women's organisations which deserve more attention from the point of the focus of this chapter: the statement of the Women's Lobby about the maintenance of Yugoslavia, the protest of Woman in Black against war and their criticism on Serb policy, the activity of Kareta with war victims, the affair of the CZŽŽR with MP Vera Stanić and, finally, the mothers' protest of the organisation Bedem Ljubavi (Wall of Love), which had initially been supported by all the anti-war feminist groups. The most explicit agenda for the solution of the nationality problem and the harshest criticism against the Serb policy was issued by the Belgrade Women's Lobby, working together with the Women for Peace movement, who incorporated Slovenian, Croatian and Serbian women too. The Women's Lobby announced:

We ask that the units of the Federal Army unconditionally withdrew to their barracks. The youth did not go to serve in the military in order to impede the separation of any ethnic group from Yugoslavia. A Yugoslavia maintained by force is useless to everyone.¹⁶²

A similarly harsh and anti-Serb group in Serbia were the Women in Black, who in their public statement¹⁶³ defined themselves as antinationalist, antimilitarist, feminist and pacifist, and saw Serbian nationalism as a motivating force of the war and the Serbian government as aggressor. Thus, the "citizens of Serbia [in the name of whom the war is fought] become the hostages of their imperialistic

¹⁶⁰ <http://www.czzzr.hr/> (Accessed 22 May 2007)

¹⁶¹ <http://www.zeneucrnom.org/> (Accessed 22 May 2007)

¹⁶² Mladjenovic and Hughes 2000, 259.

¹⁶³ *ibid.* 261.

forces."¹⁶⁴ Considering the rapes, they refused the position of symmetrical suffering, i.e. that women of each nation are to the same extent victims of war and that the members of all the armies are guilty to the same extent. They refer to the strength of the JNA and the forces of Karadžić in Bosnia and to the higher percentage of Muslim women as victims, emphatically adding that the imbalance in the numbers of victims must not allow us to forget the sufferings of women of other nationalities.¹⁶⁵

Women in Black was partly a reaction to the double failure of the mothers' protest: during the summer of 1991, mothers of the sons in the JNA, lead by the mother's organisation *Bedem Ljubavi* (Wall of love), organised protests. The initiative seemed to be promising, a lot of women protested against the war, but for the greatest disappointment of the feminist anti-war women from the Lobby, the protests had a nationalist turn. The participants turned out to be more concerned with their sons being on "the wrong side" than by the war itself.¹⁶⁶ Thus, the protest lost its anti-war character and by this, also the chance to establish a contact and cooperation with the feminists.

The other group with a nationalist overtone was the feminist group *Kareta* from Zagreb. *Kareta* also worked with raped women, provided psychological, medical and legal help, gave shelter and support to them. However, *Kareta* considered rape as exclusively a Serbian weapon against the civil population, especially women, exactly going against the acknowledgement of the other victims, which the Women in Black emphasised so much.¹⁶⁷

A short interaction between the CZŽŽR and MP Vera Stanić (HDZ representative) deserves more attention, as an affair which highlights several aspects of the clashes between feminist groups and the nation states. Moreover, this affair bears a lot in common with the argumentations in the "witch-trial" as well. It is not easy to term the affair between the CZŽŽR and Vera Stanić, because

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.*, 262.

¹⁶⁵ *ibid.*, 263.

¹⁶⁶ *ibid.*, 260-261.

¹⁶⁷ Cockburn 2002, 626.

neither of the words *dialogue*, *exchange* or *correspondence* would describe the events: the CZŽŽR replied to an interview with Stanić (of the daily *Večernji list* on the 12th August 1992), in which they were not named but felt themselves addressed, while Stanić never replied to the letter of the CZŽŽR. Stanić, as the authors of the letter also acknowledge, had attempts to stand up for women's representation, she even stood up in support of the AŽKZ (Autonomna ženska kuća Zagreb – Autonomous Women's House Zagreb) in her speech to Parliament in 1990 and throughout her career she had argued that

women should be involved in politics on a larger scale and more intensively and that politics would only benefit from this as women are certainly more qualified for resolving many social and political issues in which men only show interest if these issues involve privileges and the position of power.¹⁶⁸

The authors of the letter acknowledged her activity for women,¹⁶⁹ but after the *Večernji list*-interview also felt offended and obliged to clear the issue:

In your opinion and according to the information that you have – as you said – these groups 'give out the false impression of acting in a humanitarian way while in fact they are aimed at acting harmfully and spreading disinformation about Croatia.' Considering certain public attacks and disqualifications that we have experienced, as well as some less intense public signs of animosity toward us, we 'recognized' ourselves in this statement of yours.¹⁷⁰

Following these lines, the CZŽŽR describes its activity and mission, emphasising that: "we are not involved in politics and we do not tackle the causes of war nor do we make political assessments of it in what we do. We only deal with its consequences". They give an account about their financial sources, which is mostly international and foreign institutions and especially non-government organisations, and then they add that they are still registered in Croatia, and they do their "best to do everything within the framework of the law."¹⁷¹ This is already a distancing gesture from the state's war policy, reminding the readers and the direct addressee

¹⁶⁸ Letter of the CZŽŽR to Vera Stanić, in Kesić 2003, 189.

¹⁶⁹ They even say: "We consider your way of thinking feminist, which, in our jargon, is a compliment." (189) It is a question if they would do so after this statement too (but it was not expectable in 1993): "Woman is destined by God that in life, from the start, she must be oriented to taking care of the family, and taking upon herself the important duty of being a mother, a wife, a working woman, and then also a politician. But, I wouldn't want you to take me for a feminist." (*Vjesnik*, 22nd October 1999) <http://www.zinfo.hr/engleski/pages/research/elections%202000/TheySaid.htm> (Accessed 23 May 2007)

¹⁷⁰ Letter of the CZŽŽR to Vera Stanić, 190.

¹⁷¹ *ibid.*

of the letter that their existence is in accord with the *democratic* constitution of the new state, but they are not obliged to agree with any ideology. However, coming from the mission to help women war victims and refugees and to protect women's interest, which is both a "professional obligation" and a "political one", CZŽŽR confirms that

there is nothing strange about us reacting – both inside the country and abroad – if we notice that the Croatian politics, the Government, or some of its offices or individuals jeopardize these interests or violate women's and refugees' rights. We deeply believe that this is both our democratic right and democratic obligation, and that, by doing so, we promote the democratic and political life in Croatia rather than harm it.¹⁷²

The emphasis is placed again on the democratic nature of their activity and the new state, but they questioned the thought that anything not serving the purposes of the ruling party (HDZ) and the governmental politics would go against the democratic value system. Their pro-women and anti-war attitude overwrites their patriotism and the nationalism expected from the members of the nation in wartime, and allows no other position: "Please believe us that, after everything, we find no particular satisfaction in the banal fact that since the beginning we have considered even the worst compromise ("with the devil himself", as you put in your interview) better than war."¹⁷³

Accusing a feminist organisation of "acting harmfully and spreading disinformation about Croatia" represents very well how the feminist values, which think about women as the uninvolved, passive sufferers of war and do not differentiate between those who bring them in that situation, no matter to what nation these belong to, clash with the nationalist ideology of a state in war. The CZŽŽR affair in this sense resonates with the "witch-trial" of the five Croatian feminists, which, together with a broader analysis of the discussion of rapes, is discussed in the following subchapter.

¹⁷² *ibid.*

¹⁷³ *ibid.*

3.2 The Rape Discourse in the Wartime Period

In this subchapter, I look at the discussion of the WWII mass rapes in the specialised historiographic literature, which provides a basis for a comparison between that and the discussion of the Yugoslav wars. The “witch-trial” of five Croatian feminist authors fits sadly very well into this discourse, so the analysis of the “witch-trial” will follow the general introduction into the rape-discourse. After that, I will also give a broader view on the local attempts to change the already existing discursive situation.

The mass rapes in the Yugoslav war in the 1990s brought along a revival of feminist literatures on rape. Discussions in the media, articles in newspapers and journals, whole volumes of studies, documentaries, literary texts, visual artefacts and movies appeared, all focusing on the topic. The thematisation of the issue came just at the time when it became possible in the former Soviet bloc to break the silence about the mass rapes committed by the Soviet army in the Second World War, with a new set of tools provided by the second wave feminisms’ literature from the West. However, it is a question, what brought along what exactly, since the democratic transition in most East European countries and the break-up of Yugoslavia, accompanied by the wars, happened almost at the same time. So, the new war could have evoked interest towards the history of similar events, or the research about the WWII mass rapes was already in progress and provided the tool set for further investigation.

As we will see in this chapter, the feminism from the United States had a significant impact on the discourse of the Yugoslav wars. The vocabulary, approach and method for helping the survivors of mass rapes owes a lot to American feminism. Ironically enough, there had never been greater Western influence on feminism in (the former) Yugoslavia and in the Yugoslav successor states, than in the wartime of the early 1990s, in connection with the mass rapes committed (mostly) against the female population of the enemy country. This war moral was very far from the gender relations of the partisan times, as it can be seen from the

description of the first chapter of this thesis, but it is also useful to look at the memoir of Milovan Đilas, where he tells that one of the reasons of his disillusionment with Stalin was Stalin's reaction on the rapes committed by the Soviet troops when they entered Serbia.¹⁷⁴

Considering the Western influence, it is again a striking difference between the early phase of the *neofeminizam*, as discussed in the first chapter, that while they managed to maintain their own theoretical and political framework and agenda, by the sometimes necessary and sometimes useful external influence of the UN, the United States and the foreign media, all these had a radical influence on the feminist discourse too. One of the unanimously positive effects of the presence of international press was the publicity it brought along, for example it was journalists who revealed the tortures and murders committed in the concentration camp of "Omarska's white house". A further consequence of the international discussion is that most of the materials I discuss here are available or already written in English. The debate between the so-called "scapegoat feminists" and the non-scapegoat ones (as they saw themselves as "normal", they did not have such an attribute, though most of them belongs to the constructionist stream) brought up viewpoints relevant in any case of rape, so its impact on the Yugoslav mass rapes in this sense was inevitable. The fact that the main figure of the scapegoat side, Catherine MacKinnon became part of those investigating the mass

¹⁷⁴ "In view of the position I held, I could not keep silent when women were being violated – a crime I have always regarded as being among the most heinous – and when our soldiers were abused and properly pillaged." (Milovan Djilas [Đilas], *Conversations with Stalin*, trans. by Michael B. Petrovich [San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, c1962] 89.) Later Đilas tells a further episode with Stalin, who was continuously making fun of him for his protest against the crimes of the Red Army. Stalin could not forgive his criticism: "And such an army was insulted by Djilas! [...] Does Djilas, who is himself a writer, not know what human suffering and the human heart are? Can't he understand if a soldier, who has crossed thousands of kilometres through blood and fire and death has fun with a woman or takes some trifle?" (Djilas, 1962, 95.) This utterance is widely quoted, among others by Andrea Pető and Krisztián Ungváry, or also by Tony Judt in his *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: Penguin, 2005, 20), but the part which follows is never mentioned by these authors. After the toast, as Đilas remembers, he "kissed my wife [Mira Mitrović by then] because she was a Serb [...] The zenith of his mood certainly came when Stalin exclaimed, kissing my wife, that he made his loving gesture at the risk of being charged with rape." (Djilas, 1962, 95.) Andrea Pető, "Átvonuló hadsereg, maradandó trauma: Az 1945-ös budapesti nemi erőszak esetek emlékezete" [Army in passage, enduring trauma: Remembering the 1945 Budapest rape cases], *Történelmi Szemle* No. 1-2 (1999) http://epa.oszk.hu/00600/00617/00003/tsz99_1_2_peto_andrea.htm (Accessed 14 April 2007); Krisztián Ungváry, *The Siege of Budapest: One Hundred Days in World War II*, trans. by Ladislaus Löb. (New Haven: Yale UP, c2005).

rapes committed in Bosnia during the war, makes the sides in the debates even more clear-cut.

The major feature of WWII mass rapes was silence. The issue of silence is also crucial in the case of the childhood abuses, while it comes to the fore differently in the case of the Yugoslav story. As Andrea Pető argues in her texts about rapes committed by the Soviet troops on Hungarian women in 1945 in Hungary, this is a special status of social memory. It is surrounded by silence “on each level”, while besides forgetting on both a personal and a social level, there is also a selective collective memory working.¹⁷⁵ Though collective memory cannot be anything else but selective, otherwise we would experience some hard times with memory overload, there is clearly a complex set of reasons behind this silence. In addition, there is also a clash between the historical narrative and “what everybody knows”,¹⁷⁶ while the collective remembering will reinforce the selected, stereotypical elements.

In Pető’s argumentation, it was the second wave feminism and especially Susan Brownmiller’s book *Against Our Will*,¹⁷⁷ which created a language about rape from the women’s point of view. In the case of the Second World War rapes, this means a thirty year time difference between the events and the new discourse. Pető herself also admits the problem of parallel narrative modes¹⁷⁸ in cases where the interviewer or the researcher has a different language (approach, narrative, vocabulary, explanation) than the interviewee. Especially in the case of oral history, the danger of putting words into one’s mouth is very much present.

Probably more interestingly, Pető also points out several features of the narratives she has from archives, mostly recorded by authorities and narratives recorded via oral history in the 1990s. She draws attention to the schematic nature of the narratives, mostly resembling Hollywood movies, like *Doctor Zhivago* or

¹⁷⁵ Andrea Pető, “Magyar nők és orosz katonák. Elmondani vagy elhallgatni?” (Hungarian women and Russian soldiers. To tell or to remain silent?), *Magyar Lettre Internationale* No. 32 (Spring 1998) <http://epa.oszk.hu/00000/00012/00016/23peto.htm> (Accessed 14 April 2007)

¹⁷⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will. Men, Women and Rape* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1975).

¹⁷⁸ Pető 1999.

Gone with the Wind. Third person narrations are also extremely characteristic, the horrific stories always happen to someone else and not to the speaking person. In many cases, it was the husband who told the story of the wife. This has apparently a lot to do with shame which keeps one back from speaking.¹⁷⁹ Therefore, often either someone else, who supposedly “knows the story”, has to tell it, or the interviewee/survivor creates a story with a third person narration, where it is the character of his or her story who underwent all the suffering and humiliation and not the actual narrator. Considering husbands as narrators, the question of power and language and the issue of the husband–wife relations in the age come in, combined with the already mentioned shame felt about the rape.

Even though the raping of the enemy’s women is present throughout human history, it is not part of the mainstream histories about wars, which are about the fights between men on the battlefield. There is a way to speak about the latter, its horrors have a language to speak about it. Rape was part of the “additional damages”¹⁸⁰ and its language was silence, something, which is better to forget, since it is too traumatic to remember. It was the second wave feminism, which began to press for the open discussion of the topic and for the reconstruction of the long suppressed or repressed memories.¹⁸¹ The memories are “distorted” by multiple silence and silencing,¹⁸² as the contemporaneous discourse in itself did not allow open discussion about the female body and moreover, as the political situation did not allow the victims to speak about the misdeed of the liberating

¹⁷⁹ Not even mentioning the political aspects throughout the Soviet times, which does not concern this chapter directly and is more or less clear.

¹⁸⁰ One example is the report of the Swiss embassy in 1945 from Budapest: “The worst suffering for the Hungarian *population* is due to the rape of women.” Ungváry 2005, 350. Although the population suffered a lot from many things, the worst for them was the rape of women. This one sentence can imply several interpretations, but surely catches the attention the thought that there must have been a difference between the extent to which the rape of women makes women and men suffer.

¹⁸¹ Ian Hacking makes a difference between the two. According to this, suppression is deliberate, while repression is a “postulated mechanism where incidents are lost to the conscious memory and drives or tendencies are lost for to the conscious desire. Ian Hacking, *Rewriting the Soul: Multiple Personality and the Sciences of Memory* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, c1995), 260.

¹⁸² Petó 1998.

troops of the new ally. Till then, the only medium for telling the personal stories was literature, as Pető emphasises.¹⁸³

However, the new feminist discourse on rape has its own pitfalls. Already the widely quoted and praised Brownmiller-book has a rhetoric of victimisation of women and an anti-male attitude. Basically, Brownmiller does not speak about power relations, she speaks about men and women, in a relationship where rape “is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which *all men* keep *all women* in a state of fear”.¹⁸⁴ This here is apparently a very sharp accusation, something more than extremely disturbing to think about and something what would make any cooperation between men and women impossible by the implication that men are the mortal enemies of women. This perception would make it impossible to discern rape as a crime from everyday life practices and sexuality between men and women. As one of the most important opponents of this type of essentialisation and victimisation, Judith Butler writes, the use of the term “woman” has to undergo serious criticism which “interrogates the exclusionary operations and differential power relations that construct and delimit feminist invocations of ‘women’ [...] it is a critique without which feminism loses its democratizing potential”.¹⁸⁵

A feature the WWII rapes is the fight on behalf of historians, therapists and other professionals to reconstruct memory by tools which were influenced by the second wave feminisms’ not always moderate ideology. As it can be seen in the discussion about the war in Bosnia, many authors, even the most acknowledged ones, are still under the influence of the second wave. Catherine MacKinnon, who

¹⁸³ *ibid.* In Hungary and from the time of WWII, Alaine Polcz’s *Asszony a fronton (One Woman in the War: Hungary, 1944-1945)*. Translated by Albert Tezla. Budapest: CEU Press, 2002.) is an extraordinary example. It became a point of reference on the topic, similarly to Milovan Đilas’s *Conversations with Stalin* (Translated by Michael B. Petrovich. San Diego: Harcourt, Brace & World, c1962.). It is interesting to see how several authors and contexts disregard the complexity of the book of Polcz. The House of Terror is a good example: the aim of the museum is to show the inhumanity of an oppressive power, which is underpinned by the fact that the Soviet troops raped Hungarian women in a very cruel way. Only one quotation is taken from the book telling about indeed horrific details and it is represented as “Alaine Polcz remembers” on one of the black bakelite phones in the room of the invasions.

¹⁸⁴ http://www.susanbrownmiller.com/html/against_our_will.html Accessed 17th April 2007

¹⁸⁵ Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 29.

indeed worked a lot for those women who became victims of war rape, became also a major figure of this fight for the justice of the victims. MacKinnon published essays, gave interviews, commented on trials and represented Muslim and Croatian women in court against Serbs accused of genocide.¹⁸⁶ She has been also active in the campaign of Women Against Pornography and worked on the issue of sexual harassment.

The manifold activity of MacKinnon evoke criticism on several sides and in spite of her commitment to feminism, have been disputed on several feminist platforms. Judith Butler is one of those who see MacKinnon as the major enemy, as for MacKinnon, "sexual relations of subordination are understood to establish differential gender categories, such that 'men' are those defined in a sexually dominating social position and 'women' are those defined in subordination. Her highly deterministic account leaves no room for relations of sexuality theorised apart from the rigid framework of gender difference".¹⁸⁷ Butler, along with feminists theorists like Joan W. Scott,¹⁸⁸ Jacqueline Rose or Ruth Leys,¹⁸⁹ positions herself in opposition to MacKinnon's "deterministic form of structuralism".¹⁹⁰

As Ruth Leys argues, "current theories of abuse, trauma and dissociation are part of another cycle of oppression of women, all the more dangerous because the theorists and clinicians represent themselves as being so entirely on the side of the 'victim' – whom they thereby construct as helpless, rather than as an autonomous human being."¹⁹¹ This positioning of the "victims" can be seen in the case of the Yugoslav war. The phenomena is even more burdened by the fact that it has further moral implications: the ethnic group or nation (this was obviously a question by the time of the war and is even more complicated when looking at Kosovo, so I will maintain the ambiguity by using both terms) to which the survivors of rape belong,

¹⁸⁶ Catherine MacKinnon in Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catharine_MacKinnon

¹⁸⁷ Butler 1993, 238.

¹⁸⁸ E.g. Scott, 1999.

¹⁸⁹ Ruth Leys, "The Real Miss Beauchamp: Gender and the Subject of Imitation," in *Feminists Theorize the Political*, ed. Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (London: Routledge, 1992) 167-214; Jacqueline Rose, *Sexuality in the Field of Vision* (London: Verso, 1986); both quoted in Hacking 1995, 75-76.

¹⁹⁰ Butler 1993, 239.

¹⁹¹ Leys in Hacking 1995, 76. (emphasis added – Zs. L.)

is the general victim of the war, thus the “goodie”, the one deserving the sympathy, help and support of the international community, whatever that might be. Part of the proving procedure of one’s own suffering was the war of numbers, various groups (women’s organisations, state committees, international observers) showing off completely different numbers of victims, from ten thousand up to one hundred and twenty thousand.¹⁹² This is an example how the patriarchal structures work and maintain themselves, with all the shifts in the systems of argumentation, depending on the context. For instance, Tuđman, Izetbegović or Milošević are not less strong fathers of the nation, the soldiers and the male members of the (imagined and always reinforced) community are not less strong and brave either, just because their women are the most suffering victims of the aggressors on the other side.

Interestingly enough, despite the wide-spread victimising approach, several feminist theorists and historians agree on the argument that rape is abused in a war discourse for showing off the aggressor and proving one’s innocence. Petó emphasises it already in the WWII rape cases, where the argument contributed in an exemplary way both to the silence about the rapes during communism and to the Terror House element of the Polcz book in the after-1989/90 period. In the former case, the guilt of the Soviet army had to remain in silence, in the latter, the horrors of the invasion and the faultlessness of the Hungarians has to be put forth.

3.3 The “Witch-Trial”

The binary opposition of victim and perpetrator characterises the “witch-trial” itself and it also exemplifies how rape can be turned into hate speech. The article was published in the newspaper *Globus* on the 11th December 1992, with the authorial signature of the “Globus investigation team”, without any names. Five feminists,

¹⁹² See for example Vesna Kesić, “Muslim Women, Croatian Women, Serbian Women, Albanian Women,” in *Balkan as Metaphor: Between Globalization and Fragmentation*, ed. Dušan I. Bjelić and Obrad Savić (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002), 316.

besides Dubravka Ugrešić, Rada Iveković, Slavenka Drakulić, also Jelena Lovrić and Vesna Kesić – Iveković, Drakulić and Kesić were members of the first feminist associations in the former Yugoslavia in the late 1970s, Ugrešić and Lovrić were not –,¹⁹³ were accused of “raping Croatia” by not being patriotic enough in wartime and by exactly turning against the ethnicising rape discourse, stating that the women raped were not Muslims, Croats and Serbs but primarily women and thus they deserve the same empathy regardless of their ethnicity.¹⁹⁴

The title said: “Croatian feminists rape Croatia”. The five women are often mentioned as “witches from Rio” – hence the “witch-trial” name of the affair. The apropos of the article was the protest of some representatives of the New York section of PEN at the PEN Congress in Rio de Janeiro against the organisation of the 59th World PEN Congress in Dubrovnik, pleading the lack of the freedom of expression in Croatia, based, among others, on the abolishment of the journal *Danas* or on the attacks on the independent weekly *Feral Tribune*.¹⁹⁵ For some mysterious reasons – probably since the critical articles of the five authors were published in the international press, which was disturbing those who wanted to keep the positive image of the new Croatia – this was caused directly by the five women authors:

Their epigons [sic], various scribblers from ‘GLASNIK’ and ‘VEČERNJI LIST’ have enjoyed trying to overcome their professional complexes by supporting the campaign against the freedom of press. It is both them and the feminists mentioned above who are responsible for this absurd fact: according to the leading world media (‘Time’, ‘The New York Times’, ‘The Washington Post’, CNN, BBC, etc) Croatia is always to blame for persecution of journalists and newspapers.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ Jelena Lovrić was not only not a member of any feminist group, but she had always kept a distance even from the term “feminist” because it “sounds insulting and undervaluing”. In the recollection of Kesić, she has always been focused on high politics and “a woman who wants do deal with high politics will not easily incline to feminism.” However, she was member of the SKJ and belonged to its progressive branch. Vesna Kesić, “Confessions of a ‘Yugo-Nostalgic’ Witch,” in *Ana’s Land. Sisterhood in Eastern Europe*, ed. Tanya Renne (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1997), 199.

¹⁹⁴ See: Appendix I. *Globus* 11th December 1992. The English translation: Ženska Infoteka, “Witches from Rio” <http://www.zinfo.hr/engleski/pages/faq/vjestice/VjesticeIzRia.htm> (Accessed 22 May 2007)

¹⁹⁵ Tax 1993.

¹⁹⁶ *Globus* 11th December 1992.

The argumentation goes even further, by explaining that these women not only rape Croatia, but do not take solidarity with those women who were exposed to brutal violence:

For example, while Slavenka Drakulić, Rada Iveković and Dubravka Ugrešić were selling literary flosculus about the tragedy of the war as man's business and thesis about not raping Croatian and Moslem women on the territories of the former Yugoslavia but raping WOMEN (!), all media were talking and writing about totally opposite truth. About the truth that girls, women and old women in Bosnia and Herzegovina are raped and killed not because they are women but because they are 'non-Aryan', because they are not Serbian women, because they are Croatian and Moslem women. And while Dubravka Ugrešić was writing her essay about 'metaphor' of 'clean air' which was spreading through Croatia, her and Slavenka Drakulić's sisters - women, Croatian and Moslem women, were exposed to the real cleansing not the metaphorical one: to the persecuting and killings (labelled by euphemist [sic] 'diplomatic' synonym for the holocaust and genocide - 'ethnic cleansing'), to rapes, to bestial sexual tortures, to ritual sexual terrorism.¹⁹⁷

The argumentation implies that all the violence was committed by Serbs against the women of the innocent Croatia and BiH, and by stating this, the five authors withdraw their solidarity and empathy from the Muslim and Croatian (and Hungarian) victims of brutal gender based violence. These women were their "sisters", unlike other women!, which makes their "betrayal" an even graver crime.

What is referred to here is that when the five of them spoke about the masculinity of the war, they spoke about women as victims of a conflict based on ethnicity but becoming victims of rape primarily because of their sex.¹⁹⁸ The article in *Globus* contains several personal data, from their marital status to the ethnicity of their husbands - those of them, who "in spite of their theoretical position and physical appearance" managed to get married, were married to Serbs, but basically they are "a group of selfish middle-aged women who have serious problems with their own ethnic, moral, human intellectual and political identity".¹⁹⁹ Considering the gendering of a debate or fight, it is very interesting to see that the enemy, if she is a female, cannot be pretty, unless she is an evil femme fatale: the

¹⁹⁷ *Globus* 11th December 1992.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. "We are women and not nationalities". Dubravka Ugrešić, *The Culture of Lies: Antipolitical Essays*, trans. by Celia Hawkesworth (London: Phoenix, 1996), 120.

¹⁹⁹ Ženska Infoteka, "Witches from Rio".

archetypal representations of women are present here too, and of the two major options here the enemy is not the evil fairy or the queen stepmother, but the ugly witch.

However, to attack someone in her sexuality, appearance, private life – even if “only” verbally –, and to accuse the very same person of committing rape on someone is highly ironic. A further self-referential element of the *Globus*-article is the “witch”-attribute of these women. Not even a decade after the end of the cold war and forty years after Arthur Miller’s *The Crucible*, a play written by a left-wing artist about the McCarthy era, the tropology invented by the accusers themselves offers space for the flourishing of the metaphor, with the two main aspects of the witch trials, those of fabricated prosecution and misogyny.

It is not mentioned by the sources I have consulted,²⁰⁰ but the conditioning of the rape discourse becomes even more visible if one has a look at the very same issue of *Globus*, where just a few pages before the unsigned article with five names and extensive data (including the number of their children and their marital status) of five women writers, there is an article about young Croatian girls raped by “Serbian criminals”. The story line is rather clear: Croatian girls are raped by Serbian men and these feminists, by ignoring who the aggressor “in reality” is, hide the deeds of these criminals and turn against their own innocent country, raping it in the same way Serbians rape Croatian women. “According to this belief, ‘Croatia is being raped and thus is a woman.’”²⁰¹ The home country is clearly feminine, its body has to be defended, and feminists are not proper women, they are even able to rape.

After the *Globus*-article, the Women’s Lobby in Zagreb immediately issued a letter of protest against the accusations and about the inaccuracies of the article.

²⁰⁰ Meredith Tax, “The Five Croatian ‘Witches’: A Casebook on ‘Trial by Public Opinion’ as a Form of Censorship and Intimidation. July 1, 1993.” <http://www.wworld.org/archive/archive.asp?ID=157> (Accessed 11 February 2005) and the collection of the Ženska Infoteka Zagreb: Ženska Infoteka, “Witches from Rio” <http://www.zinfo.hr/engleski/pages/faq/vjestice/VjesticeHome.htm> (Accessed 11 February 2006).

²⁰¹ Rada Iveković, “Women, Nationalism and War: ‘Make Love not War’,” *Hypatia* Vol. 8. No. 4 (Fall 1993): 124.

However, the debate went on, among others with the article of Davor Butković "Serbs rape men too" from *Globus*,²⁰² on which the Women's Lobby answered again in an open letter.²⁰³ Here they confirm some of the most crucial points of their activities and mission, among them that "women were raped by the members of the Croatian paramilitary formations as well",²⁰⁴ that "sexual violence" is directed against women because they are women,²⁰⁵ who "will bear the horrifying consequences of the crime as individuals anyway and, as such, they need help, *regardless of their nation or religion*".²⁰⁶ This letter also clarifies some points of the "witches from Rio"-article, especially technical ones, about the statures of the Zagreb Women's Lobby, which is not "a union of feminist groups from Croatia and Serbia", but a group of women in Zagreb gathering different women's organizations, participating also in the anti-war protests. Neither Kesić, nor Drakulić "preside the lobby, because this is an informal un-hierarchical group", moreover, Drakulić did not not even participate in their work and although Kesić herself is an active feminist, founding member of several organisations (for example also of the CZŽŽR).²⁰⁷

The metaphors working in this discussion are following the behaviour of what Max Black describes as "interference theory". According to this theory, there is interference between the two elements or the two "subjects" of the metaphor.²⁰⁸ However, as Black writes, their relation is not simple similarity and the one-directional projection of the attribute of one onto the other. Rather, "the metaphor

²⁰² Davor Butković "Serbs rape men too" from *Globus*, January 1993. Quoted in Zagreb Women's Lobby 25th January 1993. <http://www.zinfo.hr/engleski/pages/faq/vjestice/wlobby2.htm> (Accessed 22 May 2007)

²⁰³ Zagreb Women's Lobby 25th January 1993.

²⁰⁴ The letter refers here to the Mazowiecky-report about the violation of human rights in the Yugoslav wars. Tadeusz Mazowiecky, the former Prime Minister of Poland was the UN's envoy for human rights, who in August 1995 quit in protest of the United Nations and the Western Allies hypocrisy.

²⁰⁵ Here the letter does not mention that men were also subjected to sexual violence, though there are also cases where this happened. However, victims of this type of violence were predominantly women, especially since most of the time the rapes were perpetrated with the purpose of forced pregnancy and thus were part of the racial policy of the perpetrators' side.

²⁰⁶ Emphasis added – Zs. L.

²⁰⁷ Zagreb Women's Lobby 25th January 1993. <http://www.zinfo.hr/engleski/pages/faq/vjestice/wlobby2.htm>

²⁰⁸ Max Black, *Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1962), 44.

creates the similarity”, instead of formulating “some similarity antecedently existing”.²⁰⁹ In this case, the two elements are the nation state or country and women. The country is like women and women can be raped, so the country can be raped. However, if we look at this logic again, it is also visible that if the country can be raped and the country is like women, it is somehow necessary to rape women, as the body of the country. This obviously does not mean that the only factor making the mass rapes possible is metaphor but as language plays a crucial role in any war, it cannot be disregarded here either.

Another use of the metaphor is to say, as Catherine MacKinnon does, that this war is an “undeclared war of men against women”.²¹⁰ It is very close to the argument of the Zagreb feminists of the “witch-trial”, emphasising the aspect of the sex of the victims instead of their ethnicity, and is still radically different. Nevertheless, while the argument of the Zagreb-authors goes against ethnicising the victims, MacKinnon’s is suggesting that the gender relations can turn into a war between men and women. “All men rape all women.” Focusing exclusively on rape in this war as the tool of warfare would mean that the worst thing that can happen to a woman is rape. However, though it is indeed horrible, especially if the rape is committed by a gang of men and is accompanied with beating, mutilation and other forms of humiliation, the idea that nothing can be worse than rape is in accord with the performative idea of female purity²¹¹ and thus also with the motivations behind committing rape on women. These can be the proving of masculinity, the demonstration of a man’s right to the female body or the use of the women’s body as a transmitter of a message for the enemy. These are a few among the possible explanations and it is obvious and also understandable that if motivation is supposedly there, it is also used in an explanatory model.

²⁰⁹ *ibid*, 37.

²¹⁰ “Herak Trial Part 1 and Part 2.” (trial proceedings) Court TV, producer. English language. 78 + 57 min. 23 April 1993. OSA 304-0-16: 27-28

²¹¹ In the sense that if we state something about someone as the natural and general feature of that person or that group, we also create a rule, so the statement meant to be constative, becomes performative. About this see Butler 1993, 11.

The body is also an exciting factor for feminist theorists, as a central element somewhere on the border of the sex/gender relation, and rape seems to be a par excellence place for explanations. However, the danger of the victimisation of women and the overemphasising of their body should be kept in consideration. If you ask women about rape, they speak about rape. And they mention their losses and the tragedies in their life, but if the talk, interview is about rape, that will be the topic. From several narratives of women who experienced war and usually also sexual violence,²¹² it turns out that for them, the loss or the possibility of the loss of their children or the possibility to see their children tortured and raped was worse than anything else.

One of the interviewees of Vesna Nikolić-Ristanović, for example, talks about the murder of her husband and blinding of her son, which seemed to her worse than the tortures she herself experienced. Even according to Nikolić-Ristanović, for this woman “the circle of horror was closed by definite and direct punishment [for the position of her husband who was a policeman and for being a woman on the enemy’s side] was the death of the husband and the incapacitation of her son.”²¹³ After this, what happened to her “in the prison was rendered absurd; nevertheless, it was the woman who was directly punished, probably without the torturers being aware that they were punishing her.”²¹⁴ This explanation is between the statement that the war between the Yugoslav member states in the 1990s was a war of men against women and the approach treating women’s sufferings as “additional harm” within a greater project. Losing one’s beloved ones under cruel and senseless circumstances and witnessing the procedure is equally painful for men and women, but it should not be forgotten that war is still regarded to be a men’s business and what happens to women under war tells a lot about the gender structures of a community and about gender structures and gender–sex relations in general.

²¹² See Nikolić-Ristanović’s collection in Nikolić-Ristanović 2000, 207-236.

²¹³ *ibid.*, 63.

²¹⁴ *ibid.*

Nikolić-Ristanović attempts to give an overview of the mass rapes in the war of the dismantling Yugoslavia. She does not speak about ethnic peculiarities of the inter-ethnic rapes, rightly, as it would be difficult and dangerous to find any. Together with Kesić,²¹⁵ she is harshly critical of MacKinnon,²¹⁶ for MacKinnon in her text about the relationship between pornography and rape states that recordings of the rapes were used for pornographic purposes “exclusively by Serbs”²¹⁷ and that before the war, pornography “paved the way for the sexually obsessed genocide”.²¹⁸ MacKinnon repeats this statement in her comments on the Herak trial on the Court TV²¹⁹ and in her essay “Turning Rape into Pornography”.²²⁰

There are several objections to be raised considering this claim. The major counterarguments of Nikolić-Ristanović are that the idea that the pre-war Yugoslavia was “flooded by pornography” is telling about “a rather impressive ignorance of historical and social characteristics of the former Yugoslavia”²²¹ and that ethnicising violence against women is highly problematic. These two arguments are connected and supported the detail that the magazine mentioned by MacKinnon as example, *Start*, was published in Croatia, while it is the Serbs who were exclusively accused of using recordings of the rapes for pornographic purposes. There is one more issue about pornography: though there is at least one obvious similarity between pornography and rape, which is the role of the feeling of power and its contribution to pleasure, the problem of sexual pleasure (a primary goal of the consumption of pornography) in the case of war rapes is not that

²¹⁵ Vesna Kesić, “A Response to Catharine MacKinnon’s Article ‘Turning Rape Into Pornography: Postmodern Genocide’,” *Hastings Women’s Law Journal* Vol. 5. No. 2 (Summer 1994): 276-277.

²¹⁶ Basically there are two representative volumes published in English focusing on the Bosnian war rapes, one edited by Alexandra Stiglmayer and containing several texts by MacKinnon and one by Brownmiller (and some essays by a physician from Zagreb and a lawyer from Sarajevo), and another one edited by Nikolić-Ristanović, first published in Belgrade in 1995, with a preface by Marina Blagojević and several texts by Nikolić-Ristanović herself. The latter is of course critical on the former volume, especially on the “Western generalisations” the authors the Stiglmayer-book get into sometimes. Stiglmayer 1994; Nikolić-Ristanović 2000.

²¹⁷ Nikolić-Ristanović 2000, 62.

²¹⁸ *ibid.*

²¹⁹ „And we also have testimony concerning Mr. Herak’s case that his father showed the New York Times his own personal massive pornography stash. I mean what this does is produces a population of men who are pre-primed, who’s (sic) sexuality is preconditioned to enjoy mass rape and mass torture and mass atrocities.” Herak Trial Part 1, Court TV.

²²⁰ Catherine MacKinnon, “Turning Rape into Pornography: Postmodern Genocide,” in *Mass Rape: The War against Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, ed. Alexandra Stiglmayer, trans. by Marion Faber (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 73-81.

²²¹ Nikolić-Ristanović 2000, 62.

simple: there are several sources about perpetrators stating that they did not enjoy the rapes sexually, they did not care about the look of their victims and there are data about men raped by men also, which places more emphasis on the humiliation and power demonstration than sexual pleasure.²²²

It should also be mentioned here that the magazine *Start* MacKinnon brings up as an example published erotic pictures of naked women and not pornography. It does not make *Start* very feminist either, but it is again the layered treatment of the issue what is missing. Not mentioned by Nikolić-Ristanović, but as it is discussed in Chapter 1 here, *Start* was also a forum for feminist issues, where several members of the Zagreb circle (Vesna Kesić, Vesna Pusić, Slavenka Drakulić – and a non-feminist target of the “witch-trial”, Jelena Lovrić) also published, which of course created a peculiar mixture within the magazine. There were even articles against pornography, like Vesna Kesić's “Nije li pornografija cinična?” (Isn't pornography cynical?).²²³ MacKinnon sees this as “[s]elect women who were privileged under the Communist regime, and who presented themselves as speaking for women” and adds that “[t]he presentation of pornography as a model of feminism repelled many women”.²²⁴ What happens here is again the projection of one discourse (anti-pornography campaign in the US in the 1980s) onto another or onto several others (mass rapes in the Yugoslav war and the position of feminists in the Titoist Yugoslavia).

Comparing discourses, it makes sense to look at the features detected and analysed in the case of the WWII mass rapes and the rapes in the focus of this

²²² About the lack of pleasure in the testimonies of perpetrators: Herak Trial Part 1 and 2, Court TV and the testimonies of perpetrators in *Cry For Help*. “Cry For Help.” (news program) CBS, producer. English language. 14 min. 4th February 1993. OSA 304-0-16: 15

Sources quoted also in Petó 1998 and Petó 1999, and in Ungváry c2005, 355. Ungváry here distinguishes the civilised soldier according to the factor of pleasure: “The defilement of women, providing the victors with a kind of collective recompense and gratification, has existed as a psychological phenomenon ever since the wars of ancient times. The better organized an army, the less likely are its soldiers to obey such archaic urges. [...] This is not to say that even the most civilized soldier may not commit sexual violence on some occasion, but he would be seeking his pleasure as an individual rather than a conqueror.” This is a fascinating argument and would deserve more attention, but due to the scope of this chapter, I do not go into the details, especially since the rapes in this case were committed between parties who came from the same socialisation and that the parties influenced each other in the way the rapes were committed.

²²³ Vesna Kesić, “Nije li pornografija cinična?” (Isn't pornography cynical?), *Start* 28th August 1982, 32-33.

²²⁴ MacKinnon 1994, 77.

chapter. In the case of the mass rapes in the Yugoslav war, most of which took place on the territory of Bosnia, similar patterns of narration can be seen. The survivors frequent the third person narration, use the same order of events, use similar vocabulary, mention and silence the same elements. Even the researchers take over these patterns, when bringing examples from the interviews. Also, since there were many interviews recorded, but still the majority of the survivors remained silent, the interviews recorded provide a pattern for the narration of all the women, also of those who did not speak. The conditions under which these narrations were born and registered did not make it easier either. There are manuals of women's organisations, giving guidance for the "fact finding methods", how to deal with victims, how to avoid to get them re-traumatised by telling their ordeal to multiple interviewers, etc. Among the guidelines there is the objective of making the survivor feel that her entire story is relevant but contextualisation should not mean that "efforts to document rape or other gender-based violence should subsume those violations in the broader experience of survivors. Just as it can be traumatising to focus only on rape, it can also be damaging to downplay, gloss over, or ignore a woman's account on rape."²²⁵

The researchers who write about the rapes and refer to the survivors' accounts and stories often use quotations as examples. In the protection of the personality rights of the survivors, only their first name is mentioned, while in the Western culture a full name is a proof for one's seriousness. Especially women, who want to be taken seriously and treated as equal with men, insist on the usage of a full name or the family name. Due to the need for generalisation in the need of giving a comprehensive view, the stories are also organised according to a pattern. This means the omission of several small details which give a human face to the victims. What Petó calls "memories distorted by silence and silencing",²²⁶ here it is

²²⁵ For example "No Justice, No Piece: Accountability for Rape and Gender-Based Violence in the Former Yugoslavia." Materials, prepared by International Human Rights Law Group (Washington, D.C., June 1993) and "Testimonies collected by the Croatian Information Centre" November 1992. HU OSA 304-0-3 Box 15 024280-024416

²²⁶ Petó 1999.

distorted by the multiple telling and repeating, by the questions posed and by the way the stories told and repeated are quoted, generalised and sometimes even abused, usually by the political forces of the opposing parties. The *Globus*-case is one example, among various others on each side.

The factor distorting the memories hides itself in an idea behind the work of those writing about the experience of the victims that they have to say what *really happened* and what the victims cannot say. For example, in the interview with Slavenka Drakulić in the end of the US edition of her book *Kao da me nema / As If You Were Not There / S. or a Novel about the Balkans*, a novel about a survivor of mass rapes in Bosnia, Drakulić tells that she made several interviews with raped women and she realised that under the trauma her interviewees cannot put into words what happened to them. So, she “must find a way to say it for them.”²²⁷ She does this in a third person narrative, while focalising the book from the point of view of the main character, what makes the text somehow annoyingly distant and artificially insiderish at the same time.

An approach from a different perspective is the documentary *Calling the Ghosts*.²²⁸ The two main characters, Jadranka Cigelj and Nusreta Sivac are two lawyers from Prijedor, who were captive in the “white house of Omarska” where they suffered mass rape and other tortures multiple times. After they got released, they became engaged in the fight for the justice of the victims and at the end they managed to get the perpetrators to the International War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague. The very personal details with their childhood experience, with the footages about their family members, especially with the interview of the teenage son of Jadranka Cigelj who tells about what his mother survived, with footages about their work with other victims make the characters human beings. Jadranka Cigelj acknowledges herself that before she had experienced what she did experience, women’s suffering somewhere in the world was just one of the evening news spots

²²⁷ “The Penguin Reader’s Guide to Slavenka Drakulić.” In Slavenka Drakulić, *S.: A Novel about the Balkans*, trans. by Marko Ivić (New York: Penguin, 2001), 4.

²²⁸ *Calling the Ghosts / Prozivanje Duhove*, directed by Mandy Jacobson, Karmen Jelincic. Original language: English, Serbo-Croatian. Subtitles: English. 63 min. Croatia, 1996.

for her and after all her sufferings she feels guilty for that. It is not by chance that the directors kept this part in the film, as it is reflecting on one of the crucial problems about representing and discussing mass rapes: the way the big number of victims, which is meant to give emphasis to the crimes, neutralises the sympathy and the feeling of responsibility by de-facing the victims. Another detail of the film, which is related to an issue raised by this chapter is Nusreta Sivac's reaction on the sufferings of Serbian women. As she says, she has heard about their sufferings and for her, all is the same, no matter if rape is committed against a Croat, a Serb or a Muslim woman. However, she adds, the Serb mass rapes were planned, it was part of ethnic cleansing and genocide. This statement is in accord with the argumentation of the Women's Lobby, as it is described in the previous subchapter.

So far, there was a lot of discussion about the gendering of the war discourse and the victimising of the rape discourse, but the ethnicisation of the latter has not been analysed yet. Nevertheless, this hides another important aspect: the social constitution of the groups of women raped. It is known that the predominant majority of the rapes happened on the territory of Bosnia. It is also known that most of the Muslims and Croats lived in towns, while the Serbs lived mostly in the rural areas. Sociological works dealing with the gender relations²²⁹ state that the position of women and gender equality was definitely better than in the urban areas, which were more under the influence of modernisation and the egalitarian state policy, which in spite of the several problematic points, still suggested a very strong model of gender equality. This means that a different attitude towards the rape and the talk about rapes can be expected from the survivors, depending on their relation to their sexuality, their social position and to the estimation of the rape in their immediate environment. These social factors influence how much effectively the second and third wave feminism brought a new language enabling the survivors to speak about their experience could be tested. However, it should be kept in mind that there is a vast amount of women who have

²²⁹ For example: Vera St. Ehrlich. *U društvu s čovjekom*. Zagreb: SNL, 1978; Katunarić, 1984.

not testified about their sufferings and it is this silence which makes a difference and which resembles the WWII rapes the most.

An important and overall conclusion of this subchapter is that women are not passive victims of misogyny and misogynous action and should not be treated as such. The train of thought arguing for the opposite, positioning women as victims, leads to the idea that the Zagreb feminists were able to rape Croatia, being not proper women, and that feminists, who actively stand up for the rights of women are not proper women. As the examples described here show, it is easy to step into this trap, and personal narratives are crucial, since here women are not passive victims but individuals with their own idiosyncratic lives. The victimising discourse carries just as many pitfalls, as does the ethnicisation of the events.

3.4 Redefining Yugoslavia in Retrospect – from Erwartungshorizont to Erfahrungsraum and the other way round (Drakulić, Iveković, Ugrešić)

After the moment when the Yugoslav wars broke out and the reversal of the growth of nationalism and nationalist discourse, what I have called “ethnicising” discourse above, was clearly impossible, the task of feminism was the redefinition of their positions in a new political discourse. As we have seen in the previous subchapters, the new women organisations also gave voice to their standpoint concerning Yugoslavia and the new states, although for them this was not a central matter. Different is the case of those figures of *neofeminizam*, who did not cooperate strongly with the new organisations and who were directly attacked in the “witch-trial” for treason against their fatherland and accused of being Yugo-nostalgic. Their relationship to Yugoslavia was a crucial endeavour in several respects, first of all an attempt to argue against the ethnic-nationalist discourse. The three authors in focus, Slavenka Drakulić, Rada Iveković, Dubravka Ugrešić, already in emigration or on the way to emigration – both physically and mentally – produced several

texts which aim at defining and redefining their relation to the (by then already) former Yugoslavia.

In this chapter I look at these approaches with the question: what is their definition of Yugoslavia, how do these three authors approach the break-up, and what does it mean to them both personally and in the relation to feminism as an ideology or system of ideas? The texts in focus are *The Culture of Lies* by Ugrešić,²³⁰ the correspondence of Iveković with three other women writers (Biljana Jovanović, Maruša Krese and Radmila Lazić) published in the volume *Vjetar ide na jug i obrće se na sjever* (The Wind Goes to the South and Turns to the North),²³¹ her essay "Make Love Not War"²³² and the two volumes of essays written in the wartime period by Drakulić, *Balkan Express* and *How We Survived Communism*.²³³

The need for the reconceptualisation of Yugoslavia happens at a specific time, when the signified onto which the concept is directed does not exist any more or is just in the break-up process. This is why for the feminist activist groups focused on the war, this concept bears less relevance. If we look at *Yugoslavia* as a concept, framed in various and extensive texts, with meanings changing in time, then we can look at the concept of Yugoslavia with the help of Koselleck's *Begriffsgeschichte* and the possible uses of the concept of *Erwartungshorizont*. The term *Yugoslavia* fulfils the requirements of a concept, as it is defined by Koselleck and discussed in the introduction of this thesis. It takes place in the social and political *Erfahrungsraum*, which, "open towards the future, draws the horizon of expectation out of itself",²³⁴ though it is not as old as those of the Aristotelian theory of state nor a complete neologism, thus does not fit completely into any of Koselleck's three groups (traditional concepts, concepts with a meaning that has

²³⁰ Ugrešić, 1996. The book was published first in 1995 in Dutch and contains essays written between 1991 and 1995, published in various newspapers and magazines like *Le Temps Moderne*, *Lettre Internationale*, *Die Zeit*, *Index on Censorship*, *Vrij Nederland*, *NRC Handelsblad*, *The Times Literary Supplement*, *The New Left Review*, *Neue Züricher Zeitung* and others. Ugrešić 1996, 275.

²³¹ The letters were published first in German in 1993 by Suhrkamp as a selection, and only a year later in original in Belgrade, in the edition of the Radio B92. Rada Iveković, Biljana Jovanović, Maruša Krese and Radmila Lazić, *Vjetar ide na jug i obrće se na sjever. / Veter gre, proti poldnevu in se obrača proti polnoči* (The Wind Goes to the South and Turns to the North) (Beograd: Radio B92, 1994).

²³² Iveković 1993.

²³³ Drakulić, *The Balkan Express*, 1993 and Drakulić, *How We Survived*, 1993.

²³⁴ Koselleck 1985, 275-276. Cf. "Introduction" of this thesis.

changed radically, neologisms).²³⁵ However, *Yugoslavia* as a concept has been appearing as a possible solution for the nationality problems in the Western Balkans since the 1830s already,²³⁶ while the idea of the need for the unification of the South Slavs was present even from earlier, from the mid-17th century on.²³⁷ Taking the competing meanings for the realisation of the unification of the South Slavs into consideration, Yugoslavia is a par excellence concept. Several meanings are competing throughout time, even during the existence of the Yugoslav states. However, the definitions of the concept before the break-up in 1991 were all focused on the future, they stood in a *Erfahrungsraum*, open for the future and opening up an *Erwartungshorizont*.

This relationship between *Erfahrungsraum* and *Erwartungshorizont* have changed by the break-up, and the texts written by the three authors in focus create a very specific *Erwartungshorizont*, considering the unlikelihood of a Yugoslav state in the near future. Their concept means much more a strategic plan for their self-definition and together with this self-definition, a basis for their theoretical and political standpoint as feminists and as intellectuals. Koselleck is right, without common concepts "there is no political field of action".²³⁸ While the party state, in spite of all the debates between the SKJ and the neofeminists, provided a frame for feminist ideas and the discussion of these, there was no need to define the existing state itself.

On the other hand, exactly the improbability of a Yugoslav state brings in another interpretation of *Erwartungshorizont*, that of Hans Robert Jauß. The comparison of the concept *Erwartung* by Koselleck and by Jauß (both of whom deeply influenced by Gadamer, of course) may help: expectation can be read in the sense of a "demand" or in the sense of "hope" or "prognosis". The latter is what we can see by Koselleck and the former is more characteristic for Jauß. Although Jauß

²³⁵ Koselleck 1985, 83.

²³⁶ Dennison Rusinow, "The Yugoslav Idea Before Yugoslavia," in *Yugoslavism: Histories of a Failed Idea 1918-1992*, ed. Dejan Djokić (London: C. Hurst, 2003), 11-12.

²³⁷ Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics*, 3rd ed. (Ithaca and New York: Cornell UP [Cornell Paperbacks], [1984] 1993), 70-73.

²³⁸ Koselleck 1985, 74.

created his theory for literature and the reception of literary works, the same theoretical background, Gadamer's *Wahrheit und Methode* (*Truth and Method*, 1960) and the same use of terms justifies the comparison here. For Jauß, the horizon of expectation is "on the basis of which a literary work in the past was created and received".²³⁹ This complies of a system of values and available material of knowledge. The term of Jauß²⁴⁰ is focused on the readership who are the possible receivers of a literary text, which can fulfil or betray the expectations of the audience, and by challenging these expectations, can contribute to *a change of the horizon*.²⁴¹ In the case of Koselleck, the horizon of expectation belongs to those defining the concept, while in the case of Jauß, it is that of the receivers, though I would assume that the author/speaker also cannot be discerned from the group of these, considering the factors establishing the horizon.

Of the three authors in focus, the one by whom the concept of the former Yugoslavia is the most detailed and elaborated is Dubravka Ugrešić. It is also her by whom this means the most spectacular change in her writings, not only because of the open expression of her political standpoint considering Yugoslavia, which becomes in *The Culture of Lies* the major element of the writings, but also for the appearance of a straightforward feminist agenda in the texts.²⁴² As I wrote in the second chapter, feminism as an explicit political agenda had no space in the writings of Ugrešić before, while *The Culture of Lies* is a remarkable example of how the topics of war patriarchy bring along feminist reactions. In addition, the feminism presented in *The Culture of Lies* reveals aspects of the author's relationship to Yugoslavia as well, sharing aspects of Drakulić's *How We Survived*,

²³⁹ Hans Robert Jauss [Jauß], "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory," trans. by Elizabeth Benzinger, *New Literary History* Vol. 2 No. 1 (Autumn 1970): 18.

²⁴⁰ The approach of whom is based also on the theories of Karl L. Popper and Karl Mannheim.

²⁴¹ "The new literary work is received and judged against the background of other art forms as well as the background of everyday experience of life. From the point of view of the aesthetics of reception its social function in the ethical realm is equally to be understood in the modality of question and answer, problem and solution, through which it enters the horizon of its historical effect." Jauss 1970, 34.

²⁴² We can already find some cultural criticism in the first post-1991 work, in the book *Have a Nice Day: From the Balkan War to the American Dream* (Trans. by Celia Hawkesworth. London: J. Cape, 1993.), but this is more about her journeys in the United States and does not have a weight in the discussions about the issues of this chapter: Yugoslavia and feminism.

since both of these texts have references to the unfulfilled gender equality in the federal state.

The one of the first essays of *The Culture of Lies* is about a first primer, a *početnica*, from which the Yugoslav children learned about the world, how it should be seen and where they should place themselves in it. The protagonists of the *početnica* are children from Serbia, Bosnia, Croatia, they are all friends and children of the Yugoslav's state. As the author writes

I started school in 1957. That year I got my passport to the Gutenberg galaxy, and another, inner, indistinct one. The primer is a kind of passport for several generations. Several generations are a whole nation, of a kind.²⁴³

and adds two pages later, after repeating these four sentences quoted here: "I recognise this nation of mine."²⁴⁴ The Yugoslav nation according to this approach of Ugrešić is unified by their cultural heritage, by the state controlled education: children who learn how to read, at the same time also learn how to be not only citizens of the state but members of the nation and what this nation is.

The nation implies an identity, which is supposed to be stable and which is questioned by the ideology of the new nation states of the break-up. When thematising the effects of the break-up on those who share this Yugoslav identity, Ugrešić is shifting between her individual experience and a more widely shared experience, an *Erfahrungsraum* of those having this Yugoslav identity. She writes about the "Yugo-writer" in general, who is

deprived of his homeland, the literary life he was used to, his readership, market, libraries, publishers, the culture of dialogue, cultural exchanges, critics, literary journals, even books themselves. [...] But nevertheless, the greatest drama is being played out on the territory of the language which was shared until a short time ago.²⁴⁵

On the one hand, the loss is cultural and intellectual, but just as much existential, with the loss of the market and the readership. The prognosis of Ugrešić is a new *Erfahrungsraum*. The options for the Yugo-writer are "transformation and

²⁴³ Ugrešić 1996, 15.

²⁴⁴ *ibid.*, 18.

²⁴⁵ *ibid.*, 165.

adaptation; inner exile, in the hope that it won't last long, real exile, in the hope that it is temporary."²⁴⁶

The Yugo-writer, while the author herself clearly identifies with this figure, is always mentioned by a masculine personal pronoun, as an act of refusal of the feminist and post-colonial way of writing, where the general form for the third person singular pronoun is always the feminine "she" and not the commonly used "he". Ugrešić, who herself eventually decides for real exile, identifies with this "Yugo-intellectual", directing "his message to foreigners," as "it seems that only foreigners need him".²⁴⁷ The masculine form and the decision and will to belong to the former Yugoslav authors in exile and the androgynous canon of Yugoslav literature with universal values is also signalled by the authors cited in *The Culture of Lies*: Goran Šimić, Bora Ćošić and, of course, Krleža. Ugrešić also chooses a new readership, with a horizon of expectation more similar to the one she is used to, as her texts do not seem to change the new horizon of expectation of the new country, being part of the old one.²⁴⁸ By losing the original nation and refusing and being refused by the new one, it is the individual I that remains.²⁴⁹

Nevertheless, in spite of the androgynous literary ideal, there is a point in *The Culture of Lies* where feminism and Yugoslavism meet, in an expanded metaphor of the core metaphor "the body of the nation":

Just as every tragedy recurs as farce, so all the former Yugo-symbols have been transformed into their ironic opposite: Tito's baton (the symbol of brotherhood and unity) has become a fratricidal stick (a gun, a knife) with which the male representatives of the former Yugo-peoples are annihilating each other. [...] The collective human body has become human flesh, all ex-Yugoslavs are today merely meat.²⁵⁰

The text here disregards the (in her view) new nationalities of the human beings fighting and is concerned solely with the death and senselessness of the fights. A footnote to this part of the book explains the patriarchal relations of a totalitarian

²⁴⁶ *ibid.*, 166.

²⁴⁷ *ibid.*, 180.

²⁴⁸ The difference between the horizons is nicely shown by the positive reputation of Ugrešić in Germany and the attempt of the Zagreb professor of literary history, Viktor Žmegač, to explain to the German readership in the journal *Literatur un Kritik* how irrelevant Ugrešić is for the contemporary national Croatian canon. Viktor Žmegač, "Letter to the Editor," *Literatur und Kritik* Vol. 28 (April 1993): 105-106.

²⁴⁹ Ugrešić 1996, 187.

²⁵⁰ *ibid.*, 51.

state, where the leader is the father of the nation, the soldiers are his sons and women matter only as those who give birth to the soldiers. Tito, Stalin, Milošević or Tuđman are not different in this sense.²⁵¹ Nothing new is invented by Ugrešić with this explanation, the novelty is *her* explicitly feminist gendered perspective.

It seems that for Ugrešić, the nation state is more misogynist than the communist federal one, though the latter is not faultless either. However, her turn to political feminism and against nationalism go together and reinforce each other. She writes about newly composed “Chetnik” songs where Croatia is a girl, abandoning her boyfriend (Serbia) preferring another (the West/Germany) and after this no one will marry her, she will be a “Western whore”;²⁵² or about the East–West relationship in gender metaphors, where the West is the male and the East is the female, the former Other-ing the latter.²⁵³

In the essay “Because We’re Just Boys” – an essay Ugrešić also gave to the feminist journal *Kruh i Ruže* for publication,²⁵⁴ while her name did not appear before, in the 1970s-80s in any feminist enterprise – Ugrešić describes the special specie, the “Yugo-man” of the Earth’s fauna with deep irony. To make the relationship between Yugoslavia and Croatia more complicated, the essay starts with Croatian men in Zagreb and the concept of the misogynist patriarchal male is spread to all republics only in the second part. “The picture belongs to typical Yugo-imagology”,²⁵⁵ and the several decades long maintenance of patriarchal values is responsible to the highly misogynist nature of the war. This essay, even if there are other ones in the volume which can be charged with Yugo-nostalgia, is far from being Yugo-nostalgic and looks at the birth of the nationalist-patriarchal nature of the nation states as a result of a longer process. As it is explicated in the title-essay, “The Culture of Lies”, “[i]n a milieu that has hidden its deeply rooted

²⁵¹ *ibid.*, 51-52.

²⁵² *ibid.*, 58.

²⁵³ *ibid.*, 240-248.

²⁵⁴ Durbarvka Ugrešić, “Jer mi smo dečki” (Because we are just kids), *Kruh i ruže* No. 1 (Spring 1994): 30-35.

²⁵⁵ Ugrešić 1996, 113.

patriarchalism behind socialist formulae about the equality of women and men, 'democratisation' has brought a new freedom for patriarchalism."²⁵⁶

For Ugrešić, mostly by her emigration, by giving up "the hope that it won't last long" and choosing "real exile" ("in the hope that it is temporary"), Yugoslavia becomes a memory and something which has to be preserved there. This idea is discussed in the essay "The Confiscation of Memory", together with the difficulties of remembering and the uncontrollable, arbitrary nature of nostalgia. This is what later returns in the project *Leksikon YU-Mitologije*²⁵⁷ (where Ugrešić is a contributor) and in the novel *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender*.²⁵⁸ In order to make a final break with the former country and the new successor state, with which the narrator-author has never identified anyways, in one of the last essays of *The Culture of Lies* the narrator-author tells a story how she refuses to fill in the answer for the question of her nationality, when officials ask for it. She rather chooses to be "no one".²⁵⁹

The last essay mentioned above is from 1996 and commemorates a problem which is one of the central topics of the correspondence of Rada Iveković with her three friends. Here, the experience of the falling apart of the country and the creation of the new nation states is expressed by the images of distance and travelling. The authors are not sitting and waiting at one point, as a decent woman would do at wartime from Penelope till all those faceless women of our days who are following the rules given to them and of whom only the maintained rule remains, their names and faces are forgotten by history. The four authors of *Vjetar*, like the wind in the title/motto, are travelling around in the country (sometimes even abroad), as they did before and as if their travels could keep together the pieces shot apart. Their difficulties with crossing borders, which are changing, with roads which are closed down and with passport controls which are a shockingly new

²⁵⁶ *ibid.*, 77.

²⁵⁷ Iris Andrić, Djordje Matić, Vladimir Arsenijević, ed., *Leksikon YU-Mitologije* (Zagreb: Rende, 2005). Web: <http://www.leksikon-yu-mitologije.net/>

²⁵⁸ Đurbarvka Ugrešić, *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender*, trans. Celia Hawkesworth (NY: New Directions, 1999).

²⁵⁹ Ugrešić 1996, 238.

experience all receive special attention and emphasis in the letters, as proofs for the horror of the break-up.

In these very personal accounts, Iveković is trying to define her relationship to the new situation. One day after the declaration of the independent Slovenian and Croatian state, she is trying to keep her disinterestedness in the events, during which the only thing she wants to avoid is war:

I don't care about the disintegration, that we are getting separated, although I'm not fond of sovereignty, what I find retrograde. We will be going across the borders, without taking any care about it.²⁶⁰

This expectation has to be betrayed when the JNA troops break into Croatia and Slovenia and the war starts. However, the initial idea implies that the essence of Yugoslavia would not change, that it will remain easily possible to have the same relationship between the member states as before. As Drakulić writes it in the *Balkan Express*, she was "educated to believe that the whole *territory* of ex-Yugoslavia" was her homeland, which means not only a cultural but also a spatial notion of Yugoslavia.

The new aspect brought in by the letters of Iveković is the metaphor in which the country becomes similar to the family. The break-up of the country is similar to death of her mother:

"The loss of my country – what will presumably (and probably determinately) happen now – I personally experience as the death of my mother. [...] Despite the common opinion, I do not find it natural that our parents die before us. Just the opposite, the natural would be if they never left us. Because they mean to us the security and the harbour, the basis, without which we cannot exist. At least this is how I feel. The same holds for the homeland, which I have always felt and considered as unified. I have literally lived all my life between Zagreb and Belgrade, simultaneously in both cities. My family has always existed above republics and nations, by then this was called: to be Yugoslav."²⁶¹

Although the "homeland as mother" metaphor is a commonplace already, Iveković gives it a new modality. The homeland is not a passive female body, waiting to be protected and fought upon, but a nurturing and protecting parent, thus someone active and not necessarily feminine. The spatial factor is also emphasised here.

²⁶⁰ Letter from Paris, 26th June 1991. Iveković et al. 1994, 15.

²⁶¹ *ibid.*, 17.

However, the travels throughout the war-ridden republics convince Iveković that this country does not exist any more. Similarly to Ugrešić, she gives up her hopes in the possibility of the maintenance anything of her Yugoslavia and chooses emigration, since as she writes in her article published in the *Vreme* (a Croatian newspaper published in Belgrade): "This country is not my state and my city. I wasn't born here."²⁶² The spatial concept of Yugoslavia fails, and Iveković brings forward her concept of the family as homeland, when she wakes up from a nightmare (in which a sniper shoots on her husband) saying: "I pray that nothing happen to Goran, because he is my only homeland".²⁶³ Thus the metaphor of the homeland as mother turns into a metaphor of the homeland as parents (family) which later turns the metaphor upside down again, turning the closest family member into a metaphoric homeland.²⁶⁴

As a mark of the interference between the lives of the authors, the emigration story of Rada Iveković is one of the essays in *Balkan Express* by Drakulić. In her various essays stories appear about various women with a first name, whose personal experience is meant to change the overall picture about women as a mass. "Rada" is one of her returning character, once as the one in the huge diplomatic apartment of whom the first feminist meetings are held in the late 1970s,²⁶⁵ then as a "very much" Yugoslav person, "a Croat living half in Zagreb, half in Belgrade, married to a Moslem: she is thus a Yugoslav, a rare bird indeed in this time of nationalist divisions."²⁶⁶ However, in the essay "The Woman Who Stole an Apartment" Drakulić tells the story of a certain Marta, who has the same

²⁶² The *Vreme*-article (28th October 1991) of Iveković in Iveković et al. 1994, 93-96.

²⁶³ Iveković et al. 1994, 274.

²⁶⁴ Cf. the interference theory of Max Black as discussed in the previous subchapters of Chapter 2. Black 1962.

A further proof for the complicated nature of "Yugoslav identity", which cannot be unified, is the categories presented in an article by a Belgrade feminist politician, Vesna Pešić, as three "modalities of Yugoslav feeling": "The first group were 'Yugoslavs by ideological choice', partisans, communists and those who identified their socialist patriotism with the state of ex-Yugoslavia. Then, there were children from mixed marriages, who did not want to choose between sides, but accepted the wider notion of Yugoslav national feeling. Finally there was a third group of Yugoslavs, those who felt Yugoslavia to be a 'common emancipator chance for all those who lived in it.'" Quoted by Jasmina Lukić, "Women's Writing and Dismemberment of the Ex-Yugoslavian Cultural Milieu," in *What Can We Do for Ourselves? East European Feminist Conference*, 83-84.

²⁶⁵ Drakulić, *How We Survived*, 1993, 128.

²⁶⁶ Drakulić, *The Balkan Express*, 1993, 15.

biographical characteristics as Iveković and even wrote an article for a Belgrade based Croatian newspaper, where the following sentences appear: "This country is not my state and my city. I wasn't born here." Drakulić uses a pseudonym for her colleague from the 1970s feminism and evaluates her actions and reactions, even Drakulić herself finding the article in *Vreme* insensible of the horrors of the wars.²⁶⁷

A striking difference of Drakulić, compared to the texts of Ugrešić and Iveković is that the refusal of the nation states and the emigration is not as assertive an action by her as it is by the other two authors. While the concept of the map and the idea of free travelling, as well as the forced nationalism appear in the book, for Drakulić the main issue is the loss of individuality in the war. When she leaves Croatia, she symbolically ceases to be a member of any nation, not matter if it is Yugoslav or Croatian, and is reduced to her refugee status.²⁶⁸ In the case of the refugees, their nationality does not seem to bear the same weight, as does their status. Similar hostility is described in a letter of Radmila Lazić, one of the correspondents of Iveković, when she speaks about the faceless refugees, who make "us [the Belgrade people] feel threatened, while they [the refugees] are more and more aggressive,"²⁶⁹ speaking in the well-known us–them dichotomy. Drakulić herself uses also this refusing, de-facing, de-individualising and homogenising tone in the case of her refugee friend from Bosnia. She is embarrassed by seeing her in high heels and make-up, she is "disappointed" by her "trying to keep her face together with her make-up and her life together with a pair of shoes".²⁷⁰ The picture of the face kept together by make-up, the need for keeping together the face of someone who loses her country refers already to the body–nation metaphor.

²⁶⁷ Interpreting the reasons for this solution is better to avoid in a half fiction half non-fiction piece of writing, such as the essay, especially where the characters are mentioned by their first name, rather as an authorial action to maintain some fictionality. Though investigating the borders of fiction even appears in this thesis, an explanation for the Rada/Marta character by Drakulić would rather belong to a psychological reading of the texts then to mine.

²⁶⁸ "an old man passed me by [...] 'Where are you from?' he asked me. When I told him that I was from Croatia his tone of voice changed instantly. 'I've read in the newspapers that you refugees are getting more money from the state than we retired people do, and I worked hard for forty years...' [...] I think I have never experienced such a terrible urge to distinguish myself from others, to show this man that I was an individual with a name and not an anonymous exile stealing his money." Drakulić, *The Balkan Express*, 32-33.

²⁶⁹ Radmila Lazić, Letter from Belgrade, August 1992. In Iveković et al. 1994, 272.

²⁷⁰ Drakulić, *The Balkan Express*, 143.

The individuality problems awoke by the break-up of the homeland, explained to the Western colleagues with the help of a self-drawn map, and by the break-out of the war, which brought along a new approach to the human body as bare blood and flesh, the relationship to the own body becomes central for Drakulić. After watching news on the TV in 1991 December, the author-narrator is sitting in the bath, she has the feeling that her body is not hers any more: "I knew all that belonged to me, that it was me, but my perception of my own body was no longer the same", "it felt like an alien body moving mechanically, no longer in my control".²⁷¹

The control over the body is lost not only by the relativisation of the control over one's body by war, but also by the loss of the control over the choice of the nationality, by changing it arbitrarily:

Along with millions of Croats, I was pinned to the wall of nationhood – not only by the outside pressure from Serbia and the Federal Army but by national homogenization within Croatia itself. That is what the war was doing to us, reducing us to one dimension: the Nation. [...] I am nobody because I am not a person any more. I am one of 4.5 million Croats.²⁷²

For the lack of choice and the violent nature of the national ideology even a war-metaphor is used, which allows for no choice. At least, as Drakulić interprets the war and the attack on Croatia. In spite of all her inner resistance to accept the reduction of herself to "one of 4.5 million Croats", she thinks that after Vukovar and Dubrovnik one cannot "tear off the shirt of the suffering nation", "it wouldn't be right".²⁷³ On the other hand, although she is more inclining to accept Croatia as her new nation – instead of refusing it as her country, her city, refusing even to have been born there, or instead of choosing to be "other" or "no one" –, she still mentions at the beginning of the essay which was quoted in this paragraph, "Overcome by Nationhood", that "the whole territory of ex-Yugoslavia was [her] homeland" and she "believed that borders, as well as nationalities, existed only in

²⁷¹ Drakulić, *The Balkan Express*, 48.

²⁷² *ibid.*, 51.

²⁷³ *ibid.*, 52.

people's heads."²⁷⁴ It seems that for Drakulić, nationality and homeland were merely constructed, without real weight, until it became a matter of flesh and blood. Later in the volume, in an epistolary essay written to her daughter, she remembers the Yugoslav times as an age when nationality did not matter and quoted the 1.5 million people who in the census in 1980 marked "Yugoslav" as their nationality.²⁷⁵ As Ivo Banac comments on these texts: "She comments on those and other matters with an air of a child or an uninformed outsider. Many of her comments concern national identity. They are ambiguous [and] flat."²⁷⁶

In *Balkan Express*, these statements about Yugoslavia mix with the accepted forced Croat identity, however destructive Drakulić finds that. She accepts the new borders, since "there is no way back" and the new borders "teach a new reality", though she feels deprived of her past, her childhood and education, memories and sentiments, as if her "whole life has been wrong, one big mistake, a lie and nothing else."²⁷⁷ Although she is several times critical about the communist state, as one which did not allow space for the development a civil sphere or a democratic dissident movement, thus even responsible for the success of the undemocratic ideologies in the new democracy, for her it is also a cultural and personal identity, with memories and education.

The communist Yugoslavia is presented from a different perspective in the book *How We Survived Communism*. The essays in the book were written for an American publisher and the idea came after Drakulić travelled all around Eastern Europe to write articles for the *Ms.* magazine, an important American feminist magazine founded by Gloria Steinem. This might be a reason for the paradigm change in the approach to Yugoslavia and its place in Europe, since while it is one of the most basic, commonplace remarks on Yugoslavia that it was in many respects different from the communist countries in the Soviet Bloc, in this volume this difference is completely ignored. This experience is presented by Ugrešić by a

²⁷⁴ *ibid.*, 50.

²⁷⁵ *ibid.*, 129.

²⁷⁶ Ivo Banac, "Misreading the Balkans," *Foreign Policy* 93 (Winter 1993/1994): 178.

²⁷⁷ Drakulić, *The Balkan Express*, 57-58.

narration of a trip to Moscow as a citizen from the country in the gloomy, dirty Balkans, although before the war Yugoslavs had all the reasons to consider themselves more Western, more civilised.²⁷⁸ While Drakulić herself finds the enterprise of an American journalist or academic woman (this is not clear) to edit a book about East European women ridiculous, she does exactly the same. She tells stories about individual women all over Eastern Europe, in everyday situations, usually very traditional ones: cooking, speaking about their husbands, struggling with the lack of basic products like sanitary napkins.

However, in this book there is no difference between these women and between all the countries in Eastern Europe. The time is not specified either, one with the most basic memories about the late 1980s and early 1990s can only suspect that if the time of the narrated stories is when sanitary napkins were not available in Eastern Europe, then it must be rather before the changes. The stories about women, which pretend to present them as individuals, eventually diminishing any sign of differentiation, are constantly deconstructing themselves. This makes the text more annoying than enjoyable. The element which makes the book more remarkable is the very strong stance towards theorising feminism. Probably these vague stories about cooking/shopping/chatting women also stand for this aim, but it becomes clear in the essay "A Letter from the United States", where the American journalist/academic colleague turns to Drakulić with her idea about the book about East European women. For her questions about essentialism, public discourse, Critical Theory, etc., the answer of Drakulić is the refusal to "discuss this matter" and answer the questions, "because they are all wrong".²⁷⁹ Besides the fact that her resistance to theory and being theorised is also a remark to people like me, writing a thesis about her as a feminist, this stance she takes is not only against Western feminism (though in the book it is a Western feminist, who, as

²⁷⁸ Ugrešić 1996, 77.

²⁷⁹ Drakulić, *How We Survived*, 1993, 127-128.

shown by Drakulić, attempts it in her ignorance), but also against theorisation in general.

It is fascinating to compare the feminism of Drakulić and the feminism of Iveković, when they write about the same topic, women and war. Drakulić in her epistolary essay addressed to her daughter – so, in a text with a female author and female reader – gives a short analysis about this relation:

At bottom, war is a man's game. Perhaps it is much easier to kill if you don't give birth. But I am reluctant to say what should follow from this: that women don't participate, or conduct or decide about wars, because they do. Not as women, but as citizens. As citizens they contribute, support, hail, exercise orders, help and work for war – or they protest, boycott, withdraw support, lobby and work against it.²⁸⁰

These lines are trying to explain something about the complicated system of attitudes women can have to war, and what is represented also in the large variety of the various women's groups and organisations taking various positions towards the war. Iveković, once in the letters and in her most famous essay "Make Love Not War"²⁸¹ addresses the same issue.

In the letter already quoted here, Iveković hastily pronounces that "women are born pacifists".²⁸² The sentence is between many other thoughts about house keys, phone calls and the news about the war which just broke out (the letter is from the 26th June 1991). The relationship between women and war receives a real explication in the essay published in the feminist journal *Hypatia*. Iveković looks at the *othering* of women by nationalist discourse, stating that "women's identity and relationship to the 'Other' is different from that of men, hence even when women participate in nationalism it is in a less violent form."²⁸³ In addition to the analysis of women's place in relation to nationalism, Iveković defines several types of nationalism. One of these is the radical one, and these, as the declared basic assumption of the essay suggests,

'radical nationalisms' at the end of the twentieth century operative in the republics of the former Yugoslavia are both mechanisms of binary, dual

²⁸⁰ Drakulić, *The Balkan Express*, 134.

²⁸¹ Iveković 1993.

²⁸² Letter from Paris, 26th June 1991. Iveković et al. 1994, 15.

²⁸³ Iveković 1993, 113.

oppositions and that they invariably led to war in the long run. By 'radical nationalism' I mean either a very belligerent nationalism and/or an advanced phase of a previous form of nationalism.²⁸⁴

The argumentation goes on with theories on *guerre fratricide*, murder of the *pater populi*, theories and interpretation of castration and further proofs for the patriarchal nature of war and nationalism. Nevertheless, Iveković emphasises that "none of this [her arguments about the anti-femininity of war] should induce us to believe that women are the only victims [of war]; the whole population is a victim, regardless of sex, regardless of nation."²⁸⁵ Interesting difference between the letters and the essay is the vision of Yugoslavia: although Iveković still opposes the nationalism of the republics, here she acknowledges the underlying animosities between them, even under the second Yugoslavia. While she and Drakulić have completely different tools for showing the different attitude of women to war and nationalism, they agree that both sexes have a citizen-side too, where gender does not change either their possibilities to chose a position in relation to war or their sufferings when they become victims of war.

It is not easy to draw an overall picture about the three authors' concept of Yugoslavia. Definitions vary from the federal state of the Yugoslav nation to the almost confederative variance. It is Ugrešić, by whom the most coherent notion is visible, though the political strength and in this way the Koselleckian *Erwartungshorizont* becomes diminished by her own acknowledgement that the way she thins about the country is indeed nostalgic. The symbol of Yugoslav unity is her childhood *početnica*, a created common culture, and as the old *početnica* has to be replaced by a new one, so will the attachment to the former country disappear. It seems that the other two authors avoid to an even higher extent the conceptualisation of Yugoslavia. For Iveković, who was born in a Croatian–Serbian mixed family and married a Bosnian man and the basic experience of whom was the free travelling and constant commuting between the republics, by the

²⁸⁴ *ibid.*, 116.

²⁸⁵ *ibid.*, 119.

appearance of the borders, Yugoslavia ceased to exist. In the texts of Drakulić, as I already write it above, we see a complete confusion, from the "childhood and memory"-type of approach to the references to mixed marriages or a census about nationality, while all of these stand opposed to the very roughly drawn failed communist state.

This chapter has hopefully managed to show that although all the three authors can be called pro-Yugoslav and feminist, the concepts they constantly refer to and by which they are defined can be significantly different even in a synchronic comparison. The combination of the theories of Koselleck and Jauß help us to see the place of these concepts too. The concept of Yugoslavia, as it is dealt with in the case of the three authors, leaves the realm of political action, when the possibility of such a state is not an option any more. However, by writing of the essays, letters, novels and publishing them, the texts step into play on another field. They have a reading audience with a certain *Erwartungshorizont*, and by turning towards the past and expressing the need for the maintenance of the concept at least as a concept, manage to go against the *Erwartungshorizont* and destabilise it.

Conclusion

Comparing two periods of the history of feminism in the successor states of the former Yugoslavia brought up several concepts structuring the feminist counterdiscourse in the given periods. As we have seen, feminism preserved its counter-discursive position in two completely different ruling discourses and socio-political contexts, while their core concept or core definition remained unchanged. In both periods, the feminist standpoint was that the "gender divisions of work, pleasure, power, and sensibility are socially created, detrimental to women, and, to a lesser degree, to men, and therefore can and should be changed"²⁸⁶ and feminism was continuously centred around "the power relations between male and female".²⁸⁷ However, the concepts which define these relations have changed in their significance.

In Koselleck's approach, on which I relied to a great extent, concepts are different from words in the sense that they have a discourse-arranging capability. There were various concepts also organising both the mainstream- and the counterdiscourses of two periods of Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav history, and feminism within these. On the other hand, the central concepts not only organised the discourse and the agenda of both those in power and the feminists', but there was also a political struggle over the meanings of certain concepts. A paradigmatic example is the term "equality" in the communist period, when both feminists and the communist party state promoted the concept, with different meanings. The communists understood it as the end of the class struggle, the feminists as equality between men and women in all spheres of life. Moreover, both of them were convinced that their concept of equality guarantees all other types of equality and social good.

²⁸⁶ Ruddick 1989, 234-235.

²⁸⁷ Freedden, 1996, 491.

Revolution and the body were the further important concepts with contested definition for feminists in the counter-discursive period of the 1970s and 1980s. Revolution became central due to its misuse in the term "sexual revolution", while the body was the ultimate defining principle of "men" and "women", pre-conditioned by its relationship to nature and materialism. At the same time, the redefinition of the body also meant a reinterpretation of the Marxist tradition of the mainstream discourse.

With the change of the mainstream discourse, the previous core concepts were also replaced by other ones in the early 1990s. The body, which so far stood for nature or materiality, was shifted towards other meanings, mostly defined by motherhood. Thus, its meanings were expanded onto the body of the nation. This also meant that rape, as the sharpest and most physical opposition in the power relations between men and women became more valorised for the mainstream discourse, their language contested the feminist one for the power to define and control the female body. That concept, which the feminists in the 1970s found still undefined and for the re-conceptualisation of which they fought for. The struggle for the conceptualisation of the body influenced other concepts as well. As a consequence of the war, the violations on the country became violations on the *body* of the nation, and since the country had already become a nation state, thus the nation itself. The appropriation of the concept of the body also meant the claim for the concept of rape, but strictly only by the exclusion of certain meanings of it. Rape as domestic violence or as a crime committed by someone from within the nation was impossible, since one cannot rape one's own body. The feminists, who still abode by the concept of women as individuals and the body as the primary field for the practices of power over women, and thus still propagated a re-definition of this body, had to go against this appropriation. By the refusal of the division between those who violate the body (of women and of the nation) and those who have the right for usage and definition, feminism strongly opposed the dominant discourse.

The central concepts of feminism in the previous period, which were counter-definitions of the concepts of the mainstream, state-controlled discourse, in the new discursive situation of the 1990s marked their commitment to the discourse they fought against. By the attempts to re-appropriate concepts, feminists were enemies in the eyes of the communist state, they were seen as representatives of a Western bourgeois ideology which has nothing to do with Marxism. In the new discourse, exactly for the attempts to redefine the concepts of the mainstream discourse, feminists were seen and represented as the collaborators of the previous regime. This is how Jelena Lovrić, who has never been member of any feminist groups, for her membership and active participation in the SKJ, was attacked and represented in the “witch-trial” as a feminist.

In the second period, from the early 1990s on, feminism became what it had not been during communism, a grassroots mass movement. This is only partly due to the democratisation of the institutions, the change of core concepts for the mainstream discourse contributed to the structural changes at least to the same extent. While in the 1970s and 1980s gender equality was an issue of high politics and philosophy, and the space for individual self-expression was literature, the body politics of the nation state demanded control over the individual female bodies. This concerned not only the control over the reproductive rights, which, due to the “nature” of the concept of the body of the nation, was already central, but also the control over who can be raped by whom. Since the democratic constitution of the state allowed women to organise themselves into groups, stand up and protest, as the CZŽŽR’s letter also argues,²⁸⁸ and since the same power, the state contested concepts influencing their own individual lives, they did organise themselves into groups, stood up and protested.

Therefore, while the first period of feminism examined here was primarily present in and formed by the academia and intellectual women and some men there, in the second period this feminism became a grassroots movement. Two of

²⁸⁸ “Letter of the CZŽŽR to Vera Stanić,” 2003.

the most significant founding mothers, Slavenka Drakulić and Rada Iveković lost contact with the grassroots movements, but kept on supporting it and writing feminist texts. On the other hand, Dubravka Ugresić, the third major figure in this text, has never participated in feminist movements, but a more straightforward political and feminist modality appeared in her work by the break-up of Yugoslavia. On the examples of the three authors it becomes visible how the fight over concepts is not only a communal activity of an impersonal discourse, but also of individuals in their personal narratives.

Appendix I

KRUH & RUŽE
ZIMA 1999. cijena 20 Kn / 6 DEM / 4\$

BROJ
10



20 GODINA FEMINIZMA

**ŽENA PIŠAC I SUOČENJE S VLASTITIM POLOŽAJEM ŽENE
KAD ŽENA KAZE "NE" - TO ZNACI "NE"
FEMINIZAM KAO POLITICKI ODGOVOR
SVJETSKA KONFERENCIJA ŽENSKIH INFORMACIJSKIH CENTARA**

Andrea Feldman • Jelena Zuppa • Lydia Sklevicky • Slavenka Drakulić • Vesna Kesić • Đurđa Knežević • Sunčica Damjanović • Maja Dubljević • Šura Dumanić • Petra Herberth • Danijela Babić • Smiljana Leinert Novosel •

Anniversary issue of the journal *Kruh ruže*, commemorating the 1978 conference. Text on the title page: No. 10. "20 years of Feminism"; "Woman author and the confrontation with her position as woman"; "If a woman says 'no' - that means 'no'"; "Feminism as political answer"; "The world conference of the Women's Information Centre [Ženska Infoteka].

Appendix II.

The *Globus*-article from 11th December 1992

GLOBUS 11. PROSINCA 1992. 41

VJEŠTICE IZ RIA

Kako su delegati na 58. kongresu PEN-a u Rio de Janeiru aklamacijom odbacili prijedlog da se Hrvatskoj uskrati pravo da organizira sljedeći kongres u Dubrovniku, zbog "progona" feministica Rade Iveković, Jelene Lovrić, Slavenke Drakulić, Vesne Kesić i Dubravke Ugrešić

HRVATSKE FEMINISTICE SILUJU HRVATSKU!

Zašto su svjetski pisci poslušali glas predsjednika hrvatskoga PEN-a prof. dr. Slobodana Prosperova Novaka ■ "Hrvatske" feministice pred svijetom su skrivale srpsko silovanje Muslimanki i Hrvatice u BiH, premda su, zbog pristupa najvećim medijima, mogle još davno uzburkati međunarodnu javnost! ■ Zašto su se feministice iz Hrvatske okrenule protiv silovanih žena iz Bosne i Hercegovine

	JELENA LOVRIĆ	RADA IVEKOVIĆ	SLAVENKA DRAKULIĆ	VESNA KESIĆ	DUBRAVKA UGREŠIĆ
GODINA ROĐENJA	1948.	1945.	1949.	1948.	1949.
MJESTO ROĐENJA /RODITELJ	LUKAVAC (BiH)	ZAGREB otac jugodiplomat	RIJEKA otac JNA oficir	LONDON majka šefica Zenskog KPZ Požage; otac radio u diplomaciji	KUTINA
NACIONALNOST	JUGOSLAVENKA	JUGOSLAVENKA	HRVATICA	HRVATICA	JUGOSLAVENKA
NAJVIŠA ZAVRŠENA SKOLA	Nezavršeni studij jugoslavističke i kompar. književnosti	VSS: filozofija, francuski	VSS: komp. književnost, sociologija	VSS: psihologija	VSS: komp. književnost, ruski
ČLANSTVO U SK	DA	DA	NE	NE	NE
ZANIMANJE	novinarka	sveučilišni profesor	novinarka, književnica	novinarka	književnica
BRAČNI STATUS	Bivši suprug MIRKO BOSILJAK, partijski funkcioner, danas direktor Croatia Records	Dopisni brak s Boranom Sejićem, funkcionerom u jugovladi	Rastavljena: 1. Slobodan Drakulić (Kanada) 2. Mirka Ilić (SAD)	neudana	neudana
DJECA	sin	—	kći	—	—
STAMBENI STATUS	Stan na Trešnjevci - zamjena za veliki partijski stan diljan s Bošnjakom - društveno vlasništvo	Stan (200m2) u središtu Zagreba - društveno vlasništvo; vila na Opatijskoj rivijeri	Kuća na Medvečaku - društveno vlasništvo Kuća u Istri	Stan u Trnju	Stan u središtu Zagreba
TREKUTNI RADNI STATUS	Vanjski suradnik u više novina	• Prodavač na katedri Indologije na nekom parijskom fakultetu • Dale otkaz na FF u Zagrebu	Književnica	Vanjski suradnik u više novina	Zaposlena u Institutu za književnost Filozofskog fakul. u Zagrebu
BORAVCI U INOZEMSTVU ZA VRJEME RATA	—	Francuska (Pariz)	SAD, Francuska, Njemačka..	Slovenija, Austrija	SAD (dva semestra)
RADOVI	Pisala u "Vjesniku", "VUS-u", "Startu", "Danasu", "Slob. Dalmaciji", "Vremenu", suradnica na ZG i BG TV, s M. Bošnjakom, drama "Obustava..."	"Rana budistička misao", "Druga Indija", "Studije o ženi i ženski pokret", "Sporost-oprost..."	Zbirka eseja "Smrtni grijesi feminizma", "Hologrami straha", "Mramorna koža", "Balkan Express", "Kako smo preživjeli komunisti"	Pisala u "VUS-u", "Studiju", "Startu", "Danasu", "Nedjeljnoj Dalmaciji"...	"Mali plamen", "Poza za pruzu", "Štetica Cvek u rajnama života", "Forsiranje romana reke", koautorica Rječnika ruske avangarde
STAVOVI O HRVATSKOJ, RATU, AGRESIJI...	• Nakon pada Kijeva: predbacivanje Kijevljanima da su napad "izavali hrvatskom zastavom" • Jugoslavija ili Hrvatska: važna je kvaliteta države, a nije bitno da li je Jugoslavija ili Hrvatska • "...ova država nije bitno drugačija od ove bivše, i nije samo rat razlog za to..."	• "Rat i realno nasilje prema Hrvatskoj izbrisao je u Hrvatskoj samu svaku sposobnost rasuđivanja, razlikovanje njansi, pluralizma mišljenja, i dake svaku demokraciju i kulturu" • "Pravi šljomci bi nam najbolje pomogli kada bi pruzali kontrolu medija i osigurali bar jedan svejugoslavenski radio i TV program"	• O akciji "Bedem ljubavi": "Zašto majke traže samo JNA da im demobilizira sinove a ne traže to i od Tudmana?" • "U novoj državi Hrvatskoj nikome nije dopušteno da ne bude Hrvat..."	• O "dezerterima" u Hrvatskoj i BiH: "...a što je s elementarnim ljudskim pravom onoga koji neće i ne želi sudjelovati ni u kojem ratu, pogotovo ne u onome koji slonovi vode nad njihovom glavom?"	• O Hrvatskoj danas za "Die Zeit": - "Masovno se ruše spomenici antifašizma" - "Dinamitišu dižu u zrak srpske kuće" - "U bibliotekama potajno se knjige srpskih autora odnose u podrum, čiste se police od neprijateljske cirilice i djela hrvatskih pisaca s antifašističkom tematikom"

O skandaloznom komplotu feministica iz Hrvatske da se Hrvatska degradira na kongresu PEN-a u Rio de Janeiru piše

GLOBUSOV INVESTIGATIVNI TIM

H

HRVATSKA je feministička laž napokon razotkrivena u Rio de Janeiru. Kako su izvještale dnevne novine, delegati 58. svjetskog kongresa PEN-a (svjetskog društva pisaca) odbili su prijedlog nekog američkog pisca da se u Dubrovniku i Hrvatskoj ospori pravo na organizaciju sljedećeg kongresa PEN-a zbog »progona« pet novinarki i spisateljica: Rade Iveković, Jelene Lovrić, Slavenke Drakulić, Vesne Kesić i Dubravke Ugrešić, kao i zbog »griješne« »Danasa«, uvođenja upravnog odbora u »Slobodu Dalmaciju«, te pokretanja istražnog postupka protiv pisaca »Feral Tribunea«!

Pisci su taj prijedlog odbacili u aklamativnim iskazivanjem podrške izlaganju hrvatskog delegata Slobodana Prosperova Novaka. Politička i moralna zrelost svjetskih pisaca nosi u sebi dvije bitne poruke o kojima je »Globus« više puta pisao. Prva se tiče štetnosti hrvatske vlasti, posebice bivšeg javnog tužitelja RH Vladimira Seksa, koja je, pokretanjem pravosudne i birokratske hajke na novinare, izazvala opravdan cehovski i opći intelektualni gnjev zapadne javnosti, zbog gušenja slobode govora i tiska, koja se tamo smatra mjerom opće slobode.

Za tu veliku štetu lovcu na medijske slobode - Vladimiru Seksu, Antun Vrdoljak, Milovan Šibi i drugi - nagradjeni su na predavanju po litanjama stranačke i birokratske, pa i protokolarnе, piramide.

Njihovi epigoni, razna pisakarla iz »Glasnika i »Večernjeg lista«, koja su sladostrasno liječila vlastite profesionalne komplekse podržavajući hajku na slobodu tiska i sponemute feministice nose podjednaku odgovornost za opisani absurd: što je Hrvatska u vodećim svjetskim medijima (Time, The New York Times, The Washington Post, CNN, BBC i sl.) dežurni krivac zbog progona novinara i novinara. Nisu silovane žene nego Muslimanke i Hrvatice!

Moralno i intelektualno samoubojstvo na koje su, očito, osudene navedene (anti)hrvatske feministice, ostalo bi skriveno u očima javnosti da jedna od najvećih feminističkih tema nije postala prvoračunskim medijskim i političkim pitanjem u cijelom zapadnom svijetu: Silovanje i nasilje nad Muslimankama i Hrvatcima u BiH!

Dok su, primjerice, Slavenka Drakulić, Rada Iveković i Dubravka Ugrešić po Europi i Americi prodavale literarne floskule o tragičnosti rata kao muškog businessa i teze o tome kako se na prostoru bivše Jugoslavije ne siluju Hrvatice i Muslimanke nego ŽENE (!), cijeli je medijski svijet govorio i pisao o sasvim suprotnoj istini. O istini da se u BiH djevojčice, žene i starije sluhaj i ubijaju ne zbog toga što su žene nego zbog toga što su »narijeveke«, što nisu Srпкиnje, što su Hrvatice i Muslimanke.

I dok je Dubravka Ugrešić komotno pisala svoj esej o metafori »čistog zraka« koja kruži Hrvatskom, njene i Slavenkine žene-sestre Muslimanke i Hrvatice bile su izložene stvarnom, a ne metaforičkom, čišćenju: progona i ubojstvima (nazvanim eufemističkom »diplomatskom« inačicom za holokaust i genocid: »etničko čišćenje«), silovanjima, bestijalnom seksualnom mučenju, ritualnom spolnom teroru. Svjedočanstva o spolnom nasilju nad Muslimankama i Hrvatcima užasnila su, doslovce, čitav svijet.

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