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National Reproduction with (Un)Disciplined Bodies: Women Moving to the Politically Possible in pre-Yugoslavian Societies (Examples from Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia)

Abstract: This paper is about national reproduction relations and the ways they affected women's bodies in context of women's accessibility to public and political space in the late 19th century Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia. The end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century embark events and processes of national emancipation for the Balkan peoples. The examples taken here are set in the different states of 'nationalizing' and 'nation-building,' as well as in different iterations of modernity, with the intention to trace possible patterns and typologies in the relation of national reproduction, in its ethno-cultural dimension, and the opening of new political spaces for women from these different national entities and territories through education, autonomous organizing, charity and anonymous domestic labor. I find the interest and vindication of my intention in the historical events after 1918, when the mentioned territories and nationalities became part of new state – the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/Kingdom of Yugoslavia. With that, the state strategies of national reproduction towards women gained new qualities with centralization and ideological unification of the ideal 'Yugoslav' woman as its final edifice.

Keywords: nation; reproduction; women; Serbia; Croatia; Bosnia; public; private

Initio: body and space one is bound to write from

By opening the question of modernization and nation-building, we are here referring to the national entities that were formatives (Serbia and Croatia) or parts (Bosnia) of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, later known as the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.[1] Before South Slavic nations arrived at the idea of Yugoslav nationalism

[1] Yugoslavia was a country in Southeastern and Central Europe for most of the 20th century. The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was state formed after the First World War and existed in the period from 1918 until 1941. Its political and territorial core – Serbia – was one of the victors in the Great War. King Peter I, from the ruling Karađorđević Dynasty, imposed a unitary state with the Vidovdan Constitution (July 28, 1921). The official name was changed to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia on October 3, 1929 by King Alexander I, in order to

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and unionism, they didn't share the same level of economic or political development. To make an apt analogy with my title, Lydia Sklevicky, when talking about the Yugoslavian women's movement, lucidly uses the term "double heritage", referring to both philanthropic feminism in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the emancipation in socialist Yugoslavia after the Second World War.[2] If we wish to understand the first part of that heritage, we must 'walk the line': to encounter the methods by which these women transcended private to public, and at the same time encounter the strategies of the state or the 'national project' they were subjected to. Back to the dimension of national reproduction in this historical constellation, I am curious how it affects women in nature and ideology. In the examples taken here, national reproduction is in close relation or even part of the national project or national movement because of recent colonial history or presence of imperial power or external ruling elites which will be explained in the beginning of each section for Serbia, Bosnia and Croatia, accordingly. In that manner, I wish to emphasize the question posed as key by mainstream and gender scholars: can nationalism be a vehicle for women's empowerment, or only subvert it? As Jill Vickers continues:

> Most western gender scholars think nationalism subverts women's empowerment because it is inherently violent and part of 'patriarchal' states. However, cases in which women's movements are allied with national liberation movements suggest otherwise. Indeed, some gender scholars point to the great ideological diversity of nationalisms; while others maintain that states are not inherently patriarchal […] But when Rawls' account of how the nation is used to legitimize democratic government is read against the grain, 'society' is shown to be a reproductive entity – i.e. 'a place where all the main aspects of human life' occur, including 'birth'. Despite Rawls' theory of justice that seems to be gender-blind based on the assertion that 'birth' has no significance in his unisex account of justice, women's capacity to give birth significantly constrains their freedoms and opportunities through the society's family law codes, internal institutions and persisting traditional practices.[3]

change the regional and particularistic political consciousness, with the idea of an integral nation. Using the political crisis, on January 6, 1929, King Alexander abolished the Constitution and proclaimed a royal [are exact dictatorship, known as the Sixth of January Dictatorship. With the new administrative division, system of nine subdivisions, or banates (*banovinas*) was implemented. The royal decree known as "Obznana" limited civil rights and opened vast space for political purges and witch hunts, particularly against communists. The Constitution from 1931 permitted the King to centralize all power in his hands. On October 9, 1931, the King was assassinated by the headhunter Vlado Chernozemski. Young King Peter II steps to the throne with the regency of Prince Paul. Alarmed by the Axis invasion, Yugoslavia singed the Tripartite Pact on March 25, 1941. Mass protests, organized with British help, and lead by General Dušan Simović, dethroned Prince Paul. On March 6, 1941, Axis forces successfully invaded and divided the territory of Yugoslavia. The Royal Family fled into exile with British help. See: Mari Ž. Čalić, *Istorija Jugoslavije u 20. veku* (Beograd: Clio, 2013).

[2] Lydia Sklevicky, *Konji, žene, ratovi* (Zagreb: Ženska infoteka, 1996).

[3] Jill Vickers, "Gendering Nations, Nationalisms and Nation-Building: A Systematic Comparative Approach," paper presented at the ASN World Convention Columbia University, 18–20 April 2013.

The great impact of the classical theory of 'social agreement' laid the foundations for rational understanding of the western political and social order, and after the events in Europe of 1848 the idea was transferred and accepted in national movements active in the Balkans. This concept put women in the private sphere, which was considered vital for keeping order, but not politically important. The exclusion of women from public discourse gave them an aura of *ahistorical* subjects.[4] Concerning national reproduction, Vickers points again:

> The public-private dichotomy that is central to western nationalisms involves a false separation between a public sphere dominated by reason and a private sphere in which reproduction occurs along with the transmission of emotions and identity construction that enable group reproduction. […] The reproduction of groups that is basic to nationalist practice involves 'battles of the cradle' over who will get to reproduce physically and 'battles of the nursery' over social reproduction. Peterson (2000, 67) adds 'battles of the bedroom' that determine the reproduction, naturalization and contestation of heterosexual practices.[5]

Mentioning the aura of ahistorical subjects, I consider it important to ask a rather honest question: how we can think today of the history of south Slavic women in the 19th century? In 1905 the pioneers of Balkan cinema – famous cinematographers the Manaki brothers – depicted a scene of everyday life in a Vlach village in the *kaza* (district) of Monastir (Bitola):[6] a 104-year-old old woman – *grandmother Despina* – spins the wooden wheel and begins weaving the wool, also weaving "the unconventional, collective, but forgotten and suppressed female memory. The other side of technical progress or lag, war winnings or loses, political change, revolutions, intolerance and forced migrations – are the women on the Balkans. They are the losers in any way."[7] This is one important historical metaphor which introduces us to the theoretical and methodological constrictions when encountering the topic of national reproduction and women from Balkan, South Slavic entities, and at the same time leads us to the useful typology compiled by Nira Yuval Davis and Floya Antias. They claim that women participate in ethnic/national processes as: biological reproducers of ethnic collectivities; reproducers of the boundaries of ethnic/national groups; cultural reproducers of the collectivity and transmitters of its culture; and signifiers of ethnic/national differences as focus or symbol in ideological discourses used in the construction, reproduction and transformation of ethnic/national categories.[8] During

[4] Nira Yuval-Davis, "Rod i nacionalizam," *Treća* 1–2, 5 (2010): 208.

[5] Vickers, "Gendering Nations."

[6] "Catalog of the Cinematheque of Macedonia," http://www.maccinema.com/Catalog.aspx?p=492, acc. July 14, 2018.

[7] Светлана Слапшак, *Женски икони на XX век* (Скопје: Темплум, 2003), 34.

[8] Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias, eds., *Woman-Nation-State* (Houndsmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: The Macmillan Press, 1989), 7.

this participation, nationalism provides spaces for women to mobilize in – and even enables them to use and endorse the universal construction of 'the citizen' in particular contexts.[9] However, their co-option in the construction of national programs is 'gendered',[10] thus never comprehensive and followed with exclusion. In the following three sections I will show particular dimensions of national reproduction with attention to ethno-cultural reproduction as a new physical and symbolic space for women.

Enlightenment *via* Orient: Serbia and the *New Woman*

After acquiring a degree of independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1817, the Kingdom of Serbia went through many political convulsions colored with dynastic and constitutional problematics.[11] Still, little is known about women across the Serbian territories in the Ottoman dominion.[12] Again, if we want to start assembling the puzzle, we must gaze with an ethnological observation: "Vuk Karadžić, the self-taught Serbian rationalist, divides folk literature on 'male' epic songs and 'female' songs – everything else: ballads, lullabies, ritual songs, fairy tales, riddles, tongue twisters, curses, love songs. The house and the confinement of the home could be ideal space for subversion."[13] Outside the home, the female body is liable to punishment; the freedom of movement is considered an offence, both by the community and the colonial ruler. In the course of a long occupational cohabitation, the Ottoman mechanism imposed some of its own customs and relations towards Balkan women.[14] According to the oral law, a woman is accomplished in the community only as a female. Tihomir Đorđević, in his lecture held in the Serbian Patriotic Society, entitled "To the Serbian Women", summarizes the above as follows: "She (the woman) is a natural need and pleasure to her husband, source of labor and extender of the family line."[15]

The beginning of 1840s in Serbia marked the beginning of a process which was understood by contemporaries as "the return to Europe." The Europeanization under the government of the Liberal party (also known as "Defenders of the Constitution"), brought on the wings of new political necessities of the modern state, was confined on eliminating of the Ottoman, non-European, eastern heritage (with parallel

[9] Shirin M. Rai, *Gender and the Political Economy of Development from Nationalism to Globalization* (New Delhi: Zubaan, 2008), 12.

[10] See more about the term in Nira Yuval-Davis, "Theorizing gender and nation," in *Gender and Nation* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 1997), 1–25.

[11] Holm Zundhausen, *Istorija Srbije od 19. do 20. veka* (Beograd: Clio, 2009) *passim* Jozo Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics and Economic Change in Yugoslavia* (Standford: Stanford University Press, 1955), 3–139.

[12] See: Јован Јанев, *Ропството на жените во Македонија во време на турското владеење* (Скопје: РИграфика, 2007); *passim* Slobodanka Peković, "Putopisi Jelene Dimitrijević kao mogućnost viđenja Drugog," *Književna istorija* 40, 134–135 (2008): 117–35.

[13] Слапшак, *Женски икони на XX век*, 36.

[14] Neda Božinović, *Žensko pitanje u Srbiji u XIX i XX veku* (Beograd: Pinkpress, 1996), 21–22.

[15] Tihomir R. Đorđević, 1911, *O srpskim ženama* (lecture held in *Serbian Patriotic Society*, Šabac 1911, November 27) quoted from: Božinović, *Žensko pitanje u Srbiji u XIX i XX veku*, 25.

delimitation from the West). To others, Europeanization equaled approximation to the political, legal, economic and cultural standards of Western and Middle Europe.[16] With the Constitution, state institutions, early industries and educational system, men from this new social class forgot many of the oriental adaptations towards women and marriage and followed the coherent concepts of private ownership[17] and natural rights. Simultaneously, these changes did not bypass the everyday life of Serbian high-society wives. For them, this enlightenment forced its way through *salon* gatherings.[18] Even though these trendsetting, *à la mode* events were nothing more than an imitation of the French *Salon*, the wives of the guests often dominated the intellectual debates. Perhaps it was here where *des querelle des femmes*' topics were opened for the very first time. Soon afterwards, free in the conformity of their economic idleness, these women started holding their own *salon* gatherings. These pioneers of *salon* philanthropy often were convinced national romantics and patriots, who understood women's emancipation as a quality of the new age way of living, as well as a change from the oriental tradition and style of household and homemaking. However, between the chitchats about housekeeping and manual homework, the works of the German philosophers were read loudly and ideas for women's education were vividly discussed. For women from the elites, this was the first form of social and cultural gathering and socializing. In an ideological sense, pro-liberals, anchored in the idea of "the superiority of the European civilization", saw women as an approximation to the European model and imagined them as the ideal companion to the citizen. Contrary to them, nationally excited youth saw the emancipation process of women as an essential need in the "upbringing of the nation", which must be done right, thus they imagined the ideal Serbian woman as the romanticized trinity trending in the 19th century: woman-mother-fatherland.

Were these new social developments the product of the work of some organizations,[19] or were they only an ideological part of the "new reality"? Was there opposition in the cultural milieu?[20] In reality, the development of spaces for political and public endorsement of women in this period is rather connected with the utilizing of women's charity work and humanitarian organizing. During the Serbian–Turkish

[16] Zundhausen, *Istorija Srbije od 19. do 20. veka*, 86.

[17] The 1844 Civil Code of the Kingdom of Serbia: "The Serb man is a perfect owner of all his goods, to own them, to live with them by his own will, to manage them by his own will, and to prevent anyone else to do that except himself, of course, as the law prescribes." (Article 211); "Underage are considered everyone that cannot, or, are forbidden from managing their own property; those are all striped from sanity, profligates by the law, scapegraces, indebted people that lost everything, women married with their husbands lives." (Article 920); "The husband is the head of the family, he represents his wife, decides where she lives, and she is and she is obliged to fulfill his orders, to serve him, to maintain the house, to care for and nurture the children (Article 109 and 110). Male children exclude female children from hereditary line (Article 396). See: "Građanski zakonik kraljevine Srbije (1844. god.) sa kasnijim izmenama," http://www.overa.rs/gradanski-zakonik-kraljevine-srbije-1844-god-sa-kasnijim-izmenama.html, acc. July 15, 2018.

[18] *Posela* [srb.], held for the first time by Jevrem Obrenović in 1832 in Belgrade (see: Božinović, *Žensko pitanje u Srbiji u XIX i XX veku*, 29).

[19] *Matica* (1865–1860), turned in 1870 to *Mlada Srbadija*, turned in *Javor.*

[20] More about the resistance towards women education: Božinović, *Žensko pitanje u Srbiji u XIX i XX veku*, 60.

war (1876–78), the newspaper *Javor* wrote about the formation of women boards and units created to aid wounded Serbian soldiers in Novi Sad, Sombor, etc. They give detailed manuals for future volunteers about recruitment, creating new local boards, clothes sewing activities, charity, and transportation of these products of voluntary work through the Woman's Association, or directly to the Red Cross from Belgrade or Cetinje. From these activities we can trace the developed the first Serbian women's cooperative in Novi Sad.[21]

We can detect a similar pattern of social networking among women from different classes in educational institutions. National education can be seen as a strong mediator in the process of preparing women for national reproduction but also in the development of intellectual and organizational network of women. The Higher Female School (opened after the educational reform of 1863), with Katarina Đorđević Milovuk as principal,[22] had a double task: to give general education suitable for girls, and to prepare female teachers for the primary schools.[23] In addition to the main subjects intended solely for female education,[24] we can also notice a gradual change in some social paradigms: professionalization of female crafts (tailoring, weaving, sewing, manual home works), very important for women from underprivileged classes. Together with the exiting of women to the public space, their anonymous domestic work exited with them. Under the wings of the higher school and Milovuk's leadership, the first women's workshop school *Pazar* was opened in 1879, an organization for making and selling products from women's workshops;[25] The Women's Society was found in Belgrade in 1875.[26] This society was not a product of some party agency, but the first autonomous society of Serbian women. In 1875 it initiated the paper *Housewife* [*Домаћица*]. Despite the conservative sound of the name, which allowed better circulation of the paper, it touched on important topics about the position of Serbian woman at the end of the 19th century. It can be seen as a place for female expression in the political space. It was here where the subject of voting rights for women in Serbia was opened for the very first time;[27] Katarina Milovuk introduced financial support for economically-challenged students in 1865. In 1884 The Society of Schoolgirls was founded with purpose to provide educational sponsorships for future schooling and subsistence. Student's Dining Table (1903) – intended for poor students, but also for all underprivileged citizens, it also functioned as shelter for elderly people. During

[21] Ibid., 47.

[22] Ljiljana Stankov, *Katarina Milovuk (1844–1913) i ženski pokret u Srbiji* (Beograd: Pedagoški muzej, 2011), 133.

[23] Dalibor Jovanovski and Suzana Simonovska, "High education in the Balkans and inclusion of the women," *International Journal for Education Research and Training* 2, 1 (2016): 140.

[24] See list of subjects: Božinović, *Žensko pitanje u Srbiji u XIX i XX veku*, 54.

[25] Stankov, *Katarina Milovuk*, 5.

[26] Its first activities were purposed to help the rebels in Bosnia, see: Božinović, *Žensko pitanje u Srbiji u XIX i XX veku*, 67.

[27] Stankov, *Katarina Milovuk*, 5.

the period of the Balkan Wars (1912–13), this potential[28] was put in the utility of nationalism.

In 1912, twenty women doctors joined the Serbian medical corps. They were all summoned under the general mobilization and with an order from the Ministry of War as well.[29] A medical unit composed of 200 nurses participated on the front as well. Hospitals organized by women proved to be highly effective.[30] The state of emergency often forgot about traditional division of private and public and the participation of women in those spheres.[31] The engagement of women as nurses,[32] sanitary corps and caregivers was introduced and utilized by the political cause of the Government.

Examples like those above, lead us directly to the problem of the dysfunctionality of women's pacifist and humanitarian elites from the beginning of the 20th century. While in 1888, in Washington, the International Comity of Women (ICW)[33] was founded, back in Serbia, feminist philanthropy did not evolve outside the citizen class. These women saw their expression of political agency only in their patriarchal function, as noble mothers and for the national cause. A great example of this was the membership of the Serbian National Woman's Alliance in the International Comity of Women. But it was not the program of the ICW which attracted the Serbian National Women's Alliance. It was rather the fact that ICW was seen as a platform for placing Serbian problems before the international public. The national cause made the Serbian National Woman's Alliance more open to adding the question of ballot for Serbian women in their statute. The negotiations for entrance started in 1906.[34] The first serious public discussion about the question of voting rights for women began in 1910, on the pages of *Housewife*, by Katarina Milovuk. When she raised the question of women's suffrage in front of the Supreme Court of Cassation, only 12 of the 36 members voted 'aye'. The president of the Court replied: "By the law you have the right, but not by our custom."[35]

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[28] Ex: home St. Elena [Св. Јелена] for war victims, organized by Katarina Milovuk.

[29] These women finished their educations abroad, in Zurich, Geneva, Paris, Nancy, Rome, Prague, St. Petersburg in the period 1866–1911. In their biographies we can note the connection with women's organizations in their homelands, but also mutual networking in the student days. See: Ivana Lazović and Radmila Sujić, "Women doctors in the Serbian Sanitary Service during the Balkan war," *Acta med-hist Adriat* 5, 1 (2007): 71–82.

[30] Ibid., 72–80.

[31] Draga Ljočlić, the first woman doctor in Serbia, had a quite difficult professional breakthrough: "Draga barely found a job, (she) had a salary smaller than her (male) colleagues, and had no right for promotion and pension […] She spent most of her career curing tobacco workers for free and also as medical help at Woman's crafts school […] She raised the question of gender equality and connecting of the organizations […] In time of mobilization, she was mobilized as a doctor". See: Božinović, *Žensko pitanje u Srbiji u XIX i XX veku*, 65.

[32] Lela Vujošević, "Uloga Kragujevačkih ženskih društava u Prvom svetskom ratu," *Zbornik radova Centra za naučnoistraživački rad SANU i Univerziteta u Kragujevcu*, 2015, http://www.arhivvojvodine.org.rs/zbornici-radova/Vujosevic.pdf, acc. July 15, 2018.

[33] The ideas of ICW were close only to the middle class women – peace, humanitarian activities, education, suffrage, neutral countries. Ibid., 9.

[34] Božinović, *Žensko pitanje u Srbiji u XIX i XX veku*, 75.

[35] Ibid., 76.

Woman's *Karasevdah*: Bosnia and the imperialistic pedagogy

The revolutionary youth participating in the assassination of the archduke Franz Ferdinand, vindicated their deed as opposition to the feudal order, with national and social freedom as final goal.[36] The penetration of the "Black and Yellow Empire" in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the Congress of Berlin in 1878, until the formally-legal annexation in 1908, ideologically reflects itself in the above title – imperialistic pedagogy: there is a political need for this Balkan region to be integrated, but at the same time distanced with the disdain of the contradiction Orient–Europe.[37] Austro–Hungarian administration in Bosnia meant modernization of the society *from above* and under the cloak of a *civilizing mission*. Exactly through institutionalized education the civilizing mission could penetrate the private sphere. According this imperial pedagogy, only the women who are aptly educated could become good wives, housekeepers, mothers of children and mothers of the nation. Educated locals should replace their national and confessional sentiments with imperial patriotism.[38]

Dealing with a forced model of hybrid cultural society, the role of women was to become a guardian of the ethnic and cultural specifics of certain community. So, the first collective activities among women were in certain religious or patriarchal ethnic frames. The first women's associations in Bosnia were strictly homogenous organizations of Serbian, Croatian or Muslim women.[39] Similar to the Serbian examples, the press played a major role in the awakening of women's organizing and gender problematics. In magazines and almanacs with or without national prefixes (*Srpkinja, Bosanska Vila, Biser, Zora,* etc.) – female intellectuals appeared as editors. Such inspirational traces left by Nafija Sarajlić, the first female Bosnian Muslim prose writer. In her column, *Topics* [*Teme*], she raised the question of a female's position in her society: "closed at home, without opportunity to leave for the outside world, Muslim women are condemned on dissatisfaction with themselves."[40] While the ruling apparatus strictly controlled schoolbooks, the press was a medium with alternative fluctuation and space for various activists. Another example, a column by Jelena Belović Bernadžinovska in *Zora*, sparked with a revolutionary tone:

> The modern woman is individuality of its own, that needs no alien breath to awaken life and conscience […] the modern woman will never fall to

[36] Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics and Economic Change in Yugoslavia*, 3–139.

[37] Actually here it is not about orientalism (Edward Said), but *balkanism* (Marija Todorova): balkanism does not construct, as orientalism, something utterly different – the Balkans clearly belong geographically in Europe – but it creates inner alien part, an alter ego, on which negative features are applied. In this kind of matrix, the *West* (Europe) can appear as something different, civilized, modern, rational, truly European.

[38] Jasmina Čaušević, ed., *Zabilježene. Žene i javni život Bosne i Hercegovine u 20. vijeku* (Sarajevo: Sarajevski otvoreni centar, Fondacija Cure, 2008), 24–30.

[39] Zlatiborka Popov-Momčinović, *Ženski pokret u Bosni i Hercegovini: artikulacija jedne kontrakulture* (Sarajevo: Sarajevski otvoreni centar, 2013), 62.

[40] Ibid., 66.

> the female weaknesses. She steps bravely in the battle for life […] American women are the first ones [in that battle], with their societies, councils and activities have shown what are women capable of. The modern woman has given the name of this century.[41]

The "brave steps to the battle for life" refer to the wings on which modernization rose – the opening of factories and the utilization of a female labor force. According to the sources, Croat and Serbian women in Bosnia were employed in tobacco factories. Their number in these factories in 1904 was twice that of men. Women of all ages, even seven to ten-year-olds, worked in carpet weaving industries, with their notorious conditions and low wages. Textile embroidery was thought of as women's work.[42] There are interesting parallels if we compare these factory workers with traditional female specialized professions: while upper-class women were bound to the house, women from lower strata who worked in servicing everyday activities gave status to their needed skills in Bosnian society: as *Hamam* ladies who take care for the hygiene in public baths; *aščikadunam*, women who cooked for local events and rich families; plus water bearers, craftsmen's wives who aid in product finalization, and others.

Finally, the first women organizations were found in the late 19th century. In 1887, in Sarajevo, the Krajsar Society of Orthodox Serbian Women [*Krajsarsko društvo pravoslavnih Srpkinja*] was founded; in 1901, in Banja Luka, The Charity Cooperation of Serbian Orthodox Women from Banja Luka [*Dobrotvorna zadruga pravoslavnih Srpkinja Banjalučanki*]; in 1905, the Sarajevo Women's Society [*Sarajevsko žensko društvo*] was turned into the Charity Cooperative of Serbian Women [*Dobrotvorna zadruga Srpkinja*]. They were the founders of the first student dining charity in Bosnia and Hercegovina; in 1909, Croat women organized the cooperative Progress [*Napredak*] in Fojnica and Vareš; in 1911 the first women cooperative was formed in Bosnian Dubica. The cooperatives of Serbian organizations united in 1912, and issued their own paper – *Serbian Woman* [*Srpska žena*].[43] All mentioned networks worked on spreading national ideas, strengthening their own cultural influence, charity action for education, shelter care and helping with the dowries of future brides. All those activities were intended for their ethnically or religiously corresponding communities, as their names suggest. But at the end of the day, regardless of the national color, their prefixes – like cooperative, subsidiary, charity, etc. – witnessed the creation of women's civil scene in Bosnia. With the advance of the new century, women's coverture, the veil, was slowly going out of fashion, but not the rules for the public space: if a woman is alone, it is not convenient for her to mingle long on the bazar streets, covered or not. These public rules applied for women from all four confessions.

[41] Čaušević, *Zabilježene*, 22.

[42] Božinović, *Žensko pitanje u Srbiji u XIX i XX veku*, 92.

[43] Tanja Lazić, *Žene u istoriji Semberije* (Bijeljina: Lara, 2012), 19–20.

Body for the fatherland: Croatia, cultural and economic reproduction of the nation

The revolutionary events in Paris in 1848 aroused and caused a wave for abolition of the serfdom that stretched also to the Habsburg Monarchy. Nevertheless, feudalism was disintegrating in Croatia and Slavonia even before. One reason was politically enlightened liberals and their awareness towards the contemporary processes of social stratification and the dynamics of the new market, urban economy and small manufacturing. The dissolution of the serfdom was proclaimed with the establishment of Croatian *banship* with Josip Jelačić as *Ban*. In 1868, after the Croatian-Hungarian settlement, Croatia was guaranteed half-autonomous status in the Empire. It lasted until the end of World War I, when the Croatian Parliament, as the representative of the historical sovereignty of Croatia, decided on October 29, 1918 to end all state and legal ties with the old Austria-Hungary.[44]

Women's upgrade in education was one of the first activities for the systematic approach to women's citizenship, from both national institutions and women's organizations.[45] Still, the opening of the Women's Lyceum (1892) was followed by legal incompleteness and programmatic conservatism towards the capabilities of women's bodies and minds:

> Namely, according to the opinion of contemporary physicians and psychologists, the constitution of the female body was not capable for mental efforts; therefore, it was asked for adjustment of the educational programs with those scientific acknowledgements. In the earlier reports of the Austrian physicians, which reminds to the book of American doctor Edward Clark, the sex in education or the equal chance for girls, are asking for decreasing of the teaching material in girls' schools, because of the "excessive mental effort", what was meant to cause various diseases. [46]

Therefore, it is no coincidence that one of the first Croatian autonomous women's affiliation was the Woman Society for Education and Earnings of Croatia and Slavonia [*Gospojinska udruga za obrazovanje i zaradu ženskinja u Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji*], dedicated to providing scholarships for female pupils of the Lyceum and organizing a female boarding school.[47] The social evaluation of women's education, can be summa-

[44] Tomasevich, *Peasants, Politics and Economic Change in Yugoslavia*, 3–139.

[45] See also about women's education in 19th century Croatia: Meghan Hays, "Valjane majke i Blage kćeri. Odgoj i izobrazba žena u nacionalnom duhu u Hrvatskoj 19. stoljeća," *Otivm* 4, 1–2 (1996); *passim* Ida Ograjšek-Gorenjak, "On ući, ona pogadja, on se sjeća, ona prorokuje – pitanje obrazovanja žena u sjevernoj Hrvatskoj krajem 19. stoljeća," in *Žene u Hrvatskoj. Ženska i kulturna povijest,* ed. Andrea Feldman (Zagreb: Ženska infoteka, 2004), 157–80.

[46] Dinko Župan, "Dobre kućanice, Obrazovanje djevojaka u Slavoniji tijekom druge polovice 19. stoljeća," *Scrinia Slavonica* 9, 1 (2009): 234.

[47] Ida Ograjšek-Gorenjak, "Otvaranje Ženskog liceja u Zagrebu," *Povijest u nastavi* 8, 2 (2006): 175.

rized in one sentence from contemporary popular readings: "If the profession is so, that the woman is exhausted from, than she is not faithful to her true profession – the marriage – then that profession is not for the woman and it is not acceptable to be delegated to."[48] In the educational goals of the high women's schools was clearly stated that female pupils should be modeled in good housekeepers.[49] The schooling system, as important disciplinary tool of the 19th century, had the purpose of generating skills that should have been incorporated in desirable social roles. The first national school was opened in 1898 in Zagreb.[50] In the lower educational grades, in the new schools program for 1883-34, the subject Women's Hand Crafting was given the longest hour range of four hours for fifth and sixth grade, and six hours weekly for seventh and eighth grade.[51] The strategy was based on bounding the female students with manual domestic work, as the subject itself implicated – for woman only. For that being a sitting activity, its feminization is setting the middle-class woman in the privacy of the home, representing a natural habitat for her[52] and entirely controlling her free time. A passage from the memoir of Vilma Vukelič, a Croatian writer from the 19th century, describes:

> One more educative measure was implied, created to destroy my life – the hand crafts. Under the moto "daydreaming is the mother of all sins," I was made to knit every day for three hours […] Rivers of tears ran down my face, to the knitting needle and the yarn. I have never cried so bitterly. I was no more than eight years old, and life under that pressure already seemed totally useless and meaningless.[53]

This process should open a vast space for motherhood for the *respectable woman* – in the context of national interests. Thus, we can't interpret the role of the mother only biologically, but also as socio-cultural reproduction. Besides this biological function of bearing as many children as possible, now it is also important those children to be raised in the right spirit – national and patriotic. This is how women became a national interest, and entered in the sphere of the political, without having political rights.[54] In those kind of ideological coordinates, women built their public space and found their voice outside the home – firstly through informal participation in party life. We should not jump to revolutionary conclusions; these parties themselves

[48] Blaž Lorković, *Žena u kući i družtvu* (Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1883), 28.

[49] Župan, "Dobre kućanice," 233.

[50] Dinko Župan, "Viša djevojačka škola u Osijeku (1882–1900)," *Scrinia Slavonica. Godišnjak Podružnice za povijest Slavonije, Srijema i Baranje Hrvatskog instituta za povijest* 5, 1 (2005): 368.

[51] Župan, "Dobre kućanice," 265.

[52] Ibid., 237.

[53] Vilma Vukelič, *Tragovi prošlosti* (Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice Hrvatske, 1994), 80–81.

[54] Jasna Turkalj, "Croatian women and the Party of the Right during the 1880s," *Review of Croatian History* 6, 1 (2010): 138.

interpreted the role of woman in the existing paradigm – republicanism and state sovereignty. Despite the fact that women are forbidden the right to participation in political decision-making in the legal and extra-legal senses, the question is how did they express their interest, or more importantly, how could a certain political interest be expressed through their factorization in party life in civil Croatia. In the 1880s, the Party of Rights [Stranka Prava][55] had grown in the national movement, attracting masses; even women began to express their party orientation on many ways. Women, most of them journalists, started to appear frequently in Rightist publications with their patriotic poems, short novels and news.[56] This informal party organizing became most visible during the elections for the Croatian Parliament of 1881, despite of their lack for ballot, of course: In the electoral district of Virovitica, supporters of the ruling National Party, while marching were pushed and yelled at by women, calling them 'traitors' and 'cowards'. Because of shame and small town gossip, they went to the line of the Rightists.[57] "The seed of true Croatian patriotism grows in the hearts of Croat women", concluded Ante Starčević, the president of the Party of Rights.[58]

Except in party life, we can find factorization of women's organizing in the extra-legal social domain of charity and social work. Prerequisite of the traditional role – care giving – middle class women from the second half of the 19th century were attracted to charity, cultural and humanitarian work. This is how they started networking until specialized organizations for welfare appeared. To put light on the process of professionalization of social work and the specific role of women in that process, firstly one must research the different forms of women's activism, with special accent on the problematic of volunteer work and unpaid labor. Participating in private initiatives and layman professions in the field of social care, they became their primary carriers. In doing so, their labor was mostly unpaid and the struggle for full professionalization followed with discriminatory rules in family and labor laws.[59] Along with women from higher classes, teachers also joined in this work (ex: *Udruga učiteljica* 1904*, Naša djeca, Dječji dom*).[60] Teaching was the first profession that allowed relatively safe and stable employment for middle class women and also economic independence for unmarried ones. However, the state discriminated against them by forbidding them to wed, except for male teachers, until 1938.[61] In the circumstances of insufficient numbers of national welfare institutions, these cooperatives became informal ministries

[55] Marjan Diklič, "Pravaštvo u Bibinjama," *Radovi Zavoda za povijesne znanosti HAZU u Zadru* 48 (2006): 645–54.

[56] Turkalj, "Croatian women and the Party of the right during the 1880s," 143.

[57] Ibid., 146.

[58] Ibid., 159.

[59] Sandra Prelenda, "Žene i prvi organizirani oblici praktičnog socijalnog rada u Hrvatskoj," *Revija za socijalnu politiku* 3–4 (2005): 320.

[60] Ibid., 322.

[61] This law, discriminated women teachers by imposing celibacy to those who were not married to men teachers, until they did so. See more: Maja Solar, "Gimnazijska nastava – između činovništva i inteligencije," *Tradicija nastave filozofije* 7 (2013): 141.

for welfare. The state, leaning back to the voluntary work and initiative of these citizens and women, focused on larger mechanisms of social politics. That long-term strategy of the state can also be seen ideologically – all these organizations and initiatives more or less emphasized 'national work'. National work is an additional part of charity and is recognizable by two things: *cultural reproducing of the nation* and in this particular way, *labor among women*. These refer to a form of social organizing, in the elaborated case – mobilizing female population for support of political option, trough controlled programs for emancipation as courses for analphabetic, cultural activities, funding and scholarships[62] together with care giving activism explained first.

Conclusion

It would be an oversimplification to say that all above different forms of social and political agency of women from three different developing South Slavic societies are not authentic form of their emancipation, but only a participation in the dominant political paradigm, which often reduced to nationalistic crusades in the Balkan context of the early 20th century. The examples used here suggest that women in pre-Yugoslavian societies were central to the construction of nationalist discourses as biological reproducers of members of ethnic collectives, as reproducers of the boundaries of ethnic/national groups on heterogeneous ethnic territories, as participants in the symbolic and ideological reproduction of the collectivity. In Serbia, those relations were mostly visible or materialized through education, women's participation in the market with their domestic work and national integration of ethnic groups through humanitarian and charity work within the national cause. In Bosnia we can find patterns of creating a 'civil scene' of women through their organizing for or against the Austro-Hungarian 'civilizing mission' towards the local mentality and elites. In Croatia, where capitalist economic and social traits were most developed, national elites strongly strove for *bourgeoisie* morals and families, thus the ideal of motherhood and domestic bliss as women's patriotism. The dimensions of national reproduction were factorized mostly in the educational curriculum designed especially for girls – to bind them to domestic work and manual crafts. Women's position as caregivers in public space was mostly in relation to national work, which refers to humanitarian activism and charity to resemble informal and unpaid net of social care agents.

[62] Prelenda, "Žene i prvi organizirani oblici praktičnog socijalnog rada u Hrvatskoj," 323.

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