

Feminist Activism at War

Belgrade and Zagreb Feminists in the 1990s

Ana Miškovska Kajevska

GENDER AND COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Feminist Activism at War

This book describes, compares, explains, and contextualises the positionings, i.e. discourses and activities, which feminists in Belgrade, Serbia and Zagreb, Croatia produced in relation to the (post-)Yugoslav wars of the 1990s. Two types of positionings are analysed: those which the feminists have produced on the (sexual) war violence and those which they have produced on each other.

Applying a Bourdieuan framework and using interviews with key feminist and peace activists in the region alongside a thorough examination of organisational documents and printed media articles, Ana Miškovska Kajevska challenges the common suggestion that the outbreak of the war violence in 1991 led to the same reorganisation of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminist fields. She corrects the understanding that the activists in each city, who had up until then worked together without tensions, divided at the same time and in the same manner into antinationalists and nationalists and began clashing with each other because of the different war-related positionings. Miškovska Kajevska explains further that the terms ‘antinationalist’ and ‘nationalist’ were not completely value-free and objective, and had different meanings attached to them. These designations were an essential part not only of the local and international efforts to stop the (sexual) war violence, but also of the struggle for legitimacy among the feminists in each city – endeavours in which many Western (feminist) academics, activists, and funders were involved, too.

In addition to providing insights into the situation in Croatia and Serbia, this book will also help increase the understanding of intra-feminist dynamics in other regions of the world which are dominated by nationalism and war violence, and where the work of the local feminists is closely intertwined with – and often dependent on – these activists’ contacts with foreign academic, funding, activist, and/or political entities.

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**In loving memory of Saskia Poldervaart,
with gratitude for the wisdom and inspiration**

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1 Feminism at War

An Introduction

Quick Preview

What befalls feminism in times of war? How do the accompanying profound societal changes and existential insecurity influence the interactions among feminists and their pre-war definitions of perpetrators and victims of (sexual) violence? What happens when the hitherto collaborators and friends take different sides? Or when a federation violently dissolves and the previously promoted idea of one shared space becomes a laden anachronism?

The first time I heard about the painful and upsetting war-related divisions among the Zagreb feminists I was a student of the Zagreb-based Centre for Women's Studies. Back then, in late 1999, that topic did not resonate much with my interests. Little did I know that it would remain brewing in the back of my head and that a decade later I would be on a doctoral fieldwork¹ enthusiastically gathering data on it and interviewing the very same feminist who had mentioned it in her lecture. This book, however, is not only about feminist activism² at war. I address, too, the importance of collecting first-hand information and developing a methodology and rapport which are suitable for engaging with such a silenced and politically and emotionally laden topic. I aim at expanding our understanding of the contextual embedment of feminism and the consequences of war which extend beyond the physical ones, such as killed and harmed living beings, destroyed homes and infrastructure, and creation of minefields and closed borders.

1 This book is a substantially abridged and modified version of my doctoral dissertation 'Taking a Stand in Times of Violent Societal Changes: Belgrade and Zagreb Feminists' Positionings on the (Post-)Yugoslav Wars and Each Other (1991–2000)'. The full text of the dissertation (including the list of sources) is freely available online from the Digital Academic Repository of the University of Amsterdam: <http://hdl.handle.net/11245/1.410134>

2 'Activism' refers here to one's work in a feminist NGO, regardless of whether that work was conducted on a fully voluntary basis or for a (small) remuneration.

2 *Feminism at War*

I present here a comparison of the positionings, i.e. discourses and activities, of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists which were related to the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia (the NATO bombing of Serbia³ and the war in Kosovo). Those discourses and activities were not a result of a singular decision or event, but they came gradually into being. Hence my use of the word ‘positioning’, which contains as it were the present participle *-ing*. Some of the analysed positionings are, in fact, the feminists’ answers to the questions of which ethnic group could be a perpetrator of (sexual) war violence and which ethnic group could be its victim. Were some ethnic groups only perpetrators and others only victims or were all ethnic groups both perpetrators and victims? If the latter was the case, were all warring parties equally responsible and equally victimised or were there differences in the extent of that responsibility and victimisation? The other studied positionings are those which the feminists had on each other. How did they name themselves and the feminists who similarly answered the above questions? Which terms were used for the feminists with dissimilar answers? Were there any instances of cooperation between the activists whose answers did not overlap? What became of the collaboration between the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists once Serbia and Croatia turned into bitter enemies?

The analysis focuses on the 1990s – the decade in which the above three wars took place – but I also examine the feminists’ views at the time of interviewing (2009 or 2010) on their positionings from the 1990s. To get a better idea about the settings in which the positionings have come about, it is necessary to recall the constitutive power of violence: its capability to construct new contexts and meanings by altering the previous ones. Violence ‘is more than a practice that acts upon the bodies of individual subjects to inflict harm and injury. It is...also a way of looking at these subjects’ (Mason, 2006: 174). As Van de Port (2008) asserts, in times of war the whole hitherto self-evident symbolic order in the society is turned upside down. The destabilisation or even break-up of all stable structures brings the unsettling understanding that what one has believed to be true was nothing but a malleable human-made construction. This destruction of social order and meaning can sometimes exert an even greater impact on individuals and societies than the annihilation of people and material property (Nordstrom, 1992). Consequently, the warring 1990s continue to be regarded in Croatia and Serbia as a continuous threat, which could become a reality again.

As I show, the positionings in Belgrade and Zagreb were not the same. Moreover, differences existed between the first and the second half of the

3 NATO bombed the then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, i.e. Serbia and Montenegro, but Serbia – by far and large the more affected party – was in the focus of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists’ engagement with this intervention.

1990s. Therefore, despite the similarities, the spatial and temporal context should by no means be taken out of the equation. By mid-1993 the Zagreb feminists clearly split based on their positionings on the (sexual) war violence in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia – a deep fissure which would remain virtually unchanged throughout the 1990s. Corresponding, but much less intense and tangible, tensions were present among the Belgrade feminists, too. The division among them became much more antagonistic and prominent in 1998–1999, during the war in Serbia, but even then it did not take the shape of the Zagreb cleavage.⁴

Particularly astonishing are the findings on the terms ‘antinationalist’ and ‘nationalist’, which are most often used in the relevant scholarship to classify the feminists’ positionings. These designations did not mean the same in Belgrade and Zagreb. Furthermore, they were not employed by all Belgrade and Zagreb feminists, but only by those who explicitly named themselves ‘antinationalists’. In both cities, ‘antinationalist’ was a self-ascribed designation, whereas ‘nationalist’ was an ascribed-to one. The feminists who were called ‘nationalists’ used different classifications, but their terms, work and voices are almost invisible in the scholarly works. I argue, therefore, that the terminology and the scholarship (including the Western one) are not neutral and objective, but ingrained with partisanship and power differences. Although I keep the terms ‘antinationalist’ and ‘nationalist’ in order to have a clearer dialogue with those texts, I put ‘nationalist’ between inverted commas. Thereby I want to attend to the thus far unreported (power) differences in naming between the anti-nationalist and ‘nationalist’ feminists, and accentuate the importance of approaching these designations critically and carefully.

Several other discoveries on the scholarship underline the dire need for its evaluation. There is an extensive presence of recurring information, which has been uncritically referenced from the same few older works without being checked against information from new research. This practice does not take into account that many of the oft-quoted works were written in the war period or very soon afterwards, which means that they were created with no or hardly any time distance and based on limited information. In addition, the discussions contain many silent places and (partially) incorrect and imprecise claims. Finally, the intra-feminist dynamics are somewhat described, but not theorised. I offer, therefore, several additions to and corrections of the existing knowledge and I propose to look at those dynamics as being influenced not only by the wars and the differences in definitions, but also by the feminists’ struggle for increasing their own legitimacy and that of the like-minded feminists, while decreasing that of their feminist opponents.

4 I thank Dubravka Žarkov for alerting me in the early stage of the research to this difference.

Setting up the Stage and Announcing the Actors

Strictly speaking, this book is not about the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Kosovo, but they are always present in the background. I begin, therefore, by explaining why I do not name them ‘ethnic’ as many others in and outside academia do. In the primordial and essentialising understanding of the (post-)Yugoslav wars (Kaplan, 1993; Owen, 1995), with which the designation ‘ethnic’ is often associated, they were fought because of *longue durée* ethnic differences and grievances which were both ‘endemic’ (Kaldor, 2006) to the region and inherently accompanied by interethnic hatreds. This view cannot accommodate the numerous instances of high-risk solidarity with ethnic Others (Broz, 2005; Tokača, 2010) and does not offer space for the antiwar initiatives which mobilised people across ethnic boundaries (Bilić, 2012; Dević, 1997). Moreover, the idea of unceasing interethnic hatreds ignores the fact that the programme of creating Yugoslavia has existed since the nineteenth century and that the pre-World War II predecessor of socialist Yugoslavia was created at the joint initiative of the Croat, Serb and Slovene political elites (Đokić, 2010).

I do not deny that large masses of people were forced out, harmed and killed because of being seen as belonging to an inimical ethnic group. The numerous and dreadful war crimes do not allow to ignore their ethnic component. However, I argue – together with Gagnon (2004), Kaldor (2006) and Žarkov (2007) – that the discourse of ethnic differences and grievances was revived and manipulated by politicians, military leaders, intellectuals and the media in their struggle for obtaining and maintaining power. Ethnicity served as a *carte blanche* to kill, rape, torture, steal and destroy, i.e. legitimated the satisfaction of one’s (sadistic) needs for power which would have been much more difficult to realise in a non-war setting. As Žarkov (2007) asserts, ethnicity was not the reason for the wars, but it was their result. The simultaneously fought media wars vehemently contributed to the construction of ethnic groups, allies and enemies. Naming the wars ‘ethnic’ also obscures the changing alliances and trade and military deals between politicians and (para)militaries from different ethnic groups (Andreas, 2008; Gagnon, 2004; Mueller, 2000). Such a classification suggests further that multiethnic societies like the Yugoslav one are impossible to sustain and neglects the impact of contingencies, internal economic disparities, as well as external economic and political factors, such as the role of the international financial institutions or the Fall of the Berlin Wall (Freyberg-Inan, 2006).

The main actors of this book are the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists. The scholarship typically suggests that the absence of unanimity among them regarding the definitions of perpetrators and victims in the (post-)Yugoslav wars led in each city to a split into antinationalist or non-nationalist and nationalist or patriotic feminists (Batinić, 2001; Benderly, 1997; Duhaček, 1998; Helms, 1998; Kašić, 1994a; Knežević, 1997; Korać,

2003; Mladenović & Litričin, 1993; Nikolić-Ristanović, 2000; Obradović-Dragišić, 2004; Stojšavljević, 1995; Žarkov, 1999). Although the inclusion of many nuances is more than necessary, my analysis confirms that the war-related positionings of the Belgrade and Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminists stood closer to the positionings of the Serbian and Croatian authorities, respectively, than those of the corresponding antinationalist feminists. Compared to the ‘nationalist’ feminists, the antinationalist ones were much more critical of their countries’ war politics and much more outspoken about the ethnic Others whom those politics harmed. The positionings of the ‘nationalist’ feminists did not contain, though, calls to restrictive reproductive politics, a religious revival, and violence against enemy women which has been the case in other parts of the world (Cohn & Jacobson, 2013; Žarkov, 2007).

The feminists whose positionings I analyse openly named themselves and their NGOs ‘feminist’. Regardless of one’s level of public criticism of her state’s politics or those of the other warring parties and the extent of her openly proclaimed solidarity with ‘enemy’ feminists or war victims, all these activists wanted to bring the (sexual) war violence to an end, were concerned with the wellbeing of the (raped) refugee women, and conducted important work on improving the position of women in general. This finding is significant not only because of the already mentioned absence of the voices of the ‘nationalist’ feminists from the scholarship, but also because of the worldwide debate on the (in)compatibility of feminism and nationalism – a topic I return to when addressing this book’s contribution. Without trying to conceal the variations in the risky expressions of dissent and solidarity, I argue that nobody’s feminism should be negated altogether. Such acknowledgment and consistent application of one’s self-designation ‘feminist’ is also present in Helms (2003a, 2013), Mladenović & Litričin (1993), Stojšavljević (1995) and Žarkov (2002, 2007).

Not all scholars share this approach, though. The designation ‘feminist’ can be used to deny some (post-)Yugoslav activists’ self-asserted feminist affiliation (Jansen, 2005; Kesić, 2002; Mostov, 1995; Nenadic, 1991, 1996; Slapšak, 2008). For example, after generally speaking about the Belgrade and Zagreb feminist NGOs, Borić & Mladineo Desnica (1996) only describe the positionings of the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists. In a similar manner, MacKinnon (1993) illustrates her statement on the Zagreb feminists only by mentioning ‘nationalist’ feminist NGOs. In both cases the feminists whose positionings are not endorsed by the author(s), by being omitted from the illustrations, become implicitly classified as ‘non-feminists’. On a different note, there are works in which ‘feminist’ and ‘women’s’ are used as synonyms (Batinić, 2001; Blagojević, 1998a; Jansen, 2005; Korać, 1998, 2003; Milić, 2002; Pavlović, 1999) and those in which ‘women’s’ broadly denotes everybody, including the declared feminist activists and NGOs (Borić, 1997; Helms, 2003b, 2013; Irvine, 2007; Mostov, 1995; Kesić, 2002). ‘Women’s’ can also be employed to distinguish the

activists and NGOs which do not assert themselves as feminists (Helms, 2003a, 2013; Knežević, 1994, 2004).

Many arbitrary classifications and *ad hominem* criticisms exist in the utterances of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists. By juxtaposing, cross-checking, interpreting, contextualising and theorising their war-related positionings, I seek to shed new light on them and bring them to a higher level of abstraction. Inspired by Wright Mills (1978), I strive to link the biographical and the structural/historical, i.e. – to borrow from the famous feminist slogan – the personal and the political, in the lives of these activists. Although they do not always convey an understanding of this interconnectedness,⁵ I do not want to suggest that they are incapable of arriving at those insights by themselves. I am profoundly aware, though, that my privileged location at the University of Amsterdam, which provided me with information, money, time and a physical distance from the post-Yugoslav region, markedly benefitted my production of such complex knowledge.

My main theoretical lens is informed by the work of Bourdieu (1990, 1991, 1993; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). I tell a story of Belgrade and Zagreb feminists who, besides advocating an end to the wars and war rapes, providing assistance to the victims and demanding persecution of the perpetrators, vigorously articulated their war-related positionings in the feminist field in their respective city and in those abroad. Already during Yugoslavia's existence there were differences in cultural, economic and social capital among these agents. In addition, disagreements occurred regarding the correct feminist positioning on certain societal practices. Each feminist aimed at increasing her symbolic feminist capital: the perception that she accurately understood the gender-based power disparities and knew the right ways to correct them. These efforts to be recognised and supported as a legitimate feminist agent gained strength once the feminists were faced with the extremity of the (sexual) war violence.

Within the feminist field in each city, the initial positioning on (sexual) war violence fully subordinated ethnicity to gender. Men, regardless of ethnicity, were seen as perpetrators, whereas women, regardless of ethnicity, were perceived as victims. Some feminists contested this established or orthodox positioning by adding ethnicity, i.e. by starting to distinguish between ethnically specific perpetrators and victims. Their heretical positioning was a newcomer in the respective feminist field, but not a newcomers' positioning: It was not only employed by those who had entered that field at a later point. This indication of the field in question is very important. If the political field in each city and the there occurring

5 Blagojević (1998b: 35) observes the same in her analysis of the Belgrade women's NGOs in the 1990s: '[T]he activists perceive the conflicts foremostly as "personal disagreements"'.

struggle for legitimacy are analysed instead, not only the participating agents would be different, but also the orthodox and heretical positionings.

The names which the feminists gave to their own positionings and those of other feminists (e.g., 'antinationalist', 'patriotic', 'neutral' and 'radical antinationalist') served to situate the concrete feminists and their positionings in the feminist field and legitimise or delegitimise them. Those designations were, thus, by no means impartial. They also provided a coping mechanism (Janoff-Bulman & Hanson Frieze, 1983) by creating some order in the physical, psychological and discursive insecurity caused by the proximity of war violence, the disintegration of Yugoslavia, and the hard to grasp divergent positionings of the hitherto like-minded feminists and friends. Wherever the shared affiliation was disbanded, the naming made it easier to cope with one's dissenting choices and strengthened the ties between the feminists with the same or very similar positionings.

I view all Belgrade and Zagreb feminists as concurrently autonomous and free, as well as manipulated and constrained. This perception stands in contrast with the denial of (feminist) agency of one's opponents which is articulated by a number of feminists regardless of city and cluster. Their delegitimation strategy usually manifests in negation of autonomy and accusation of only pursuing personal gains. By portraying somebody as not autonomous, the speaker implicitly presents herself as particularly autonomous: She is capable of both establishing herself as an independent agent and disclosing others' dependence. The accusation of self-interest helps the speaker to describe herself as solely advocating a collective, higher, cause and being disinterested in obtaining any individual benefits – a strategy which Bourdieu calls 'misrecognition'. A contradiction exists, thus, in the utterances of some feminists. While being outspokenly committed to the emancipation of women and their establishment as agents, these feminists simultaneously negate the emancipation of the not like-minded feminists and their ability to position themselves.

The individual differences in degree of autonomy and pursuit of self-interest notwithstanding, I argue against any a priori classifications which are only based on one's war-related positionings (cf. the criticism by Žarkov, 2006). My conceptualisation of all feminists as agents is additionally inspired by Mahmood (2001, 2005) and McNay (2000), who uphold that agency is not only formed in resistance to domination, subversion and resignification, but also in acceptance, accommodation and adaptation to norms and normative behaviour. For example, the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists challenged the up to then orthodox (post-)Yugoslav feminist positioning on war violence by underlining the latter's ethnic component. The Zagreb antinationalist feminists partially maintained the primacy of gender over ethnicity, albeit slightly differently than the Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists. The other Belgrade cluster accentuated the ethnic dimension to the (sexual) war crimes, but did not discard the gender one. Thus, all feminist clusters resisted and subverted some norms, while accepting and

accommodating others. There was, however, a disagreement between the clusters as to which norms were to be rejected and which were to be embraced – a struggle for the legitimate definition of the situation.

Besides naming, the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists employed myths to establish themselves as legitimate agents with unambiguous and consistent positionings. According to Yanow (2000: 80), '[w]e create myths as an act of mediating contradictions, such as those that arise when we are faced with accommodating in daily life the mandates of two (or more) irreconcilable values. Myths direct our attention away from such incommensurables.' One myth was widely used already before the wars. Although there were inequalities and disagreements among the Yugoslav feminists, they advocated sisterhood – i.e. commonality, cooperation and solidarity – among women due to their collective underprivileged gender-based position in the society. The myth of sisterhood had to superficially reconcile the simultaneous existence of similarities and differences.

After the beginning of the wars, the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists reaffirmed the idea of sisterhood, but adapted it to the changed reality. By speaking of 'transgression of boundaries' or 'crossing the lines', they accentuated their markedly daring continuation of cooperation across the newly established ethnic and state demarcation lines. At the same time, the metaphor obscured the parallel creation of a boundary by the same feminists: one which separated them from the feminists who did not want to cooperate anymore. Equally concealed were the misunderstandings and conflicts between the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists (e.g., Kašić, 1994b). The Belgrade and Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists stopped using the myth of sisterhood. The former presented themselves as the sole impartial feminists regarding the war violence (i.e. created a myth of objectivity), whereas the latter constructed a myth of advocacy by portraying themselves as the only righteous advocates of the cause of raped Bosniak and Croat women.

Although I speak of four feminist clusters – one antinationalist and one 'nationalist' in each city – the Belgrade 'nationalist' cluster is quite different from the other three. Despite the existence of shared war-related positionings among those Belgrade feminists and the cooperation between some of them, they have never formed one joint NGO and/or publicly used a 'we' positioning. In the interviews, too, each of them expressed her positioning using the 'I' form. Therefore, the aggregation of the Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists, which was necessary for analytical purposes, imposes to them a greater degree of affiliation than the actually existing one. A word of caution is required also regarding the Belgrade antinationalist cluster. These feminists had divergent positionings on the Serb responsibility for and victimisation by the war in Serbia. The positioning of some of them even overlapped with the corresponding one of the Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists. Nonetheless, for the sake of not complicating the analysis further, I maintain the division which had come into existence during the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and

Croatia, and take the later fragmentation of the Belgrade antinationalist cluster into account only when discussing the war in Serbia.

Methodological Strategies, Tools, and Experiences

I did not set out to verify a theory. I aimed instead at collecting a lot of diverse empirical material on a topic which many had mentioned or briefly analysed, but not systematically explored and theorised. My final goal was to re-examine and supplement the common narrative on the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists' war-related positionings and propose an explanation for their development and contents. I was interested in the war-time activists who had known and cooperated with each other – as feminists – already before the wars. The Yugoslav feminist activism developed in Ljubljana, too, but in light of the great contextual differences from the second half of 1991 onward between Slovenia, on the one hand, and Croatia and Serbia, on the other, as well as between the work of the Ljubljana feminists and that of the Belgrade and Zagreb ones, I left out Ljubljana from the comparison.

The choice for a shorter time span (the 1990s) and a more detailed exploration – as opposed to obtaining less detailed data on two decades (the 1990s and the 2000s) – was prompted by the many silent places and biased claims on the topic in question. Their existence required extensive interviews and a repetitive thorough search for clues in all data sources. This would have been impossible to conduct in a satisfactory manner in the earmarked fieldwork time, had the analysed period extended over two decades. A longer time span would have proven unfeasible also because Croatia and Serbia experienced great political changes in 2000. The political parties of the respective presidents Tuđman and Milošević, which had been in power throughout the 1990s, lost that year's parliamentary elections. These internal political changes and the preceding end of the wars were followed by new NGO funding policies of the foreign donors. The hitherto largely informal emergency donations gave way to official project-based grant procedures, which led to organisational changes in the NGOs, such as the creation of more formal hierarchical structures and less fluid membership. Since the beginning of the 2000s the feminist fields in Croatia and Serbia additionally changed due to the establishment of state and municipality gender equality bodies wherein some feminist activists have found employment (Bagić, 2004; Bilić, 2012; Kesić, 2007; Potkonjak et al., 2008).

By accentuating the narrow scope of my research, I follow Haraway's call (1988: 589) for 'politics and epistemologies of location...where partiality and not universality is the condition of being heard to make rational knowledge claims'. I also second her assertion that all knowledge is situated, which means that the context in which it is generated and the location of its producer are ontologically and epistemologically relevant. Therefore, 'being reflexive about one's own positionality is [not] to self-indulge but to

reflect on how one is inserted in grids of power relations and how that influences methods, interpretations, and knowledge production' (Sultana, 2007: 376). Such reflections – which are present throughout this book – are a necessary part of the ethical principles which have guided my analysis:

The *feminist research ethic* is a commitment to inquiry about how we inquire...[It] involves being attentive to (1) the power of knowledge, and more profoundly, of epistemology...(2) boundaries, marginalization, and silences, (3) relationships and their power differentials, and (4) our own situatedness as researchers.

(Ackerly & True, 2008: 695, emphasis in the original)

Access, Sampling, Assets, and Challenges

I engaged with this topic as a multiple insider-outsider. Being born in Macedonia in the mid-1970s gave me the experience of living in Yugoslavia, including the period when it started becoming 'former', while also providing me with a generational and geographical distance from my respondents. My participation in diverse NGOs in Macedonia in the 1990s sensitised me to the non-war-related organisational issues my respondents referred to, such as conflicts regarding task division or participation at conferences abroad, and throughout my residence in Amsterdam I kept my interest in the (post-)Yugoslav region alive. Therefore, despite all challenges and knowledge which I was yet to absorb, the fieldwork did not feel like an exploration of the great unknown.

I spent most of those 12 months (September 2008 to August 2009 and September 2010) in Belgrade and Zagreb. I travelled to Berlin and Oberhausen to do archival research and to Ljubljana, Prishtina and Sarajevo to conduct interviews with external respondents. The data were primarily gathered from qualitative in-depth semi-structured interviews and paper records found in personal, organisational and state archives and libraries.⁶ To a much smaller extent, data were collected from documentary films and internet presentations. The written sources included documents produced by the feminists themselves or their NGOs – e.g., (academic) articles and books, leaflets, press-releases and reports – and print media items of third parties. My full fluency in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian and native familiarity with the Cyrillic alphabet proved very beneficial. They allowed me to conduct most interviews in the respondents' native language, examine

6 Atria – Institute on Gender Equality and Women's History (Amsterdam), Green Memory Archives (Berlin), International Women's Peace Archives Fasia Jansen (Oberhausen), National Library of Serbia (Belgrade), and Croatian State Archives, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, and National and University Library (Zagreb).

original materials and use the scholarship which was only available in local languages. My ability to read texts in Dutch, English, French, German and Slovenian further contributed to the (innovative) quality of my research findings.

Unlike my linguistic skills, several technical challenges complicated and slowed down the data collection: the presence of undated and unsigned documents, the incorrect referencing of newspaper and magazine items, and the absence of the date and/or the source of the archived articles. In addition, sometimes a respondent could only vaguely remember where she had published a certain text and could not show it to me because of not having kept a copy. The Croatian and Serbian print media from the 1990s were not digitalised, so unless I could obtain the information elsewhere, I had to manually look for the article in question. I struggled, too, with foreign authors' insufficient attentiveness in spelling the activists' names: e.g., 'Besic' instead of 'Kašić' and 'Zaidgiz' instead of 'Daidžić'. Consequently, the search for digitalised foreign articles by using names as key words demanded a serious investment of time and labour, but bore fruit only occasionally. The poor condition of the personal and organisational archives did not help either. Only one of these archives was kept under the proper storage conditions. In the other archives, the documents – especially those on thermal fax paper – were gradually destroyed by warmth, light, moisture, dust and dirt. This situation is quite worrisome considering the malleability of memory and the different perceptions of same events. It also exposes the importance of preserving original documents in professionally run and publicly accessible archives so that they can be used for research purposes and the creation of a more comprehensive view of the past.

The selection of potential respondents was intended to take place by a two-stage sampling process: initial selection of key antinationalist and 'nationalist' feminist NGOs from Belgrade and Zagreb, followed by a selection of their key activists. This plan had to be adjusted to the situation on the ground. Whereas in Zagreb one could speak of antinationalist and 'nationalist' feminist NGOs, such a clear-cut intra-feminist split had never happened in Belgrade. No feminist NGO there was considered nationalist: only individual feminists. Furthermore, not all Belgrade and Zagreb feminist NGOs have preserved their archives and the existing ones were more often than not incomplete and unsystematic. Some archives were fully inaccessible. It was risky, therefore, to assume that on each selected NGO I would find data which would be comparable to those on the other NGOs in the sample. The intended sampling method was further hindered by the fluidity of one's NGO affiliation: some feminists were active in several NGOs, others had left one NGO and joined or established another, and there were also those who had withdrawn from an NGO but returned later.

In light of these insights, I let my sample develop more organically, i.e. be guided by the incoming data. Being aware of the scarcity of relevant empirical material in the scholarship and the difficulty of obtaining such

material due to its sensitivity, I looked for the apparently most information-rich respondents. The purposive sampling was supplemented with a much more limited snowball sampling. These sampling methods limit my ability to draw conclusions on all Belgrade and Zagreb feminists. So, although I speak for the sake of simplicity about 'Belgrade and Zagreb feminists', my findings should be understood as only concerning the actors of the war-related feminist activism in the 1990s.

The main activists whom I sampled were those who – based on the scholarship, organisational documents, media sources or information from other informants – had been directly and prominently involved in the war-related feminist activism in Belgrade or Zagreb from the beginning of the 1990s. Given that most of them had been active feminists already in the late 1980s, I could ask them about their first-hand experiences of the divisions and alliances which were brought along by the violent disintegration of the country. It turned out that I knew the majority of potential antinationalist respondents. Without having ever cooperated closely, they had been my first teachers of feminism. I was much more of an outsider to the 'nationalist' feminists – especially the Zagreb ones – and rather unfamiliar with their names and work. Despite this unfamiliarity and related lower degree of trust between me and them, I made a point of interviewing all four prominent Belgrade feminists who were seen by some as nationalists and tracking down the key figures of all Zagreb 'nationalist' feminist NGOs. By giving space to the 'nationalist' feminists, I not only attend to the even greater scarcity of information on them. I also endorse Žarkov's (2006: 215) challenge to the oft-present 'feminist uneasiness' with recognising and analysing the agency of women whose politics we do not necessarily share, as well as Mahmood's claim that

in order for us to be able to judge, in a morally and politically informed way, even those practices we consider objectionable, it is important to take into consideration the desires, motivations, commitments, and aspirations of the people to whom these practices are important.

(2001: 225)

The discovery of silent places in the scholarship inspired me to look for insider-outsider perspectives, too. I conducted a few less extensive interviews with Belgrade and Zagreb feminists, and with two feminists from other towns in Croatia. These respondents had been less prominently involved on the war-related issues, but had worked closely with the prominently involved activists. I also interviewed several women who had had extensive ties with my main respondents. These external respondents were Belgrade and Zagreb peace activists, Ljubljana, Prishtina and Sarajevo feminists, and a Zagreb-based US sociologist and activist who had written on the (war-related) feminist activism in the (post-)Yugoslav region and worked for one of the main funders of local women's NGOs.

I approached 55 women for interviewing and got an exceptionally positive response rate of 87%. Four out of the seven non-respondents were Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminists: one never responded to my inquiries, whereas three declined the invitation due to a grave illness, the emotional load of the research, and a lack of trust in my interpretation. The remaining three non-respondents – a Zagreb antinationalist feminist, a Belgrade and a Ljubljana activist – could not participate because of a lack of time. I interviewed, thus, 48 women, 12 of whom were external respondents. The remaining 36 respondents are classified below.

Table 1.1 Main and additional interview respondents

	<i>Belgrade*</i>	<i>Zagreb</i>
Main antinationalist respondents	9	8
Main ‘nationalist’ respondents	4	7
Additional antinationalist respondents	2	5**
Additional ‘nationalist’ respondents	0	1

Interviews time periods: January to July 2009, and September 2010

* The interviews usually took place in the city in which the respondent was active

** Including two respondents active in other Croatian towns

My quite unique access consisted of a great number of activists willing to be (extensively) interviewed – most interviews lasted between two and a half and three hours – and the readiness of many, especially the antinationalist respondents, to allow me to freely go through their private libraries and archives. One Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminist even went to the Croatian State Archives to give her permission for my full access to her NGO’s documents, which were under a very restricted access for privacy and sensitivity reasons. There were further respondents who personally sought for a document or a book which they considered important for my research. Without my asking, some told me why they had given me such access. One set of reasons had to do with our acquaintance and past interactions, and the other with their need to reflect aloud upon contested and silenced issues for which there was not otherwise much space. The collection of oral testimonies often benefits from the latter: The respondents ‘had long felt a desire to furnish their own account of an important transaction or controversial period, but had lacked time and opportunity until suddenly seated before a tape recorder with a well-equipped interviewer’ (Nevins, 1996: 31).

I suspect that the communication break between many feminists and the subsequent unexpressed positionings and emotions have positively affected the data collection. I believe that the encountered willingness had also to do with the chance which my work gave to the respondents to reach out to one another and communicate that which had been left unsaid but was

still very much alive. The fact that the people of Macedonian ethnicity are usually seen as a neutral party in the wars of the 1990s probably assured the respondents that I would transmit their message correctly. I see the good access as also resulting from some respondents' perception of me as their personal biographer or research assistant, who would write their story or pursue their research interest. The single respondent who explicitly communicated this to me said that it was good that I was doing this work because she did not have the time for it. Others implied it by suggesting the direction of the research.

The good access had, thus, a reverse side: integrity challenges. The analysis of a recent period of war violence and still living actors demanded a careful and thoughtful communication with the (potential) respondents, impossibility to outsource the transcription and translation of interviews, a lot of effort to internally process the narratives of violence, pain and anger, and an obligation to formulate criticism in a considerate manner, while preserving my commitment towards my research agenda and results. Such a sensitive approach was also needed in view of my previous acquaintance with the majority of respondents, the ongoing communication with some of them, and my ambition to continue contributing to (women's) human rights, peace, and social justice in the post-Yugoslav region.

Customised Interviews, Richer Data

At least half of the questions in each interview were custom-made and there was space to follow up issues which would surface in the course of the conversation. The standardised set addressed the respondent's life trajectory (this part was significantly shorter in the interviews with the additional and external respondents) and her recollections and interpretations of the war-related dynamics among the feminists. Such an inquiry into one's biography and subjectivity was necessary for situating the agents within the feminist field and better understanding their positionings. The customised questions referred to seemingly important events which the respondent had attended and/or written about, and statements of hers which I had come across in the empirical material, including the interview narratives of other respondents.

The large amount of custom-made questions meant that prior to each interview I read as many writings or statements by the respondent as possible, so that I could use that material in the interview to ask for a very specific explanation or commentary. Albeit exhausting and time-consuming, this strategy turned out to be very rewarding. It helped me to better and faster decipher the statements wherein the respondents would not give explicit answers or disclose concrete names of people and NGOs. The same was true for the allusions made outside the interview context or in the (scholarly) articles. Furthermore, considering the malleability of memory, it was thanks to these preparations that I was able to assist or correct my

respondents regarding, e.g., the dates of an event or the names of the attendees. Finally, this approach improved my rapport with the respondents. I was able to converse more easily with them, whereas they appreciated my knowledge on the topic and familiarity with their work and/or statements.

The need for an extensive custom-made part was raised primarily by the lack of historiography on the Belgrade and Zagreb war-related feminist activism. More precisely, in order to be able to interpret the positionings on the wars and each other, I first needed to find out the factual information, such as who had organised an event, when and why, who had (not) been invited and why, and who had (not) come and why. This quest for information was a very demanding task for me and the respondents alike: More often than not there were hardly any available original documents on a particular event. I was aware of the impossibility of fully reconstructing an event, and yet I needed anchors in the form of concrete scenes and utterances around which my respondents could construct their stories, and I mine. Also this laborious undertaking proved useful. The recollection of one episode usually helped the respondent remember more information on it or other events.

Handling Interviews, Respondents, and Oneself

The analysis was performed on the original transcript in order to reduce to the greatest possible extent the loss of meaning which is intrinsic to the translation process. I treated the interviews, just like the organisational documents and articles, as a resource and a topic. In the first usage, the interview serves to 'discover things about events outside the interview situation' (Seale, 1998: 215), such as the historical information I was after. In the second usage, 'the accomplishments of participants are investigated through a detailed examination of the language people deploy' (Seale, 1998: 215), including the silent places in their narratives and the framing of their statements.

Leydesdorff, Passerini & Thompson (1996: 12) correctly state that 'any writing about the past is a subsequent reconstruction, and...no history reaches us unmediated'. To validate the obtained historical data I used triangulation extensively (Lummis, 1998): crosschecking the information gathered from one source with that collected elsewhere. Another way in which I aimed at evaluating the information was by examining the internal consistency or coherence of the narrative. Although contradictions in one's account are to be expected, they are at odds with the human need to have an 'illusion of wholeness' (Ewing, 1990). This need to present oneself as a coherent agent turned out to be particularly important to some respondents. Several of them explicitly demanded to receive the interview transcript for authorisation, but in order to treat all respondents equally, I sent the transcripts to everybody.

The reactions were diverse. Some respondents did not make significant alterations to the transcript, whereas others did exactly that. Four respondents

even rewrote most of the transcript. Those to whom coherence mattered dearly changed the order of sentences, provided (extensive) additional explanations and made many language and style changes. In order to attend to the important information which the substantial modifications provided, I clearly marked all interventions, including the erasures. The altered and erased fragments informed the analysis, but for ethical reasons they are neither present in it as quotations nor as paraphrases. There are further respondents whose concern with coherence I can only surmise. To begin with, this applies to one Belgrade and one Zagreb antinationalist respondent who withdrew their transcripts: the former because of the feeling of bitterness the transcript had left her with, and the latter due to her lack of trust in my analysis. The seven respondents (three Zagreb 'nationalist' and one antinationalist, one additional from Zagreb, one external from Ljubljana and one Belgrade antinationalist), who tacitly terminated the communication after receiving the transcript for authorisation, belong to this group as well. Their silence entailed never telling me what they thought of the transcript and whether they would authorise it or not. They all received emails and mobile text messages in which I informed them that if I had not heard from them by a given date, I would treat their transcripts as authorised. Consequently, this is how I used them in the analysis.

This brings me to the recurring theme in my research: its very sensitive and emotional character for the respondents. It played a role in all interviews and sometimes even before, when I was trying to arrange the interviews. The common use of covert statements – the word 'implicit' and its synonyms appear in this book quite frequently – required a lot of time-consuming reading between the lines, especially when a respondent would not disclose somebody's name but tell me that I should ask others about it. This demanded an additional search for clues in the succeeding interviews and the other empirical material. The charged nature of the topic was further visible in the words and fragments which were absent from the authorised transcripts. Most alterations concerned conflicts with and criticism of other feminists. Personal names, laden or slang words, whole sentences and even whole descriptions of events were erased. Occasionally the deleted parts were replaced with more neutral terms or formulations. These reactions become even more telling considering the information which I provided upon sending the transcripts for authorisation. I said that I would only publish selected sentences from each narrative and take out all personal names from the quoted fragments. I also let the respondents make a final choice on how they wanted to be quoted after having seen the transcript.

Initially only one respondent had asked to be quoted by a different name. This number did not increase significantly after the reception of the transcripts, probably because those with the greatest objections had broken the communication with me, withdrawn the transcript or made huge alterations in it. After reading the transcripts two more respondents opted for anonymity, whereas two others chose to be quoted with their initials.

I decided eventually to employ code names for everybody⁷ because of the five respondents who had asked not be quoted by their real name, the respondent who had passed away without having the chance to read her transcript and decide, and the seven respondents who had stopped communicating with me. Although I felt confident to treat their transcripts as authorised, I found it unethical to mention them by name without their explicit permission. Lastly, a smaller number of respondents with code names might have simplified the disclosure of their identity, which I wanted to avoid.

I wish I could have kept the full names – a choice which would have pleased some respondents, too. There is urgency in documenting the direct actors given the large gaps in the historiography, the fragility of human life (as manifested by the passing away of five activists whom I would have loved to interview and three whom I did interview), and the influence of time on the fading and loss of human memories and paper sources. Furthermore, I would have liked to pay these activists a more explicit tribute for the immense amount of important and often life-saving work which they had conducted under very difficult conditions. It is my sincere hope, therefore, that the future analyses of this and related topics will not have to navigate a minefield and will attend to the historiographic lacunae which have been partly reproduced by this research.

Some of those lacunae concern issues which were revealed by the post-fieldwork analysis. Due to the sensitivity, I chose not to contact the respondents for additional information. The few occasions when I nevertheless did contact them concerned topics which I deemed unproblematic. By not reopening any delicate issues after the end of the face-to-face communication, I prioritised the maintenance of ethically responsible relationships. The importance of a careful approach was later confirmed by the silence with which most respondents met my dissertation. Besides sending it to them, I distributed it through mailing lists of women's activists in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia, and presented my research in these countries. Small but positive media coverage in Croatian/Serbian followed. Nonetheless, I have hardly received any reactions. The avoidance of engaging again with the war-related positionings – a state of affairs which the respondents addressed in the interviews – is, obviously, still in place.

My respondents were not the only ones, though, who found this research emotionally difficult. I learned the hard way that going back in time meant to observe in a highly condensed manner the process of arrival and progression of the wars, the lies and illusions of politicians and

7 The code names (e.g., Belgrade15N) begin with the name of the city the respondent was active in, followed by the number of interview in that city. The last part shows whether she was interviewed as a main antinationalist (AN), main 'nationalist' (N), additional antinationalist (ANA), additional 'nationalist' (NA) or an external (EXT) respondent.

military leaders, and the activists' inability to stop the (sexual) war violence. Often during the interviews and informal conversations I felt as if I had opened Pandora's Box and exposed myself to an avalanche of hitherto silenced emotions, memories and positionings. I also became aware that working on a topic which concerned a war period meant a regular, albeit indirect, exposure to terrible war crimes and other forms of destruction and inhumanity. Sometimes the victims and atrocities were quite real, almost tangible: I stumbled in an archive upon hand-written victim testimonies, and in a museum, while looking at the Yugoslav identification documents of murdered people, I realised that I had had the same back then. It took me a while to learn to cope with such unsettling encounters. They brought me a much more profound realisation of the intensity and the consequences of the wars, and confronted me once again with the vulnerability of human life, including my own.

Audience

Despite the already mentioned virtual absence of respondents' feedback on my dissertation, I hope that my analysis and findings give them some new information, insights and ideas in return for the knowledge, histories and archives which they shared with me. The study might also benefit the younger post-Yugoslav feminists, students and scholars by providing a more extensive view of the trajectories of their local feminist foremothers and those generations' enormous activist and intellectual legacy. My contribution to the historiography of (post-)Yugoslav feminism will, hopefully, 'enrich the collective memory [and] make it more critical by integrating in it the knowledge which has not been produced for rehabilitating or denouncing, but rather for explaining and understanding' (Noiriél, 2007: 691).⁸

This research could be useful, too, to scholars of feminist activism in other societies where nationalism and war – or another type of conflict – hold sway. The information contained in this book also enriches the already extensive debate on the compatibility of feminism and nationalism (Aguilar, 1998; Cockburn, 2000, Giles et al., 2003; Iveković, 1993; Jayawardena, 1986; Kim, 2009; Sarkar & Butalia, 1995; Stasiulis, 1999; Sunseri, 2000; Ueno, 2004; West, 1997; Yuval-Davis, 1997; Žarkov, 2006). While showing that one should not deny the feminist component of the work of the Belgrade and Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists, i.e. that in this case one can speak of a certain compatibility between these two ideologies, I do not aim at making generalising statements. Cockburn's observation that the

8 All translations are mine. I use British English throughout the text, with the exception of the parts which have been either originally written or officially translated into American English, including the names of the NGOs. This means, for example, that both 'Centre' and 'Center' can be found in this text. Some quotations contain typing and language mistakes in the original.

compatibility of feminism and nationalism depends 'on what *kind* of nationalism and what *kind* of feminism you are talking about – for both of them are plural movements' (1998: 41, emphasis in the original) is particularly relevant here.

The analysis further supplements the scholarship on feminism and nationalism and feminism in conflict by attending to some of the challenges of the intra-feminist cooperation. This concerns, for example, the call to transcend the state and/or ethnic boundaries when there is a difference in power and responsibility between the entities which those boundaries demarcate. Ueno (2004) addresses this challenge regarding the issue of comfort women. Her appeal to the South Korean and fellow Japanese feminists to transcend the interests of their respective state in order to avoid becoming manipulated by it has been rebuked by a South Korean activist. The latter has accused Ueno of whitewashing the fact that Japan had invaded South Korea, and disrespecting the importance of nationalism for South Korean feminists. A tension exists, thus, between the gender-based distancing from an ethnic collective (or a state) as a way of disclosing and denouncing a nationalist ideology and the embracing of that collective as a way of disclosing and denouncing the hostility against it. A comparable tension, *mutatis mutandis*, can be observed in the antiracist struggles in the United States:

Much as I would like vigorously to be able to underwrite Virginia Woolf's famous dictum⁹...I cannot. Woolf's statement is attractive in implying a disloyalty to patriarchal civilisation, a disregard of narrow nationalist definitions and a sisterhood across national/ethnic boundaries. However,...being able to be aloof and detached from any country is the privilege of high caste and whiteness and can only be asserted when there is no challenge to belonging.

(Wekker, 1995: 67–68)

As Yuval-Davis explains, that friction can be so intense that it can lead to a non-dialogue, like that which had occurred between Western and Third World feminists:

To the extent that the western [sic] feminists did relate to their national collectivities it was usually from an oppositional point of view...[T]hey were...often involved in anti-governmental political movements...This created in both sides very different assumptions concerning relationships between individual women and their collectivities – and their governments at the time.

(1997: 117–118)

9 '[A]s a woman I have no country. As a woman I want no country. As a woman, my country is the whole world' (Woolf, 1938: 109).

This book shows that similar debates have taken place among and between the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists. In those cases it concerned, e.g., one's understanding and articulation of the war-related responsibility and victimhood of one's ethnic group, the cooperation and solidarity with women from the supposedly inimical ethnic groups, and one's expression of belonging to an ethnic collective. When presenting my analysis, my goal is not to criticise and delegitimise the Belgrade and Zagreb (or any other, for that matter) feminists for not being able to rise above such challenges. I call instead for frankness about them and their acceptance as an inherent part of the vital attempts to go beyond the differences – especially those which are seen as fundamental or non-negotiable – and achieve a broader mobilisation. After all, a problematic issue cannot be grasped and (partially) resolved before it is openly voiced and recognised as such. By underlining the importance of those efforts, I second Yuval-Davis' (1997) earnest invitation to practice transversal politics, i.e. a creation of alliances between activists without negating and despite the differences between them in, e.g., societal position, life trajectories and (war-related) positionings.

Outline of Chapters

The following Chapter 2 contains short historical portrayals of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminist NGOs which are the most relevant ones for this research. By describing these NGOs and their development, I set the stage and present the actors whose characteristics, movements and utterances are analysed in the remaining chapters. I zoom in on the war-related activism in the 1990s, but where applicable and needed I also attend to some pre-war activities and conflicts. I show that the differences in war-related positionings were sometimes intertwined with non-war-related frictions – some taking place in the 1990s and others stemming from the pre-war period. The portrayals of the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminist NGOs are of particular importance given the absence of information on them in the relevant scholarship.

That scholarship is scrutinised in Chapter 3. I address the discovered biases and silent places, and offer explanations for their presence. This concerns the domination of the designations used by the antinationalist feminists, the political component of the texts, the lack of analyses of the post-1995 developments, the limited to non-existent attention for certain conflicts, and the homogenising bias. Afterwards I discuss the encountered classifications and descriptions of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists. I pay attention to the joint and separate portrayals of the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists, and to the separate depictions (no collective ones exist) of the two 'nationalist' clusters. I demonstrate the variety of used designations (in addition to the most oft-used ones) and show that the same terms can connote different things.

Chapter 4 features nine historical episodes which illustrate the intra-feminist dynamics upon which I seek to shed light. The selected episodes are not only temporarily and geographically diverse, but they also differ with respect to the key agents. Eight episodes are specific events in the 1990s and one is a Belgrade feminist NGO which is significant because of the developments which have taken place in it. I start with the proposal for a Yugoslav feminist umbrella NGO in the spring of 1990 and I end with the NATO bombing of Serbia and the intensified Kosovo war in the spring of 1999. I explore the gradual materialisation of war-related positionings and the varied contexts in which they were articulated. The influence of Western (funding) audiences on the struggle for legitimacy is examined, as well as the interactions among local feminists in the absence of third parties.

In Chapter 5, the last empirical chapter, I look into the ways in which the Belgrade and Zagreb ‘nationalist’ and antinationalist feminists referred at the time of interviewing (2009 or 2010) to the war-related intra-feminist dynamics in the 1990s. I analyse the process of naming, the views on the (un)authenticity of one’s (anti)nationalism, and the largely ongoing silence among these feminists regarding their war-related positionings. Thereby, special attention is given to their treatment of the participation of one Zagreb antinationalist feminist in the war in Croatia. The chapter also demonstrates the certain arbitrariness of the self-ascribed and ascribed-to designations and their role in the struggle for legitimacy, and points to some pre-war differences and tensions which were built into the later war-related ones. Unlike Chapter 4, this chapter shows the respondents’ variations in critical distance from the 1990s and attends, too, to the dynamics at the time of interviewing. In the more historiographical Chapter 4, the interview transcripts are treated as a resource (and supplemented with other data), whereas the more interpretative Chapter 5 is almost exclusively based on the transcripts, which are treated as a topic of a discourse analysis.

My main findings are compiled in the concluding Chapter 6. I underline there the important and multilayered contribution of this research to the scholarship on the (post-)Yugoslav war-related feminist activism in the 1990s, including my critical observations about that knowledge. In the closing part I reflect upon the relevance of the findings for the studies of feminism in conflict and feminism and nationalism beyond the borders of the post-Yugoslav region. Lastly, I explain why I support the Slow Science trend in conducting academic research.

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2 Portrayals of Feminist NGOs

In this chapter I shortly describe the Zagreb and Belgrade feminist NGOs which are the most relevant ones for discussing the war-related feminist activism in these cities in the 1990s. The choice to begin with Zagreb serves to increase the comprehensibility of my argument, given that the war-related tensions were more pronounced there. I also pay limited attention to some activities in the last two pre-war years. Although that period is not in the focus of my analysis, it is important to address it in order to better understand the processes which started from the second half of 1991 onward. For example, the consuming pioneering work which the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists had enthusiastically conducted prior to the wars can partially explain the anger, betrayal, confusion, disappointment and pain, which they felt due to the war-related differences. Also, attending to the pre-war divisions helps clarify the war-related ones.

In portraying the Belgrade NGOs I have made grateful use of the edited volume on organised women's activism in Belgrade in the 1990s (Blagojević, 1998a). Due to the absence of a similar publication on the Zagreb NGOs, more data had to be collected on them than on the Belgrade ones. The Zagreb portrayals bring important novel information to the scholarship on war-related (post-)Yugoslav feminism, but should not be treated as comprehensive because the creation of an extensive historiography was outside the scope of this research. They are only a helping tool to better grasp the dynamics which were caused by the geographical and temporal proximity of nationalism and (sexual) war violence.

The depicted Zagreb antinationalist feminist NGOs are: Autonomous Women's House Zagreb, B.a.B.e., Center for Women War Victims, Centre for Women's Studies, Women's Information and Documentation Center (Women's Infoteka), and Women's Lobby Zagreb.¹ The 'nationalist' feminist cluster consists of: Kareta, Multimedia Women's Centre Nona, Network of Multicultural Help, O-zona, Women's Group Trešnjevka, and Women's

1 In addressing the initiatives below, I follow the chronological order of their creation. Regarding the translation and spelling of each organisation's name, see note 8 in Chapter 1.

Help Now. The Belgrade antinationalist feminist NGOs which are relevant for this research are: Autonomous Women's Center, Belgrade Women's Lobby, Women in Black, and Women's Studies Center. No feminist NGO has been classified in Belgrade as nationalist, although internal tensions regarding nationalism have been reported in the SOS Hotline, the Women's Party (ŽEST), and the Women's Studies Center. Therefore, the SOS Hotline and the Women's Party are included, too. The four 'nationalist' Belgrade feminists work or have worked in academic institutions and/or (feminist) NGOs engaged with the development of women's activism or with providing assistance to refugees and other survivors of violence. Some of these NGOs are listed earlier in this paragraph, whereas the remaining ones, which have not been brought into connection with nationalism, are left unaddressed.

Zagreb NGOs before the Split

On the eve of the war in Croatia there were three feminist NGOs in Zagreb: Independent Union of Women, Kareta, and Women's Help Now. Many of the then involved feminists also had the experience of being a member or just attending the activities of Woman and Society (Žena i društvo). This academic feminist initiative was established as a section of the Sociologist Association of Croatia in 1979. Lydia Sklevicky (1989: 68), one of the founding members, described this initiative as 'the first alternative women's studies group in post-war [World War II] Yugoslavia'. The activities of Woman and Society focused on organising public debates, lectures and seminars, as well as writing and translating academic and non-academic texts. Its goal was to explore the position of women in Yugoslavia and spread feminist ideas (Barilar, 2000; Drakulić, 2005; Swaneveld, 1984).

Due to this type of work and the high profile of its prominent members – established or rising star academics and publicists – some less established members started criticising the, in their view, privileged elitist armchair character of its activities. After leaving Woman and Society, these feminists in 1986 formed the grassroots Women's Group Trešnjevka (Dobnikar & Jalušić, 2002). In the second half of the 1980s the activities of Woman and Society gradually dissolved. Some of its members joined the newly set up SOS Hotline for Women and Children Victims of Violence in March 1988 and/or formed the Independent Union of Women in April 1990. I will address the creation of these NGOs in the text below.

Women's Group Trešnjevka (Later Called: Women's Help Now)

Women's Group Trešnjevka (Ženska grupa Trešnjevka) was founded in 1986 as a consciousness-raising and self-help group, but not formally registered. When its members launched the SOS Hotline in March 1988, they registered it as a programme activity of the district committee of the

Union of the Socialist Youth of Croatia and could temporarily use one of the Committee's rooms and phone lines. Due to the insecurity and unsuitability of this arrangement, the activists sought more appropriate and permanent housing, but in order to be eligible for receiving such space from the city authorities, Women's Group Trešnjevka had to be registered as a separate organisation. This happened in February 1990, under the name Women's Help Now (*Ženska pomoć sada*).

As all efforts to legally obtain space proved unsuccessful, Women's Help Now squatted two properties. The first squat took place in August/September 1990, after the death of the grandmother of one of the members. The activists moved into the deceased woman's flat – a property of the city of Zagreb – and asked the authorities to allocate the flat to the NGO. Besides for the SOS crisis line and other programme activities, the flat was also used as an emergency shelter for women and children victims of domestic violence. Shortly afterwards, in December 1990, Women's Help Now squatted once more. This time it took over some large office premises which had also belonged to the city of Zagreb. Within a few days the first shelter in Eastern Europe for women and children victims of domestic violence was opened. A decade of juridical turmoil later, in December 2000, the shelter was finally legalised.

In order to increase public awareness of violence against women and have more impact on its prevention and treatment, some members of Women's Help Now – future antinationalist and 'nationalist' alike – decided to participate in the first multiparty local and parliamentary elections in Croatia in April/May 1990. Their candidate list, Women's List, did not win any seats, though. The election programme revolved around violence against women, whereas no attention was given to nationalism, interethnic tensions and the future of Croatia and Yugoslavia. Croatia was only mentioned as one of the two levels (the other one being Zagreb) at which the candidates would demand changes in the area of violence against women: e.g., legislative changes, changes in the court procedures, and establishment of shelters.

The narrow attention to violence against women seems to have been due to the broad theoretical and practical expertise which the involved feminists possessed on this issue (Kodrnja & Vidović, 1988; Singer, 1989). By concentrating on it, they were able to assert themselves as knowers and doers alike and strive to obtain legitimacy and a larger (female) electoral support. The latter was also attempted by correctly presenting the problem of violence against women as one which concerned women in general regardless of their ethnic affiliation. The absence of references to Yugoslavia was not coincidental either, but resulted from the increasing contextual (including legislative) differences between the Yugoslav republics following the constitution of 1974. For example, whereas one of the demands of the Women's List in 1990 was criminalisation of marital rape, Slovenia had already criminalised it in 1977. Given that violence against women did not

fall under the policies which were decided upon at federal level – defence, foreign affairs, and foreign trade – there was no point in advocating any changes at that level.

Kareta

Kareta was established sometime in the spring of 1990 after the dissenting decision of a member of Women's Help Now to become a candidate in the local elections in Zagreb. In view of the approaching elections, Women's Help Now had created a prescription about the passive suffrage of its members. Each activist was free to affiliate with any political party and become its candidate – or an independent one – but only as an individual and not as a member of the NGO. This was done in order to preserve the NGO's autonomy and prevent its work from becoming abused by parties for gaining electoral support. The feminist in question was rebuked by the others for disrespecting this decision and agreeing to appear on the candidate list of the successor party of the League of Communists of Croatia as a representative of Women's Help Now. She interpreted this criticism as an unfair lack of trust in her ability to contribute in that capacity to the improvement of the situation of abused women, but, nonetheless, asked the party to remove her name from the list. After leaving Women's Help Now, she established the Radical Feminist Group Kareta (*Radikalna feministička grupa Kareta*). Following the split of the Zagreb feminists in late 1991, early 1992, this future 'nationalist' feminist resumed the cooperation with some of those who had vehemently opposed her dissidence in the spring of 1990.

In December 1990 Kareta co-organised the Women's Assembly of Croatia² in Zagreb. A few months later, in March 1991, the NGO produced the first issue of the first feminist magazine in Yugoslavia, called *Kareta feministički časopis*. No other issues followed due to the war in Croatia. Kareta also worked on translating the US feminists Andrea Dworkin, Audre Lorde, Catharine MacKinnon, and Adrienne Rich, and in April 1991 organised a celebration of the Walpurgis Night in Zagreb in order to commemorate all women killed as alleged witches.

None of the statements made by Kareta's members in this period revealed any signs of the ethnically marked positioning which these feminists would start using only several months later, after the beginning of the war in Croatia. The key dichotomy in their pre-war analyses was that between men as perpetrators and women as victims. No references to ethnic grievances or ethnically marked perpetrators and victims were made. What was, nevertheless, shared between the war-time positioning of Kareta and its pre-war one – as it had been typically expressed in the US feminist press – was the fervent criticism of communism as an oppressive political

2 A one-day meeting which gathered around 600 feminist and non-feminist women from all over Croatia and guests from other parts of Yugoslavia.

arrangement and the laudation of the new democratic system as liberating. As I show in Chapter 4, Kareta's members promoted their opposition to communism to distinguish themselves from the future Zagreb anti-nationalist feminists. Their foremost aim thereby was to obtain legitimacy and support for their activities from the Western – US, in particular – (feminist) audiences. This strategy was chosen in spite of the fact that one of Kareta's most prominent members was the same feminist who in the spring of 1990 had been on the candidate list of the successor party of the League of Communists of Croatia.

Independent Union of Women

The Independent Union of Women (Nezavisni savez žena)³ was founded in April 1990 by some former members of Woman and Society. Their ambition was to create a wide pan-Yugoslav umbrella organisation which would struggle for factual – instead of the merely proclaimed – gender equality in the country. This was to be done by e.g., advocating women's reproductive rights and equal representation of women in the political bodies and state institutions, as well as by monitoring the legislation from a gender lens. The NGO's programme declaration criticised the position of women not only in socialism, but also in the newly emerging democracies. Women were once more 'in danger of being manipulated in the name of "higher" goals, such as Nation, State, Freedom or Democracy' (Nezavisni savez žena, 1990: 1). With the exception of this sentence, no other (implicit) references to nationalism and polity were made.

Besides co-organising the Women's Assembly of Croatia, the Independent Union of Women was one of the founders of the Antiwar Campaign Croatia in July 1991. During that month some of its members also took part in a daily peace vigil in Zagreb, demanding demilitarisation, peace and economic prosperity. This NGO did not exist for a long time. The dissolution of Yugoslavia and the war in Croatia made the development of an all-Yugoslav umbrella organisation obsolete and the Independent Union was disbanded. Its last mention was in a statement from December 1992. Together with the other Zagreb antinationalist feminist NGOs, it opposed the use of the women raped in war for propaganda aims and pleaded for a sensitive and women-centred approach in working with them.

The Split of Women's Help Now

After the beginning of the war in Croatia there were increasingly more tensions between the members of Women's Help Now with regard to the NGO's positioning on the war violence. Although the NGO was one of

3 In the first analysis in Chapter 4, I address the tensions which accompanied the creation of this NGO.

the founders of the Antiwar Campaign Croatia, as the war progressed fewer women wanted to remain in an antiwar initiative which advocated non-violent solutions and a continuation of the communication and cooperation with the activists from the other republics (Janković & Mokrović, 2011). The existence of the two factions and positionings within Women's Help Now can be read from the statements which were produced in the first months of the war in Croatia and before the final split of the NGO, i.e. between July 1991 and April 1992. As Zagreb9AN pointed out in the interview, it had not been required that all members agree upon a certain text in order to have that statement or letter carry the name of the NGO. That was why the documents from that period could contain opposing positionings. In addition, one could witness one positioning or another depending on which member had been invited to a meeting abroad.

At the last joint meeting of the two factions in April 1992 it was decided to split the NGO in two. The faction of Women's Help Now which did not want to remain in the Antiwar Campaign Croatia and whose positioning on the war violence resembled that of the Croatian government retained the SOS crisis line and the squatted flat. The faction which continued feeling allied with the Antiwar Campaign Croatia and used a more moderate language on perpetrators and victims kept the squatted shelter for victims of domestic violence. In June 1992 the latter faction registered the shelter as a separate NGO called Autonomous Women's House Zagreb.

In an interview (Renne, 1997: 188), a key activist of the shelter described the split as being caused by the 'completely different [work] approaches'. She did not, however, provide any other information on those approaches, including whether they had been in any way war-related. It seems that the positioning on the war in Croatia and the participation in the Antiwar Campaign Croatia had not been the only reasons for the divide, although they may have been the most articulated ones. Some respondents – from both factions – stated various (additional) sources of tension. One was over the question whether Croat women should get preferential treatment in the shelter, given that Croatia had been attacked, or whether one's degree of victimisation by domestic violence should be the only criterion for acceptance, regardless of one's ethnicity. Other reasons included the differences in age, education or world view between the women from the two factions, or their dissimilar work preferences: volunteer vs. paid work, public advocacy against violence against women vs. direct assistance to survivors, and work on an SOS crisis line vs. work in a shelter.

Zagreb 'Nationalist' Feminist Cluster

Women's Help Now – SOS Hotline

After the split, Women's Help Now – SOS Hotline (Ženska pomoć sada – SOS Telefon) continued running the crisis line and the small emergency

shelter which was situated in the same flat. In October 1992, together with Kareta, Women's Help Now organised the international women's gathering Women in War in Zagreb. This gathering caused a great controversy between the two 'nationalist' organisers and the activists of the Autonomous Women's House Zagreb, who were supported by some Belgrade and Ljubljana feminists.⁴ In addition to its work against domestic violence, and due to the increasing influx of refugees arriving in Zagreb, Women's Help Now started providing financial, legal, medical, and psychosocial help to refugees. In February 1994, in cooperation with the Zagreb Faculty of Medicine, the NGO began operating a donated mobile gynaecological unit. This unit moved for two years between the refugee camps in and around Zagreb and provided gynaecological and other medical services to refugees. After the war Women's Help Now abandoned the war-related activities and focused again on the crisis line and the emergency shelter.

Women's Help Now was the only Zagreb 'nationalist' feminist NGO which restored the cooperation with the Zagreb antinationalist feminists. The first common action took place in the spring of 1995 – half a year before the end of the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia – when the NGO joined the pro-choice petition campaign of the other Zagreb cluster. The next joint activity was the 8 March manifestation in 1996, which was also organised by the other cluster. Next to this, Women's Help Now became a member of several initiatives at national level, such as the Women's Ad Hoc Coalition for Monitoring and Influencing Elections,⁵ and the Women's Network Croatia.⁶ These initiatives gathered (feminist) women's NGOs from different parts of Croatia, but were to a great extent shaped by the Zagreb antinationalist feminist cluster. In 2006 Women's Help Now even received an award from the Women's Network Croatia for its 18 years of continuous work on women's human rights and against violence against women.

At the time of data collection Women's Help Now ran the crisis line and the emergency shelter and was a member of the Women's Network Croatia. That Women's Help Now had re-established the cooperation with the Zagreb antinationalist feminists was due to the rapprochement which both sides had made. On the one hand, the activists of Women's Help Now who had spoken most fervently of the Serbs as the aggressors and the non-Serbs as the victims had left the NGO, whereas the remaining members had been more willing to cooperate with the other cluster. On the other hand, exactly because of this change in the membership, the antinationalist feminists had agreed – albeit initially with some caution – to work with this NGO.

4 See the analysis in Chapter 4.

5 This coalition was set up for the first time for the local elections in 1997.

6 A network of (feminist) women's NGOs which was established in 1996 as a platform for joint advocacy activities and exchange of knowledge.

Kareta

When the war in Croatia began Kareta dropped its project of a feminist magazine and started visiting refugee camps to offer psychosocial counselling and distribute humanitarian and other aid. In 1994 it organised the setting up of a donated gynaecological unit – different from that operated by Women's Help Now – in one refugee camp in Croatia. The NGO's main focus was the work against the sexual war crimes committed by the Serb forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. In fact, the co-organisation of the gathering Women in War was Kareta's first big advocacy activity on this topic. In addition to this, its activists collected information and testimonies from the women survivors, spoke at conferences and in the media, and otherwise lobbied in Croatia and abroad for the conceptualisation of those war rapes as part of the Serb femicidal and genocidal strategy, as well as for a general recognition of war rape as a war crime (Armanda, 1992; Gattin, 1992).

Kareta's largest advocacy effort was the participation in the US civil lawsuit against Radovan Karadžić for, inter alia, genocidal acts of rape, forced pregnancy, and enforced prostitution. In this, Kareta worked very closely with the US feminist legal scholar Catharine MacKinnon and her American Croatian former student Natalie Nenadic. The lawsuit was brought to court by MacKinnon in 1993 on behalf of 12 raped women of Bosniak and Croat ethnicity. Its foremost goal was to raise public awareness of the war rapes committed by Serb forces against non-Serb women. The juridical process received assistance also from the Network of Multi-cultural Help, O-zona, and Women's Help Now, as well as from the Zagreb women's NGOs Rampart of Love, BISER, and Women B&H.⁷

Kareta's local activists did not write many articles. Many of the texts where the standpoints of Kareta and its advocacy work are laid out were authored by MacKinnon or Nenadic (Armanda & Nenadic, 1994; MacKinnon, 1993, 2006; Nenadic, 1991, 1996, 2010). However, in the period 1993–1994, when the war rapes were front page news, one form of textual production was often used by Kareta. Its activists wrote letters to conference organisers, editors, and authors of books and articles. In these letters, they expressed their disagreement with the selection of women who were to represent Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia or the post-Yugoslav region, or criticised the portrayal of the wars and the war rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. In 1998 Kareta ceased to exist. Its documentation and archives were brought to the Croatian State Archives by one of its members.

(The Second) Women's Group Trešnjevka

In the summer of 1992 two activists of the informal Women's Group Trešnjevka which existed between 1986 and 1990 registered an NGO

7 BISER and Women B&H were NGOs of Bosnian-Herzegovinian refugee women who resided in Zagreb.

under the same name. Even before the registration the two feminists had used the name of Trešnjevka as their affiliation on separate occasions. One did so when she co-organised the Women's Assembly of Croatia and when she asked the Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights to send letters in support of women's reproductive rights in Croatia. The other used Trešnjevka's name to fundraise for her research on domestic violence. Because the first Trešnjevka had never been formally registered under that name, there was, apparently, no legal problem in reusing the name. Moreover, it seems that these two activists did not feel that they were doing something inappropriate. Zagreb13N told me that they had been the only successors of the first Trešnjevka because its other activists had established new NGOs.

In their press releases and letters for (financial) support, the two feminists presented their NGO as continuously working since 1986. It is, thus, very likely that they had chosen the name Trešnjevka in order to be able to claim a continuity and, consequently, legitimacy for their NGO. Nonetheless, the second Trešnjevka should be distinguished from the first Trešnjevka. In spite of the proclaimed continuity, there was a huge difference between the two entities in their memberships and positionings, especially because the first one functioned in pre-war Yugoslavia and the second one in war-time Croatia. The continuity claim is additionally problematic in light of the apparent gap in Trešnjevka's activities between February 1990 (after the first Trešnjevka officially changed its name to Women's Help Now) and September 1992 (the report of the second Trešnjevka on the war rape camps in Bosnia-Herzegovina). In analysing this period I came across this NGO only five times. The respondents recalled only one of those two feminists and only in connection to the Women's Assembly of Croatia. Trešnjevka's other key activist, Zagreb13N, indirectly confirmed the existence of a gap: '[W]ith the beginning of the war, we activated the group'.

I was unable to find out when and why exactly the first of the two activists had left the first Trešnjevka. She is the only person whom I did not manage to get in touch with. The other activist left the first Trešnjevka most probably in the spring of 1989, following the rejection of her idea to analyse the data obtained from the calls to the SOS crisis line. After the beginning of the war in Croatia, this feminist, just like the member of Women's Help Now discussed above, restored the cooperation (within the 'nationalist' feminist cluster) with some of the feminists with whom she had parted ways earlier. Zagreb1N and Zagreb23AN, two other members of the first Trešnjevka, recalled that the problem between this particular feminist and the others had been her plan to fundraise for a salary. Given that all activists were unpaid volunteers, this – at the time uncommon – proposal was seen as an attempt to obtain personal gain from feminism and everybody's voluntary work. As Zagreb23AN said, given the later professionalisation of NGOs, this rejection might have been exaggerated,

but it was due to the activists' inexperience regarding those issues at the time. Zagreb13N explained that the creation of paid positions was not the only issue. Some members had been unable to see the value of applying scientific and statistical methods in working against violence against women – something which she had particularly pushed for as a sociologist. As I show in Chapter 5, when Zagreb13N spoke about her use of inflated war rape figures in the early 1990s, she created the same dichotomy between herself, who had been acquainted with the impact of statistics, and the others, who had not.

The second Trešnjevka gained great publicity with its report on the war rape camps – 'concentration camp-bordellos' (Kadić, 1992) – in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Its activists were the first to compile and send around such a list. Their goal was to mobilise the international community to put an end to the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the war rapes committed by the Serb forces. After the production of this report, in late 1992 and 1993 the two main activists were often interviewed or invited to speak in Croatia and abroad as experts on the war rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina. They cooperated on this issue with the Bosnian-Herzegovinian war government (Fischer, 1993; Šeparović, 1993). Next to this, the NGO distributed humanitarian aid in refugee camps and offered advice and access to medical services to refugee women. In March 1995, together with Rampart of Love and Women B&H, Trešnjevka unsuccessfully tried to organise a food convoy to several war-affected towns in Bosnia-Herzegovina. This convoy was the last activity of Trešnjevka on which I could find more information. I came across its name once more, on the list of co-organisers of the pro-choice petition of the Zagreb antinationalist feminists. It seems that Trešnjevka had ceased to exist after the spring of 1995.

Network of Multicultural Help

Network of Multicultural Help (Mreža multikulturalne pomoći) was a spin-off of Women's Help Now. Initially established in November 1992 as a project of the latter, the two authors of the project registered it in June 1993 as a separate NGO. This move was a consequence of the different views on how to proceed with the project, as well as of the positive response which the project had received from its target audience – (raped) refugee women who resided in Croatia. The term 'multicultural' referred to the exchange of experiences and help between women of urban and rural origin, and not necessarily between women of different ethnicities.

The Network focused on attending to the 'nonstandard' needs of the refugees, given that 'most humanitarian aid did not go beyond clothes, food and accommodation' (Ćupić, in: Ilinčić, n.d.). In practice, this meant a provision of occupational therapy in the form of e.g., art and looming workshops, and literacy and photography courses. In order to provide a safe space outside the refugee camps and private houses (leased accommodation

or accommodation at relatives/friends) where these women lived, the activists rented a conveniently located house in Zagreb. There the refugees could attend workshops and classes, make use of the feminist library, receive (legal) advice concerning their refugee status and living, exchange information with one another, or simply relax. Another significant activity of the Network was the visit of 150 refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina to their relatives who were refugees in Slovenia. This visit in late 1993 involved extensive cooperation with the Croatian and Slovenian state because the refugees did not have the freedom of movement between countries.

After the end of the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia the Network primarily conducted advocacy activities against (war) violence against women and maintained its assistance – in the form of workshops and support groups – to women survivors of (war) violence. In 1999 and 2000 it participated in MacKinnon's lawsuit against Karadžić, and during the NATO bombing of Serbia, together with Nona and O-zona, sent a letter of support to the Kosovar Albanians. The signatories also asked for a ground intervention by NATO in order to stop the Serb genocide (Vidović & Radić, 2000). After 2000 the Network's activities gradually decreased to the largely dormant level observed in 2009.

Nona

The Multimedia Women's Centre Nona (Multimedijski ženski centar Nona) was established in December 1993 as a space 'which encourages, celebrates, and preserves all forms of women's creative expression' (Jovičić & Miklaužić, 1995: 3). The accent on the provision of a safe location was visible in the way in which the members explained the NGO's name. Nona, i.e. 'grandmother', signified 'safety, nurturance, and grounding for women in a country still embroiled in the turmoil of war' (Jovičić & Miklaužić, 1995: 3). The two co-directors⁸ were former members of Kareta. Their aim was to provide space for women in general – and refugee women from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, in particular – where they could create and present art and literary works, obtain (legal) advice, make use of a feminist library, attend concerts of female musicians, and participate in public lectures and discussions on feminist issues. Furthermore, Nona organised activities for refugee children, as well as a weekly get-together of refugee women from the Croatian town of Vukovar.

A one-off activity of Nona was the production of a daily planner for 1995. The planner indicated important events in the history of feminism and provided information on the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia,

8 Because I could not interview either of them (one was deceased and the other declined my interview invitation), my portrayal is based on the few written sources which I could access.

as well as on Zagreb feminist and women's NGOs which worked with female survivors of (war) violence. None of this information, which was compiled by an activist of Kareta, mentioned the antinationalist feminist NGOs. Nona also published one book of poetry and prose and another of photographs authored by refugee and non-refugee women (Jovičić, 1995; Miklaužić, 1994, 1995). In May 1996 Nona co-authored the demands for fostering the equality of women and men (see in the section on O-zona) and in April 1999 co-wrote the support letter to the Kosovar Albanians (see in the section on the Network of Multicultural Help). In 2002 the NGO carried out an analysis of the stereotypes in the Croatian primary school textbooks, worked on raising public awareness of the presence of landmines in Croatia, and offered assistance to landmine survivors (Jovičić, 2002). The latter was the latest recorded activity of Nona which I came across.

O-zona

In the spring of 1994 Kareta set up a 24/7 crisis line called O-zona Women's Line (O-zona ženska linija). 'O-zona' was a term coined by the US radical feminist Mary Daly and signified a zone without patriarchal pollution. O-zona provided phone and face-to-face counselling to women victims of (war) violence. In May 1996 O-zona and the rest of Kareta, together with the Network of Multicultural Help, Nona and Women's Help Now, submitted a set of demands to the Commission for Equality Issues of the Croatian government. These demands included a constitutional law on the equality of the sexes, state-supported shelters for battered women, and financial state support and tax relief for the women's NGOs. In 1997 several activists, following internal disagreements, left Kareta and registered O-zona as a separate NGO. In cooperation with the Network of Multicultural Help, O-zona advocated legislative changes in the realm of violence against women, domestic violence in particular. Besides this collaborative effort, O-zona also lobbied separately for these issues, as well as for women's reproductive rights (Vidović & Radić, 2000). By 2009 O-zona was close to inactive due to lack of funding.

Zagreb Antinationalist Feminist Cluster

Similarly to the dynamics in the 'nationalist' feminist cluster, NGOs have proliferated also in the antinationalist cluster, albeit in a slightly different form. Unlike what happened in the 'nationalist' cluster, in the antinationalist cluster there was an overlap between the members of the different NGOs, meaning that the same women participated in two or three NGOs. Due to these multiple affiliations, when the available information only contained the names of individual feminists it was often difficult to impossible to pinpoint the exact NGO which had conducted the activity in question.

Autonomous Women's House Zagreb

After the split of Women's Help Now, the shelter Autonomous Women's House Zagreb (Autonomna ženska kuća Zagreb) was registered in June 1992 as a separate NGO by the feminists who wanted to maintain their affiliation with the Antiwar Campaign Croatia. The shelter never became a member of the Antiwar Campaign, but many activists of the former remained involved with the latter. Two antinationalist feminist NGOs which were established later, the Center for Women War Victims (late 1992) and B.a.B.e. (spring of 1994), part of whose staff had previously been or was still active in both above NGOs, did officially join the Antiwar Campaign. Concerning the absence of an official link between the Autonomous Women's House and the Antiwar Campaign, three possible reasons come to mind. The first could be a wish of the shelter's activists to protect its vulnerable clients from the potential danger if the NGO were to publicly declare an unfavourable positioning on the war. Second, the activists might have wanted to keep the shelter accessible to all women survivors of domestic violence, regardless of their political affiliation. Third, given the costs of running such a shelter, it is possible that its activists did not want to ruin all chances of obtaining funds from the city and state authorities.

During the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia the Autonomous Women's House continued to accommodate survivors of domestic violence and offer legal and psychosocial counselling to them.⁹ The NGO also maintained its advocacy work against violence against women, just like its activities for raising the public awareness of this societal problem. All these efforts still went on in 2009, despite the constant threat of closure due to the lack of regular and sufficient funding from the state and the city of Zagreb – a problem which has followed this NGO throughout its existence. In addition to the specialised activities in the realm of peacetime violence against women, and in cooperation with other antinationalist feminist NGOs, the Autonomous Women's House offered e.g., psychosocial support to war rape survivors, lobbied for the recognition of war rape as a war crime, conducted reproductive rights advocacy, and participated in the monitoring of the elections in Croatia through a gender lens (Matijević-Vrsaljko, 2000).

Women's Lobby Zagreb

The increasing war violence and the growing number of (raped) refugee women arriving in Zagreb prompted the antinationalist feminists to

9 A refugee woman could also receive accommodation in the shelter, but only if she was a survivor of domestic violence. By preserving the function of the Autonomous Women's House Zagreb as a shelter only for the women and children victims of domestic violence, the feminist activists – next to providing concrete assistance – wanted to make a clear political statement that the peacetime domestic violence did not stop or become less important in times of war.

commence new activities. In November 1992 the Women's Lobby Zagreb (Ženski lobby Zagreb) – also called Zagreb Women's Lobby (Zagrebački ženski lobby) – was established as an informal initiative of feminists who were already active in the Antiwar Campaign Croatia, the Autonomous Women's House Zagreb, the Independent Union of Women, and/or the newly set up Women's Infoteka. The goal of this political pressure body was to come together ad hoc to produce press releases on burning issues and do advocacy work on women's (reproductive) rights. It turned out that one part of its activities was writing rectifications of articles and statements by Croatian journalists or the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists in which the work and/or the personas of the antinationalist feminists had been maligned. Zagreb7AN recollected that the Lobby had still existed at the time of the pro-choice campaign in the spring of 1995 and according to Barilar (2000), the initiative ceased to exist in 1995. As I found only one record of an activity after 1993, it seems that the Lobby had been dissolved somewhere in 1995 at latest.

Center for Women War Victims

The Center for Women War Victims (Centar za žene žrtve rata) was launched in late 1992 by the activists of Women's Lobby Zagreb with the aim to create an NGO which would specifically and explicitly cater to the needs of female refugees regardless of their ethnicity. Although from the very beginning the activists were aware that some female refugees would also have the trauma of war rape, it was decided not to put the terms 'war rape' or 'sexual violence' in the name of the NGO. Thereby the activists wanted to avoid the potential stigmatisation of those who would receive support. Initially housed at the office premises of the Antiwar Campaign Croatia, after securing sufficient funding from foreign sources, the Center for Women War Victims moved to a larger location in March 1993.

The Center became the biggest feminist NGO in Zagreb, employing many refugee women, too. The provision of employment to refugee women was a conscious political decision in order to foster solidarity between refugee and non-refugee women, empower the refugee activists, as well as obtain easier access to and more trust within the refugee population. The activists visited refugee camps to give psychosocial and legal counselling, facilitate (the setting up of) refugee self-help groups, distribute humanitarian and financial aid, as well as help refugees with their migration to third countries. For the female refugees who lived in private housing the NGO organised activities at its premises. In addition to providing direct assistance to women, the Center for Women War Victims – separately or together with the other antinationalist feminist NGOs – lobbied for halting the war rapes and treating them as war crimes. These demands were stated at diverse locations: e.g., at a vigil in Zagreb on the UN

Human Rights Day in 1992, during the MADRE speakers tour in the spring of 1993, and at the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in June 1993. At other times, the activists wrote articles, organised petitions, spoke at conferences abroad or gave interviews to foreign journalists.

After the end of the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, the work with the remaining refugee population in the Zagreb area was gradually reduced. Due to the departure of refugees and the significant decrease of the foreign funds for such activities, the Center increasingly started to focus on the position of women in peacetime. The NGO conducted advocacy work against violence against women and trafficking in women, offered one-on-one counselling to women victims of violence, worked on community and trust building in the parts of Croatia which had been heavily affected by the war, participated in the Women's Network Croatia and the ad hoc women's coalitions in the country, and gave trainings to women's NGOs in Croatia and elsewhere in the post-Yugoslav region. For the purpose of maintaining the awareness of the position of the (raped) women in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Center for Women War Victims cooperated with the US playwright Eve Ensler. This resulted in the autumn of 1996 in the play *Necessary Targets*, which was based on war rape stories from Bosnia-Herzegovina and staged on Broadway. During the Kosovo war in 1999 several activists went to Albania to transfer their experiences to the local women's NGOs which worked with the Kosovar Albanian refugees. With the exception of the refugee work, the Center's other activities still went on in 2009 (Belić, Borić & Kesić, 1994; Kesić, Janković & Bijelić, 2003).

Women's Infoteka

Women's Information and Documentation Center (Ženski informacijsko-dokumentacijski centar) or Women's Infoteka (Ženska infoteka) was founded in November 1992. Its purpose was to gather and produce information about and for the (feminist) women's NGOs, and be a resource centre on gender issues. Therefore, the NGO created a database of the women's (feminist) NGOs in Croatia, started to publish a feminist magazine in the autumn of 1993, opened a public feminist library and archive, made monthly press clipping collections on women's issues from the major Croatian dailies, and published local and foreign feminist literature. Infoteka also organised (international) seminars and conferences on different topics, such as: women's and feminist movements in post-socialist countries, class differences in feminism, women and politics, and women in history. This NGO played initially an important role in the development of electronic communication between the women's activists in the post-Yugoslav region through *ZaMir BBS (ForPeace Bulletin Board*

System).¹⁰ The US feminist Kathryn Turnipseed started to work with Infoteka in 1994 – and later with B.a.B.e. and the Center for Women War Victims – to set up the project Electronic Witches. In the scope of this project she gave computer training to women's (feminist) activists in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, and Serbia proper, and helped them obtain computers and modems.

After the war years, in addition to its documentation and information activities, Women's Infoteka participated in the Women's Network Croatia and the ad hoc coalitions of the Zagreb antinationalist feminist cluster. Finally, Infoteka also produced gender analyses of the programmes of the Croatian political parties, the electoral process, and the election results (Czegledy, 1995; Knežević & Zaborski-Čunović, 2000; Turnipseed, 1996). Infoteka still functioned in early 2009, but only its library collection was publicly accessible because of the move to a new office space. It turned out later that by then there had already been a serious decline in its activities: the only publication produced that year was the 35th issue of its magazine. Somewhere in 2011 Infoteka's website stopped functioning. In January 2012 its former long-standing director wrote that the NGO had ceased to exist.

B.a.B.e.

B.a.B.e. ('Be active, Be emancipated') was established in April 1994 by feminists already active in the Women's Lobby Zagreb. The goal of B.a.B.e. was to specialise in legal and advocacy issues aiming at the improvement of the position of women in the society. Before the catchy acronym was invented, the initiative had signed its documents as Zagreb Group for Women's Human Rights (Zagrebačka grupa za ljudska prava žena). Afterwards its full name became B.a.B.e. Women's Human Rights Group (B.a.B.e. Grupa za ženska ljudska prava). B.a.B.e. advocated for women's reproductive rights and the rights of women refugees in Croatia, as well as against violence against women. It analysed laws and media contents from a gender perspective, monitored the status of women's human rights in

10 A now outdated system of electronic communication, set up by foreign and post-Yugoslav civil society activists in the period 1992–1994. *ZaMir* enabled the activists from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Serbia proper, Slovenia, and Vojvodina to exchange emails with each other and with people outside of the BBS (both within the post-Yugoslav region and in third countries). The possibility to exchange information by dialling a local phone number was extremely important in a context of state-controlled media, closed borders, non-functioning postal services, and cut-off phone lines between some post-Yugoslav republics. Without *ZaMir*, one would e.g., need to send a fax from Croatia to somebody in Austria and ask them to forward it to Serbia. Or, a person in Sarajevo would call somebody in Germany and give them the news so that the intermediary would call the person in Croatia for whom the information had been intended in the first place. Obviously, this BBS made the communication easier, cheaper, and more direct and frequent (Janković, 2009; Janković & Mokrović, 2011; Knežević, 2000; Stubbs, 2004).

Croatia and protested against their violations, travelled to different parts of the post-Yugoslav region to train women's NGOs on this topic, and published relevant educational brochures. In 1995 B.a.B.e. organised the attendance of the Croatian NGO delegation to the NGO Forum at the Fourth UN World Conference on Women in Beijing (Belić, 2004; Magelssen & Sarnavka, 1998). During the Kosovo war and the NATO bombing of Serbia B.a.B.e. produced critical statements on the war rapes in Kosovo, the treatment of Kosovar refugees, and the bombing.

Whereas B.a.B.e. had been one of the initiators of the Women's Network Croatia (and the ad hoc coalitions), it left the Network in 2004. This move was caused by a disagreement regarding the support which the Network's coordinator had allegedly offered to the only female candidate at the 2004 Croatian presidential elections. In the view of B.a.B.e., this support had compromised the Network's independent and neutral status. In 2009 B.a.B.e. was still active, but it shifted its focus from women's rights to human rights in general. Its future help services and advocacy and educational activities were to be organised around the core topics of gender equality, prevention and elimination of gender-based violence, and promotion of human rights.

Centre for Women's Studies

February 1995 saw the launching of the Centre for Women's Studies (Centar za ženske studije) – three years later than its Belgrade counterpart. This time lag had probably to do with the great demand for psychosocial and humanitarian assistance which the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia had imposed on the Zagreb feminists. The Centre was a spin-off of Women's Infoteka and its aim was to offer a feminist perspective on women's issues, link theoretical, activist and artistic feminism, and raise public awareness of the position of women. The realisation of this goal was operationalised by doing research, publishing books and a feminist magazine, running a feminist library, organising one-year educational programmes in women's studies, (international) conferences, seminars and workshops, as well as participating in the women's ad hoc coalitions and the Women's Network Croatia. Despite being the first interdisciplinary educational institution in Croatia in the field of women's studies and having a broad expertise and staff and lecturers with university positions, the Centre is still not integrated in the official Croatian educational system. Its certificates remain unrecognised by the Croatian authorities (Barada et al., 2003; Barilar, 2000).

In October 1996 the Centre for Women's Studies organised in Zagreb the big international conference Women and the Politics of Peace, which was dedicated to the participation of women in war resistance and peacebuilding. Next to participants from other conflict regions in the world, women from other post-Yugoslav countries were present as well. However, none of the speakers belonged to the Zagreb (or Belgrade) 'nationalist' feminist cluster. This exclusion has continued throughout the years. With the exception of two

feminists, none of the (guest) lecturers at the Centre came from or was related to the other Zagreb feminist cluster (Kašić, 1997).

The cooperation between this NGO and one Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminist is not that surprising given that it concerned the feminist whom some respondents described as a bridge between the Zagreb clusters and a person who had abandoned her former war-related positionings. Much more striking is the collaboration with one Zagreb university professor, who had worked during the war years with the Rampart of Love and Women’s Help Now. The peculiar character of this occurrence becomes more obvious if one considers that in 1993 the Center for Women War Victims – some of whose activists became members of the Centre for Women’s Studies – had expressed its unwillingness to work with the professor in question. This was due to her criticism of the ‘five witches’¹¹ and affiliation with Rampart of Love – an NGO which had participated earlier in the denouncement of the Center for Women War Victims (Lóránd, 2014). Another in this sense remarkable cooperation is that which the Centre for Women’s Studies established in the second half of the 1990s with several scholars from the Zagreb-based Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research. In the early war-time publications of some of these academics (e.g., Čale Feldman, Prica & Senjković, 1993), the expressed war-related positionings on perpetrators and victims sometimes resembled those of the Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminists. This shows a certain inconsistency in the Centre’s criteria for (re)establishment of collaboration, i. e. the not per se decisive influence of one’s war-time positionings on that choice. I will return to this issue in Chapter 5.

Belgrade NGOs

Woman and Society

The establishment of the Zagreb academic initiative Woman and Society in 1979 and the enthusiasm of its members inspired some women in Belgrade to set up in 1980 a similar initiative with almost the same name: Feminist Group Woman and Society (Feministička grupa Žena i društvo). Whereas the Zagreb Woman and Society was more institutionalised by virtue of being a section of the Sociologist Association of Croatia, the Belgrade one was an informal initiative. During the get-togethers, which initially took place at people’s homes, feminist literature was discussed and personal experiences were shared. These encounters served, thus, as a platform for consciousness-raising and self-help alike. A bit later the need was felt to present feminist ideas to a broader audience and in the form of open public debates. The popular Student Cultural Centre – the location of the international feminist conference Comrade (m/f) Woman in 1978 (Bonfiglioli, 2008) – hosted these debates. Diverse topics were covered: e.g., women’s writing, abortion, media

11 See the analysis of Women in War in Chapter 4.

images of women and men, sexuality, women's health, violence against women, women and art, and women and the left.

Analogous to the Zagreb Woman and Society, wherein some men participated as well, its Belgrade counterpart was initially also open to men. This was to change in the second phase of its existence, after the two initial organisers had withdrawn due to feeling that they had exhausted their organisational capacities and the format of the debates. In 1986 the organisation of the activities went into the hands of a feminist who was a proponent of women-only activities. It would be in this phase that increasing awareness would be raised of female homosexuality and (domestic) violence against women, including the setting up in March 1990 of an SOS crisis line for women and children victims of violence. This development in the second half of the 1980s belonged to a broader trend in Yugoslav feminism which had earlier led to the establishment of such a line in Zagreb in 1988 and in Ljubljana in 1989. The activists of the Belgrade Woman and Society also started conducting street surveys in order to obtain more information on the position of women, especially those whom they did not manage to reach through the largely intellectual public debates. Just like the Zagreb feminists in the late 1980s, the Belgrade ones conducted groundbreaking work in exposing the myths about domestic violence and violence against women in general, as well as in raising the public awareness of the existence of those problems in Yugoslavia – contrary to the claims of the state authorities (Benderly, 1994; Vušković & Trivunac, 1998).

In anticipation of the first multiparty elections in Serbia in December 1990 and given the increasing pronatalist discourses in the public sphere, Woman and Society sent out a public appeal warning that in 'times of social and economic turbulence the inequality of women is constantly hushed up in the name of the "more important" problems' (Feministička grupa, 1990: 1). The political parties were called upon to pay more attention to the position of women, and women were encouraged to boycott those parties whose programmes did not attend to their needs. Finally, Woman and Society demanded that the basic women's right to decide upon child-birth was to be respected and that 'none of the so-called interests of the Nation, State, [and] Church should dare endanger this right' (Feministička grupa, 1990: 1).

The comparison of this appeal with the declaration of the Women's Assembly of Croatia written several months later (First Women's Assembly, 1990) yields a strong resemblance. The similarity of the two texts points to the analogies between the socio-economic and political situations in Croatia and Serbia at the time,¹² the cooperation and exchange which

12 Balen's (1990) analysis of the programmes of the political parties in Croatia and Serbia shows that in both republics the majority of parties accentuated the ethnic issues and either fully neglected women or spoke about them as having to contribute to the ethnic, demographic, and moral restoration of the society.

existed between the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists, and their shared positioning on the societal status of women. Furthermore, in both documents there is an observable absence of explicit mention of nationalism, omission of the secessionist tendencies in Yugoslavia and the calls for restructuring the federation, and a (strategically useful) conceptualisation of women as a general category of people who suffer due to their gender and regardless of their ethnic and political affiliation.

In late 1990 and early 1991 the members of Woman and Society started establishing or becoming involved in other formal and informal feminist and/or antiwar initiatives. After 1991 the documents produced by its members, now active elsewhere, were signed with the names of the new initiatives. The never registered Woman and Society was, apparently, disbanded.

SOS Hotline

The SOS Hotline for Women and Children Victims of Violence (SOS telefon za žene i decu žrtve nasilja), set up by activists of Woman and Society, had operated as an informal initiative for almost two years before it was registered as an NGO in November 1992. Similarly to the Zagreb SOS Hotline, which was initially housed in a space allocated to the Union of the Socialist Youth of Croatia, the Belgrade SOS Hotline could work in the beginning in the Home of Youth – an educational and cultural centre belonging to the Union of the Socialist Youth of Serbia. In those times of political turbulence, when the disappearance of the socialist institutions also meant (a temporary) opening up of some previously unimaginable possibilities, the SOS was allowed to use the office of the director of the Home of Youth after the end of the work day. This situation lasted only half a year. The need for a more appropriate, permanent, and safe housing for the crisis line, which would also include a shelter for women and children victims of violence, made the activists repeatedly write to the city authorities to ask for such a space.

This need became even more pressing after the activists had to move twice within the Home of Youth, but especially after the SOS Hotline's premises were broken into and rummaged through. According to Četković's (1998a) short reference, this incident followed a discussion on the domestic violence which the men active in the Serb paramilitary units in Croatia committed upon their return to Serbia. In 1992 the SOS was given space owned by the City of Belgrade, thanks to the then vice-president of the city council Nada Popović-Perišić. Despite her academic feminist work and participation in the activities of Woman and Society, some activists felt uncomfortable with this deed because of her membership in Milošević's party. The NGO kept that space eventually, whereas the uneasiness seems to have been resolved by obtaining additional space from a local council run by the opposition, as well as by insisting on the NGO's autonomy and freedom from political pressures.

Towards the second half of 1990 it became obvious that the women who worked on the SOS (the former activists of Woman and Society, plus the newly admitted volunteers) held different views on the worsening political situation in Yugoslavia and the prominence of the discourse of ethnic grievances. These diverse positionings within the NGO complicated the production of public statements on topics other than the protection of women's rights in general. To solve this problem it was decided that the SOS would only (co-)produce general statements on women's rights and violence against women, without linking them to ethnic issues and the broader political context. This choice also benefited the crisis line's function as a service provider for women regardless of their political affiliation. The feminists who wanted to connect women's issues to other political issues established the informal initiative Belgrade Women's Lobby. Those who were active in the SOS and the Lobby alike were to use a different discourse in their public statements depending on which entity they represented at the concrete moment (Ćetković, 1998a; Mladenović, 1995; Zaharijević, 2007).

It seems, however, that the tensions in the SOS continued. Without giving any further details, Mladenović & Litričin describe them – and the way they have been dealt with – as follows:

Despite the fact that the SOS group had a deliberately non-nationalist policy from the beginning, some volunteers were unable to keep their nationalist feelings out of their SOS work. Several [reconciliation] attempts were made...[A]fter that some of the women left and some of them stayed and remained silent.

(1993: 117)

Belgrade3AN rejected the suggestion of nationalism-related frictions within this NGO and spoke of leadership conflicts, but Belgrade5AN and Belgrade14AN recalled the differences in awareness of Serbia's foremost responsibility for the wars. One cannot detect, though, such variations in the public reports and co-signed statements which were produced around the same time as the above essay of Mladenović & Litričin. These documents depict the SOS Hotline as an antiwar NGO which did not divide women on the basis of ethnicity and worked against nationalism. Belgrade5AN hinted at this internal presence and external absence of disagreement by saying that some members 'did not have for sure the political clarity and sharpness regarding the war. It [the positioning] was not really homogenised, but the platform was indisputable.'

Next to the provision of phone counselling, the NGO offered to the women survivors of violence direct support in dealing with the relevant state bodies, such as the police and the medical institutions, and provided humanitarian, psychosocial, and other assistance to women and children in refugee camps. Unlike its Zagreb counterpart, the Belgrade SOS Hotline

did not initially possess any premises where it could shelter the women and children in need. In the most serious cases the activists offered temporary housing either in their own homes or gathered money to put the woman (and her child/ren) in a hotel. From April 1994 onward, thanks to foreign donations, the SOS started renting private accommodation where it could offer longer term housing and provide better assistance (Ćetković, 1998c; Stanojević, 1993).

In December 1992 a special section was formed within the SOS whose focus was on the women survivors of sexual war violence. The establishment of this initiative – whose initial name was Group for Women Raped in War – was triggered by the visit of Swiss women's activists in November 1992. They had come to Belgrade to inquire about the position and treatment of raped women in the refugee camps and medical institutions. Due to the observed lack of psychosocial assistance to this specific group of refugees, the Swiss activists agreed to provide financial support and know-how so that the Belgrade activists could purchase office premises and establish a centre for women who had survived (war-related) sexual violence. This led to the opening of the Autonomous Women's Center Against Sexual Violence on 10 December 1993 – the UN Human Rights Day. Although the Center was registered as a freestanding NGO only somewhere in the late 1990s, very soon after its establishment in 1993 its activists started using only its name on the documents and publications. I will, therefore, address the Center separately.

Throughout the 1990s (and the 2000s) the SOS maintained its assistance to women and children victims of violence through phone and face-to-face counselling, as well as provision of safe accommodation, legal help, and support in the communication with state institutions. In April 1997 it initiated the creation of the Network against Male Violence against Women. The Network gathered NGOs and individuals mostly from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, but also some from the neighbouring Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia. Non-nationalism was one of its explicitly stated principles to which all (potential) members were required to subscribe. The Network accentuated its boundary transgression character further by stating that it did not have language or territorial limitations (Protić, 1999).

Belgrade Women's Lobby

The Belgrade Women's Lobby (Beogradski ženski lobi) – also called Women's Lobby Belgrade (Ženski lobi Beograd) – was launched out of the need of some members of the SOS Hotline to publicly speak on the political situation in Yugoslavia. Like its later established Zagreb counterpart, the Belgrade Women's Lobby was an ad hoc informal advocacy body which wrote statements primarily against women-unfriendly practices, and asked for introducing women-friendly ones. Its name appeared for the first time

in June 1990 on two petitions¹³ co-authored with the Feminist Group Belgrade¹⁴ and several small political parties. The requests of the first petition included easy access to contraceptives and abortion, whereas the second one criticised the draft resolution for demographic restoration of Serbia for discriminating against unmarried and childless people, and those from the ethnic groups with a higher birth rate (read: Albanians and Roma). In September 1990 the Lobby announced its Minimal Programme of Women's Demands. In view of the forthcoming elections, the Lobby called on the political parties to include a gender perspective, and outlined a set of demands for improving the situation of women. The adjective 'minimal' notwithstanding, those demands required radical changes: e.g., shortening of the work day so that women and men could equally share the household tasks, full respect for the women's right to decide upon childbirth, criminalisation of marital rape, and decriminalisation of sex work.

Some of the Lobby's later statements were an appeal for a peaceful solution to the Yugoslav crisis (March 1991; together with Woman and Society), a protest against the patriarchal and warmongering messages in the school textbooks in Serbia (August 1991), a reminder of what war crimes are and a warning against committing them (October 1991; together with the Women's Parliament),¹⁵ an appeal to the citizens of Serbia for solidarity with the (mostly female) refugee population in the country (March 1994), a letter to Milošević not to sign the new and much more restrictive abortion law (May 1994), a rebuke of the Serbian regime's violence against the Kosovar Albanians (May 1998; together with the Autonomous Women Center and Women in Black) and in August 1998 a protest against the campaign for increasing the birth rate in Serbia (Ćetković, 1998b, 1998d; Ćetković et al., 1995). The latest mention of the Lobby which I came across was an article published in April 2000.

Women's Party (ŽEST)

The Women's Party (Ženska stranka)¹⁶ or ŽEST was officially registered in October 1990, two months before the first multiparty elections in Serbia.

13 Ćetković (1998b) situates the establishment of the Lobby in September 1990, but that seems incorrect given these two petitions.

14 There has not been any initiative with this name. Most likely it concerns the Feminist Group Woman and Society.

15 The Women's Parliament was launched on 8 March 1991 by the Belgrade Women's Lobby, the Women's Party, and Woman and Society, in reaction to the miniscule percentage of elected women in the Serbian parliament. Led by the idea that there was no democracy without women, the initiators gathered women active in NGOs, female politicians from various parties, and individual women. Until its disbandment by mid-1993 the Women's Parliament served as a think tank and a monitoring and advocacy body (Imširović, 1998).

16 The Women's Party was not an NGO, but my respondents treated it as such, just like Cockburn (1991), Milić (1998), Mladenović & Litrčin (1993), and Zaharijević (2007).

According to Milić (1998), ŽEST was built upon the tradition of the first Women's Party in Serbia, which had been established in 1927 to advocate implementation of female suffrage. As a word, ŽEST meant strength, whereas as an acronym it stood for Žene (Women), Etika (Ethics), Solidarnost (Solidarity), and Tolerancija (Tolerance). The majority of its members were women – including Belgrade feminists – but it had some male membership, too.

The Women's Party eventually did not participate in the local and parliamentary elections in December 1990: It did not manage to create candidate lists in such a short time. By way of experiment it attempted to take part in the presidential elections with a shared candidacy of one female and one male party member – a choice made in the spirit of promoting a partnership of women and men. However, its proposal was rejected as illegitimate by the court in charge. ŽEST's members seem to have been aware that even if they had participated in the elections, their chances of any electoral success would have been quite slim. They had hoped, nevertheless, that their presence in the media would empower women and make the other parties put forward female candidates and pay more attention to the position of women. This was indeed somewhat the case during the election campaign, but it did not have a lasting effect (Cockburn, 1991; Milić, 1998).

After the results of the 1990 parliamentary elections (only 1.6% of the elected parliamentarians were female), the Women's Party – together with the Belgrade Women's Lobby and Woman and Society – submitted to the Serbian parliament a demand for installing a Ministry of Women. In January 1991, in reaction to the increasing prominence of the discourse of interethnic hatred all over Yugoslavia, ŽEST appealed to all citizens not to allow their fear, insecurity, and parental and ethnic feelings to be manipulated for warmongering purposes. Its later activities included the action to replace violent toys with non-violent alternatives, the debate for recognition of unpaid female domestic labour, the joint advocacy with the SOS Hotline and the Women's Parliament for changes in the marriage law, and the demand to Yugoslavia's federal and republican parliamentarians to end the armed violence by non-violent negotiations which would include women. In July 1991 ŽEST was one of the founders of the Centre for Antiwar Action – the Belgrade counterpart of the Antiwar Campaign Croatia. The latest found document of the Women's Party was a letter to the Serbian parliamentarians from October 1991:¹⁷ The parliamentarians were asked to recognise their accountability for the war and stop it.

In its Charter of Intentions (Ženska stranka, n.d.: 3), ŽEST expressed its general protest against 'national-chauvinist madness and hatred', and criticised the warmongering fixation on ethnic issues as detached from the

17 Given this letter it seems that Milić (1998) mistakenly situates the disbandment of ŽEST in the summer of 1991.

political, economic, social, and cultural issues. Incoherence can be observed, though, in its antiwar and non-violent orientation. As Zaharijević (2007) remarks, the Charter contained a positioning which largely resembled one of the two justifications which Milošević gave for his violent politics – the importance of preserving Yugoslavia within its federal borders.¹⁸ The problematic paragraph read as follows:

The party will not compromise in opposing and aiming at disclosing each attempt to solve the interethnic relations in a violent and intolerant manner, regardless of who its agents are, and it will in the same way oppose each attempt to attack and breach the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia and its republics.

(Ženska stranka, n.d.: 5)

This leads to the question why the Women's Party froze its work in late 1991. Several texts state that its activities were hindered by – further not elaborated – internal nationalism-related conflicts (Hughes & Mladenović, 1995; Hughes, Mladenović & Mršević, 1995; Mladenović & Hughes, 2000; Mladenović & Litričin, 1993, 1998). However, none of my respondents, including the (antinationalist) ones who had been its members, could confirm this. Neither could I find an organisational document or a newspaper article in support of the above claim. When I asked the authors of the first text wherein this claim had appeared (Mladenović & Litričin, 1993) to give me concrete examples, they seemed perplexed and could not remember any. The other written sources and interviews provided only non-war-related explanations of the disbandment: disagreement regarding whether to run for the 1990 elections in coalition with other political parties or independently, insufficient financial means and organisational capacities, lack of willingness to run for the elections, fatigue of the key members, and personal conflicts (Milić, 1996, 1998). Zaharijević (2007: 246) is the only author who possibly sheds light on this issue by suggesting that the above paragraph might have divided the members: '[I]t is almost certain that not everybody could support [it] easily'. Due to this ambiguity, the claim on nationalism should be taken with a pinch of salt.

Women's Studies Center

In 1991 some members of Woman and Society, two feminists in particular, started working on setting up a women's studies programme. This move, due to the pressing need for knowledge which recognised women as societal actors, had been one of the resolutions of the Third Yugoslav Feminist Gathering in 1990. The aim of the Belgrade Women's Studies Center

18 The other justification was the protection of Serbs all over Yugoslavia (Vasiljević, 2008; Zaharijević, 2007).

(Centar za ženske studije)¹⁹ was to make a bridge between feminist theory and activism by offering education in feminist theory, motivating the students to become feminist activists and, as Duhaček (1998) summarises, producing knowledge by women, on women, and for women.

The initial plan was to launch the experimental programme in the autumn of 1991, but its realisation was postponed due to the war in Croatia, which had begun in the meanwhile. The cease-fire in January 1992 gave hope to the organisers that the war was over.²⁰ Consequently, the plan to launch women's studies was re-enacted and 8 March 1992 was chosen as the start date of the experimental programme. Each feminist who lectured in this first programme attended the other lectures, too, by way of self-education and exchange of knowledge. Some council members and lecturers were also active in Women in Black, which regularly protested, published, and sent out press releases on war-related issues. However, the Women's Studies Center was not very outspoken on those matters in the 1990s. Its main political activity was the creation of alternative knowledge. It seems, thus, that the situation in the Women's Studies Center resembled that at the Belgrade SOS Hotline. The Center was generally positioned against nationalism and the wars, but refrained from producing more concrete statements in order to provide education to as large an audience as possible (Dojčinović-Nešić, 1998; Duhaček, 1998; Mladenović, 2002).

The Center's council members differed in their views on the mainstreaming of women's studies and in their preference for theory or practice. A number of Belgrade respondents mentioned this difference as the reason for the Center's split in 1998. Others singled out the disagreement between the two initiators on the extent of Serbia's responsibility for the war violence. The latter divide corresponded to the different preferences of these two feminists regarding the functioning within or outside academia (the academism vs. activism difference). Belgrade16N provided a third interpretation: the donor-driven change from the more democratic collective coordination to the more hierarchical single coordination which increased the possibilities for power abuse. I will return to this in the analysis of the Center in Chapter 4.

After the split between the two initiators, the bigger proponent of activism established the Association for Women's Initiative (Asocijacija za žensku inicijativu), whose name was later changed to Association of Autonomous Women's Initiatives (Asocijacija autonomnih ženskih inicijativa). The

19 This programme in women's studies was not the same as the formal academic one which was set up between 1992 and 1993 at the Belgrade Faculty of Philosophy (Blagojević, 1998b). The feminist scholars who engaged with those women's studies lectured and otherwise participated in the NGO-based women's studies, too.

20 This hope proved premature. The cease-fire in Croatia turned out to be only temporary and the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina erupted in April that year.

Association maintained its grassroots and autonomous character. At the time of data collection it promoted women's cooperatives and small businesses, assisted the self-organisation and networking of women throughout Serbia, published books, and offered low-cost courses in foreign languages. The initiator who preferred theoretical work remained running the Women's Studies Center. Since the early 2000s the Center has been associated with the Faculty of Political Sciences at the Belgrade University, while maintaining its NGO status and educational and publishing activities. Many of the women who were active there in 2009 were also members of the Center for Gender Studies and Politics – an official part of the Faculty of Political Sciences.

Women in Black

Women in Black (*Žene u crnom*) was set up in October 1991 by feminists and antiwar activists who were already engaged in the mixed gender NGO Centre for Antiwar Action. The creation of a separate women's NGO was caused by the need to give visibility to women's public and private antiwar efforts. More precisely, although women made up the majority of members of the Belgrade antiwar initiatives, it was usually men who received the media and public attention. Even more hidden was women's private resistance in the form of emotional and financial support to, and acquisition of legal and other advice for, their male family members and friends who were deserters or draft evaders. The direct inspiration came from the Italian Women in Black, who in the early autumn of 1991 travelled to different parts of the (post-)Yugoslav region as part of a larger group of Western peace activists. Developed by Israeli women peace activists in 1988, the concept of Women in Black meant conducting silent vigils. The message was transferred by banners held by protestors dressed in black, and the mere presence of (female) bodies in the public space. This at the time novel form of protest was explained on the leaflet which the Belgrade Women in Black distributed at their first vigil on 9 October 1991. On that leaflet the activists also expressed their opposition to patriarchy, war, and the political rulers in general, without singling out any ethnic group (Fridman, 2006; Zajović, 1993, 1995).

For the greatest part of the 1990s Women in Black held weekly vigils in a central location in Belgrade (in the late 1990s they were replaced with monthly ones, and in the period of martial law during the NATO bombing in 1999 no vigils were held). The activists – few of whom were men – regularly produced press releases, supported conscientious objectors and deserters, visited refugee camps to offer psychosocial and other assistance and distribute humanitarian aid, organised yearly international women's peace and solidarity gatherings, and extensively published books, brochures, leaflets and, from 1995, a magazine on conscientious objection. Starting from 1997 the NGO began developing the Women in Black Network

Serbia – a platform of NGOs and individual activists for exchange of knowledge and joint actions. Women in Black articulated a very broad political agenda: opposition to war, war rapes, ethnic cleansing, militarism, nationalism, fascism, and religious fundamentalism (especially those employed by the Serb political, military, and clerical authorities), non-violence, civil disobedience, solidarity with (Serb) refugees and women (and men) of the allegedly inimical ethnic groups, freedom of choice regarding use of arms and reproduction etc. Women in Black sharply criticised Serbia's repressive politics against the Kosovar Albanians and paid special attention to the expression of support to and the development of cooperation with the Kosovar Albanian feminist and women's activists (Božinović, 1998; Zajović, 1996, 1999).

Although the Serbian state has never banned Women in Black, its work did not go smoothly and risk-free. Besides the police obstruction of gatherings and actions, the activists were regularly subjected to threats and verbal attacks, in particular during the vigils. Therefore, they had to use a lot of precaution regarding their personal safety and the preservation of the secret address of their office premises. In August 1995, following the denial of entrance to Serbia of some Western feminists who travelled to a Women in Black gathering, two activists of this NGO were subjected to police interrogation. One of the problematic points was the alleged invitation of Croat women to the gathering at the time when Croatia was ethnically cleansing the Croatian Serbs. In September 1998, half a year before the NATO bombing, Vojislav Šešelj, the then vice-president of the Serbian government, accused the members of Women in Black of being traitors and threatened them with violence should NATO attack Serbia. The greatest recorded security risks which this NGO experienced occurred in the late spring and the summer of 2000 – the last months of Milošević's rule. Women in Black was among the NGOs whose activities and finances were scrutinised by the Serbian authorities. This included confiscation of materials and hard disks, raids of activists' homes, long interrogations, and issuing of arrest warrants for two activists. A third activist was detained for a day by the state security service. During the interrogation verbal and physical violence was used and he was forced to produce statements about being involved in espionage against Serbia.

In 2009 Women in Black was still very active, but its work was somewhat changed in line with the altered socio-political contexts of Serbia and the Yugoslav successor states. There were only occasional vigils to commemorate events which this NGO considered to be of utmost importance for Serbia, such as the Serb genocide against Bosniaks in Srebrenica. Also, the members have started paying regular commemorative visits to places which had been particularly affected by the wars, and were actively involved in the Women's Peace Coalition, which was set up in 2006 by the Women in Black Network Serbia and the Kosova Women's Network (Zajović, 2007, 2009).

Autonomous Women's Center

The Autonomous Women's Center (Autonomni ženski centar) was established in December 1993 by members of the SOS Hotline. Its initial name was Autonomous Women's Center Against Sexual Violence (Autonomni ženski centar protiv seksualnog nasilja). The presence of the term 'sexual violence' was intended to increase the visibility of this peace and wartime phenomenon and empower the women survivors to speak about it. The need to raise awareness of this issue became even more pressing in light of the war rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the intensification of the domestic sexual violence committed by Serb soldiers on home leave.

The Center developed a broad range of activities. It offered face-to-face counselling, self-help groups, and legal advice for women victims of male violence, set up an SOS crisis line which was specialised in sexual violence, distributed humanitarian aid to refugees in refugee camps and private accommodation in Serbia, organised psychosocial therapy for refugee women, and during the siege of Sarajevo collected and sent via humanitarian organisations food packages, letters, and money to its inhabitants regardless of ethnicity. As part of the advocacy efforts to combat (sexual) violence against women and improve women's health, the Center organised educational activities for women's NGOs in Serbia, and published books and leaflets on these topics and on women's human rights and feminism in general. Similarly to Women in Black, the Autonomous Women's Center was very involved in establishing and maintaining personal and professional links with the Kosovar Albanian feminist and women's activists, as well as in articulating its strong disagreement with the Serbian state politics. In May 1998, together with the Belgrade Women's Lobby and Women in Black, the Center condemned the growing violence and politics of apartheid against the Kosovar Albanians. The signatories called for civil disobedience – including conscientious objection – vis-à-vis the Serb regime, and clearly expressed their support to the Kosovar and Serbian women's and peace NGOs which advocated non-violence.

During the NATO bombing and the intensified Kosovo war, despite the often non-functioning phone lines, the Center's activists repeatedly called their contacts from all over the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (including Kosovar Albanian women) to hear their experiences and offer support. Hereby the activists were also able to obtain information about the situation outside Belgrade, which was particularly important in view of the media censorship. Another type of support was running errands for the women in Belgrade who did not dare to leave their homes due to fear (Ćetković et al., 1995; Hughes & Foster, 1996; Mladenović, 1998; Mršević, 1994; Žarkov, 2005). The Autonomous Women's Center was fully operational in 2009. Next to maintaining the provision of legal, psychological, and other assistance to women survivors of violence, it has developed into an

important advocacy, research, and expertise body in the field of violence against women. As such, it did not only provide training to women's NGOs in Serbia, but also to different state institutions, and served as a consultative body for international organisations.

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3 A Time to Examine the Common Scholarly Narrative

In the first part of this chapter I address the biases and silent places which are present in the scholarship on the war-related feminist activism in Belgrade and Zagreb in the 1990s: the domination of the designations used by the antinationalist feminists, the political components of the texts, the lack of analyses of the post-1995 developments, the limited to non-existent presence of certain conflicts, and the homogenising bias. In the second part I elaborate upon the diverse and sometimes contradictory ways in which these positionings and feminist activists are described and (implicitly) classified. I begin with the contributions in which the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists are treated as one entity. I do not include an analogous section on the 'nationalist' feminists because there are no works which factually attend to them in such a way. I proceed by addressing the texts on the Zagreb antinationalist feminists. After the subsequent exploration of the contributions on the Belgrade antinationalist feminists, I move to the 'nationalist' ones and analyse the writings about them in the same order.

Most of the analysed scholarship has been produced by scholars from the post-Yugoslav region. I did not bypass the foreign (mainly Western and English-language) works, but I chose to go to the source and use the texts which the foreign scholars had built their arguments upon. I sought to avoid the inaccuracies and losses of meaning which could occur when interpretations are interpreted. Furthermore, I wanted to draw attention to the existence of local knowledge. Some of it has remained underexposed because of being published only in local languages and/or not easily available publications. Due to my quite extensive literature search, I am confident that I include the overwhelming majority of relevant works – both those which are regularly referred to and those which have remained largely unknown.

Biases and Silent Places

Preponderance of Some Designations

The designations used by the Belgrade and Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists have not entered the Western academic publications like those used by the

Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists – some of whom often appear as authors of those contributions. Although a more extensive exploration of this discrepancy in prevalence (a phenomenon which is worth analysing for epistemological reasons, too) is beyond the scope of this book, I want to propose three factors which have very likely contributed to it.

The first factor is the clarity of these designations at face value compared to the terms used by the Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminists. Although the terms ‘antinationalist’, ‘non-nationalist’, ‘nationalist’, and ‘patriotic’ can be conceptualised differently, they appear to be sufficiently intelligible in indicating one’s (supposed) distance or proximity vis-à-vis a nation-building ideology, one’s state, and/or ethnic group. The designations ‘abstract’ and ‘neutral’ do not possess such a presumed semantic universality. They do not make it directly clear what the abstractness or neutrality refers to. The terms ‘(pro-)Yugoslav’ and ‘communist’ seem to be situated between the previous sets of designations. At first glance, they inform about one’s (presumed) positioning – adherence to the Yugoslav state and communist ideology – but they are less lucid classification tools for an analysis of the war-related positionings.

The positionings of the Western (academic) feminists form the second factor. As Lindsey (2002) also observes, there seem to have been more Western feminists whose positionings on the (post-)Yugoslav wars resembled those of the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists than there were feminists who agreed with the ‘nationalist’ positionings. This phenomenon has been spotted also by authors writing on political mobilisation elsewhere (Edelman, 2001; Heumann, 2010; Polletta, 2006; Seidman, 2001). To better understand the impact of the preponderance of the antinationalist positionings, one should keep in mind the intertwinement of the local and foreign scholarship and scholars. Foreign (foremost Western) and local (Belgrade and Zagreb) authors based their elaborations also on each other’s published and oral analyses, and established personal relationships and direct cooperation: e.g., invited one another to speak at conferences and submit texts for publishing. The influence of this phenomenon on the production of knowledge is not only visible in the prevalence of the designations used by the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists, but also in the virtual absence of more extensive research on the ‘nationalist’ feminists, especially the Belgrade ones. The latter also counts as one of the scholarly biases.

The third factor is the ‘nationalist’ feminists’ very limited authorship on the war-related tensions. This factor, too, partially explains the scarce inquiries into the ‘nationalist’ feminists. The Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminists have not published much in general. It has been foremost thanks to their close collaborators, the US scholars MacKinnon and Nenadic, that their positionings have been presented – and in a more complimentary manner – in the Western scholarship. The otherwise extensive textual production of three Belgrade ‘nationalist’ feminists did not specifically

address the war-related intra-feminist dynamics. This issue was only occasionally and sporadically touched upon in their works on other topics. After 2000 two of these feminists referred to the positionings of the other Belgrade cluster as ‘antinational radicalism’ (Milić, 2002) or ‘extreme antinationalism’ (Nikolić-Ristanović, 2008). Although these designations are clear enough at face value, they have not been widely used in the scholarship. This could be explained by the dominance of scholars supportive of the antinationalist feminists, as well as by the quite late appearance of these terms in, moreover, non-English publications.

Intertwinement of Scholarship, Politics, and Struggle for Legitimacy

In addition to their scholarly value, the contributions which addressed the war-related Belgrade and/or Zagreb feminism in the 1990s were sometimes used in the efforts to stop the wars and war rapes, put the perpetrators of (sexual) war crimes on trial, secure (financial) support for the raped women and other refugees, introduce international legislative changes regarding war rape, impose one’s conceptualisation of the (sexual) war violence and its perpetrators and victims, and obtain (financial) support for like-minded feminists to be able to do all that work. This is especially, but not exclusively, true for the texts written in the periods of war violence: 1991–1995 and 1998–1999. The political component is a source of bias particularly when it manifests in the use of laden terms and formulations. For example: ‘Many of these women were seen bitterly as sell-outs to a party that was brutally and bloodily silencing women’ (Nenadic, 1991: 20) or ‘The Zagreb informants...mutated into Croatian nationalists’ (Fischer, 1997: 14). Papić (1999), too, sees nationalism as mutation and entitles an essay ‘Women in Serbia: Post-communism, War, and Nationalist Mutations’.

The analysis of the classifications of the war-related positionings, which is presented in the second part of this chapter, also shows the existence of a political bias. The disagreements between scholars – some of whom are the directly involved Belgrade and Zagreb feminists – mirror the classification conflicts which occurred in Belgrade and Zagreb in the 1990s. Thereby, the intertwining of the local and foreign scholarship and scholars becomes more visible. Those ‘ideological influences’ (Lindsey, 2002: 68) have remained unreported and unaddressed, just like the meaning and the origin of the used designations. The absence of transparency on the political biases represents an important component of the same bias. It is a clear instance of misrecognition, which has serious consequences on both theory and activist practice. Therefore, Lindsey’s critical observation on the debate on the war rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia deserves attention:

[T]he ideological influences behind the theorizing of the debate went largely unnoticed or, perhaps, largely unattributed...This lack of referencing seems inexplicable and dangerous. By not exploring the

ideological roots of a theory, does an academic collude with the elisions that are taking place within the various theoretical camps?

(2002: 68; see also Bos, 2006)

Finally, the political component is visible in the manner in which authors describe the feminist field – an issue which I have already addressed in Chapter 1. They mention only certain NGOs and activists, while omitting others, portray some NGOs and activists only favourably and others only unfavourably, and/or use the designation ‘feminist’ only for the like-minded feminists and endorsed positionings.

Lack of Analyses of the Post-1995 Developments

There is a shortage of analyses of the war-related positionings of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists in the aftermath of the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, i.e. from the second half of the 1990s onward. This lack also concerns research which would address these feminists’ recapitulation of the events between 1991 and 1995. I explain this bias primarily by the overwhelming and mobilising effect which the war rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia had on gender scholars – an effect which did not leave many resources for engaging with other topics. In addition, the end of the wars (and war rapes) by the end of 1995, as well as the progression of time and the occurrence of conflicts and wars elsewhere, decreased the interest in and funding for research on the (post-)Yugoslav region in general and (post-)Yugoslav feminism in particular.

It is striking that the silence on the post-1995 war-related positionings can be observed also in texts written after 1999, i.e. after the Kosovo war and the NATO bombing of Serbia – events which it is reasonable to presume have influenced at least the Belgrade feminists. There is little relevant information on those dynamics among the Belgrade feminists in Bilić (2012), Cockburn (2007), Fridman (2006a, 2006b), and Mladenović (2001, 2003). This scholarly lacuna could be further explained by the rather short duration of the intensive military violence (24 March 1999 to 10 June 1999), the absence of information on large-scale war rapes, and the low visibility of the war-related divisions among the Belgrade feminists.

The diminishing attention for the (post-)Yugoslav feminism in the 1990s has also resulted in lack of evaluation of the information and claims which are (repeatedly) found in the existing scholarship. The article of Mladenović & Litričin (1993) – or one of its somewhat altered versions: Hughes & Mladenović (1995), Hughes, Mladenović & Mršević (1995), Mladenović & Hughes (2000), and Mladenović & Litričin (1998) – is a case in point. It is regularly used for illustrating the dynamics among the Belgrade feminists after the beginning of the (post-)Yugoslav wars (Batinić, 2001; Benderly, 1993, 1997a, 1997b; Bilić, 2011a, 2012; Cockburn, 1998; Helms, 1998; Jansen, 2005; Pettman, 1996; Zaharijević, 2007; Žarkov, 2002, 2007). The

perpetual use of this article does not mean, however, that its contents have been critically analysed. That such reassessments are needed is best visible from the claim that the Belgrade-based Women's Party could not continue with its work due to 'conflicts over nationalism' (Mladenović & Litričin, 1993: 117). Despite my extended efforts, I did not have this statement confirmed either by a written source or a respondent – including the two authors.

Limited to No Presence of Certain Conflicts

The intra-feminist war-related conflicts which have at least received some limited scholarly attention are those between the two Zagreb clusters, between the two Belgrade clusters, between the two antinationalist clusters, and between the Belgrade antinationalist and the Zagreb 'nationalist' cluster. There are no reports of frictions between the two 'nationalist' clusters, but that is not surprising. These feminists seem not to have had any contact after the outbreak of violence. It is more intriguing, though, that there are no records of war-related tensions within the clusters (besides the very limited information on the Belgrade antinationalist one during the NATO bombing). In view of the myths of sisterhood and transgression of boundaries, the limited attention to the conflicts between the two antinationalist clusters is particularly interesting. Whereas those myths have been recurrently recorded not only by the affected feminists, but also by third parties (see the second part of this chapter), the conflicts and misunderstandings between these feminists have received very limited attention. Even the texts which address them often do so in an implicit and/or summarised manner (Bilić, 2011a, 2012; Četković, 2000; Knežević, 1994; Mladenović, 1997, 1998; Mladenović & Kesić, 1996; Mladenović & Miličević, 1996; Radović, 2002; Savić, 1995; Žarkov, 1999, 2002). Benderly (1993: 54) appears to be the only foreign scholar who mentions these issues, albeit only implicitly: 'Non-nationalist politics have made it possible for a working relationship to be re-established – delicately – between Croatian and Serbian feminists'.

I propose four explanations for this particular silent place, the first being the absence of these differences and tensions in the published accounts of the direct actors (the scarce exceptions are Knežević, 1994; Mladenović, 1997, 1998; Mladenović & Kesić, 1996; Mladenović & Miličević, 1996; Radović, 2002, and Savić, 1995). The antinationalist feminists seem to have refrained from recording the painful conflicts among them because such a move would have challenged their myth of transgression of boundaries. In other words, it would question their legitimacy as agents who cooperated with each other, thereby potentially devaluing the risky efforts which they had put in crossing those boundaries. Second, learning about and grasping the silenced disagreements asks for extensive fieldwork and interview sessions. That is not always feasible given the time, money, language, and access constraints the outsider scholars often encounter.

Third, the published accounts of local feminists sometimes suffer from parochialism. Even when these accounts are (re)published abroad, they contain much implied knowledge. Their understanding requires a lot of background information, which might not be necessarily available to outsiders, even if they come from the post-Yugoslav region. A good example is the contribution of Mladenović & Kesić (1996) on the meeting of Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists in Medulin in March 1995.¹ The information which I extracted from this text before the fieldwork was insufficient for realising the importance of the event for those who had attended it. I started seeing its great significance only after several interviews. The newly obtained knowledge enabled me to read the text in a different key and find information which had initially remained invisible to me. Additionally beneficial were the insights in Mladenović & Miličević (1996) and Mladenović (1998) which I only discovered after the fieldwork.

Fourth and final, given the difficulties which the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists encountered in their respective countries, as well as the personal connections between them and scholars of (post-)Yugoslav feminism, it is possible that the latter were hesitant about probing into sensitive topics and/or wanted to support the former by addressing only the sisterhood-building and boundary-transgressing aspects of their work. Benderly's (1993) exceptional hint should be seen in this light. She has been aware of the tensions and silences because of her ability to converse in Croatian/Serbian and her extensive communication with the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists. Nevertheless, she has not been able to elaborate on this delicate issue either and has chosen only to give a tiny indication of its existence.

Geographic Homogenisation

There is also a homogenising bias in the scholarship. Some authors construct their argument as if it concerned the 'nationalist' feminists in the whole (post-)Yugoslav region, but only give examples from Zagreb (Benderly, 1997a, 1997b; Lindsey, 2002; Stojšavljević, 1995; Uremović, 1995) or from Belgrade and Zagreb (Batinić, 2001; Borić, 1997; Korać, 1998, 2003; Žarkov, 2002). Such a *pars pro toto* approach gives the false impression of the absence of significant differences between the post-Yugoslav countries in the development of feminism and their economic, political, and social contexts. It imposes, in other words, artificial homogeneity on a heterogeneous terrain. This bias is particularly problematic for the period starting from mid-1991, when Yugoslavia as one federal state gradually dissolved into several separate states, each with a different direct exposure to and participation in the wars.

1 See the analysis of this meeting in Chapter 4.

Three reasons could be behind those homogenisations. Due to the output and citation pressure in the academic world, the presentation of one's argument as being valid for a broader region than the one the author actually has data on potentially increases the geopolitical relevance of one's work and the chances of having it published and referred to. Authors may further wish to bypass criticism when being uncertain about the prevalence of the issue in question. For example, it is safer to say that 'there were peace protests in the (post-)Yugoslav region' instead of 'there were peace protests in Croatia and Serbia'. Such a broad formulation safeguards one from being criticised for ignoring the peace protests in, e.g., Slovenia. Lastly, scholars may be insufficiently familiar with the region under study and perceive Yugoslavia as one uniform entity without major legislative, political, socio-economic, and linguistic differences on its territory.

Existing Classifications of Feminists and Positionings

The scholarship contains a plurality of perceptions of the war-related restructuring of the feminist fields in Belgrade and Zagreb in the 1990s, although the existence of a dichotomy – usually one between anti-nationalist and 'nationalist' feminists – is often reported or hinted at. This plurality is commonly inspired by the authors' greater affiliation with one side, but it can also indicate deficient knowledge of the analysed NGOs, as in this case:

Within Croatia, one large group of feminists adopted a patriotic, nationalistic stance and subordinated women's issues to the so-called national interest. The nationalist feminist groups Kareta and Bedem ljubavi...see the rapes...exclusively in national terms...[They] are also very vocal in issues surrounding motherhood and demographics...[and work] with other conservative organizations and individuals.

(Pavlović, 1999: 138)

Pavlović states correctly that Bedem ljubavi (Rampart of Love) shared Kareta's positioning on the war rapes and that the two NGOs cooperated. However, Rampart of Love has never declared itself feminist nor was it seen as such by any Zagreb respondent. Moreover, the 'nationalist' feminist NGOs were not involved in any anti-choice initiatives. One Zagreb 'nationalist' feminist from Women's Help Now was even a particularly fervent pro-choice advocate, who often debated – also during the war years – with the anti-choice activists, including those mentioned by Pavlović (M. D., 1990; Matošić, 1993; Večerina, 1995).

Also problematic is that the meanings and origins of the employed designations are generally not discussed. Neither is the scholar's preference for one term over another – or their interchangeable use – elaborated. The

scarce exceptions include Batinić (2001), Benderly (1997a), and Žarkov (1999), who state their preference for ‘nationalist’ or ‘patriotic’. Such lack of explanation can leave the reader wondering about one’s terminological choices, like the use of ‘patriotic’ and ‘disloyal’ (Korać, 1998, 2003) instead of ‘loyal’ and ‘disloyal’, or ‘patriotic’ and ‘unpatriotic’. The usage of these names is, thus, commonly left untouched by the academic scrutiny, which is necessary when classifying, especially when the designations in question are as laden as in this case. Furthermore, even the absence of scholarly attention for the process of naming has remained unattended to. This silent place is quite worrisome, as the seemingly impartial use of presumably unbiased analytical terms masks a power disparity between the self-ascribed and ascribed-to designations.

Explicit naming is performed by using an adjective, such as ‘patriotic’ (Benderly, 1997a), or a description: ‘[feminists with] antinationalist sentiments’ (Mladenović, 2003: 162). The same two forms of naming can be also employed implicitly. For example, by explicitly creating a category of ‘neutral feminists’, Vranić (1996) implicitly names the opposing category ‘non-neutral’ or ‘partisan’. Or, by declaring that to choose patriotism means to ‘renounce the right of self-determination and autonomy’ (Zajović, 1995a: 51), the author implies that the feminists who have chosen patriotism are not autonomous. The use of an adverb or adverbial phrase instead of an adjective – e.g., ‘feminists with antiwar belonging’ instead of ‘antiwar feminists’ – enables the author to avoid a direct naming of the feminists in question and refocuses the reader’s attention from the people to their positionings. Becker (1998) calls this approach ‘turning people into activities’. By concentrating on the expressed positionings, one allows that people or NGOs might not always act in the same manner. Although this tactic has as downsides an increased number of words and a possible reduced readability of the text, it helps the creation of less essentialising categories. Therefore, and considering the already laden character of the war-related designations, it is possible that some authors have used this approach on purpose.

The instances of explicit naming can be further classified into those which contain the word ‘nation’ and those which do not. Besides the obvious and oft-used ‘antinationalist’, ‘nationalist’, and ‘non-nationalist’, the first category includes ‘[with] a radically anti-nationalist stance’, ‘anti-national’, ‘[with] antinational radicalism’, ‘internationally oriented’, ‘[with] nationalist feelings’, ‘pro-nationalist’, ‘[with] international belonging’, ‘who adopt the official ethno-national line’, and ‘who try to resist the ruling nationalist politics’. The other category incorporates ‘academic’, ‘autonomous’, ‘antiwar’, ‘[those] claiming rape as genocide’, ‘critical’, ‘disloyal’, ‘independent’, ‘indigenous’, ‘less concerned’, ‘loyal’, ‘neutral’, ‘opposition(al)’, ‘pacifist’, ‘patriotic’, ‘radical’, ‘[with] radical insensitivity’, ‘revisionists of rape and genocide’, ‘[with] the sexism approach [to war rapes]’, and ‘with a genocidal rape approach’.

Belgrade and Zagreb Antinationalist Feminists

When the positionings of the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists are jointly addressed, the positionings and/or the activists are named ‘antinationalist’ (Batinić, 2001; Benderly, 1997a; Fischer, 1993; Helms, 1998, 2003; Jansen, 2005; Žarkov, 2002, 2007), ‘autonomous’ (Korać, 2003), ‘disloyal’ (Korać, 1998, 2003), ‘independent’ (Borić, 1997), ‘internationally oriented’ (Uremović, 1995), ‘neutral’ (Vranić, 1996), ‘non-nationalist’ (Batinić, 2001; Benderly, 1993), and ‘oppositional’ (Jansen, 2005). These positionings are described as criticism of the nationalist politics of one’s state and the use of (exaggerated) war rape figures for inciting hate, rejection of the analogy between the suffering of the raped women and the suffering of the whole ethnic group or state, and accentuation of the transgression of the post-Yugoslav ethnic and state boundaries – both regarding the assistance to women and cooperation with feminists (Batinić, 2001; Borić, 1997; Borić & Mladineo Desnica, 1996; Dobnikar, 2000; Helms, 1998, 2003; Jansen, 2005; Korać, 1998, 2003; Lukić, 2011; Uremović, 1995; Žarkov, 2002, 2007). The conceptualisation of the war rapes is stated to be one whereby rape is seen as being committed by all warring sides and a continuation of the peacetime male violence against women (Batinić, 2001; Borić, 1997; Jansen, 2005; Korać, 1998, 2003; Uremović, 1995). Vranić (1996) is the only one to rebuke these feminists’ ‘neutral’ or ‘equidistant’ gender-based positioning on the war rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In her view, the insistence on the gender component of those rapes is a political manipulation. By implying equal responsibility and equal victimhood of all warring sides, this positioning denies the genocidal character of the rapes and distorts the factual situation.

Unlike the above authors who report a strict gender-based, i.e. an ethnicity-free, positioning on the war rapes, Borić & Mladineo Desnica (1996), Helms (1998, 2003), and Žarkov (2002, 2007) note a nuanced gender-based positioning. Despite still being gender-based, this positioning entails the acknowledgement that the Serb militaries were the foremost perpetrators. As I show in Chapter 4, both the authors who observe the strict and those who observe the nuanced gender-based positioning on war rape are partially right. The two positionings have indeed been assumed by the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists, albeit at different moments in time: the strict gender-based positioning preceded the nuanced one.

Zagreb Antinationalist Feminists

The Zagreb antinationalist feminists and/or their positionings are separately named ‘antinationalist’ (Helms, 2013; Obradović-Dragišić, 2004), ‘critical’ (Knežević, 1994), ‘genocide revisionists’ (Nenadic, 1996), ‘neutral’ (Irvine, 2007), ‘non-nationalist’ (Benderly, 1997b; Irvine, 2007; Knežević, 1995), ‘pacifist’ (Obradović-Dragišić, 2004), and [with] anti-war as “international”

belonging' (Kašić, 2006). Irvine's (2007) approving use of 'neutral' – in the meaning of not taking the Croat side and not using a warmongering discourse – stands in direct contrast with the use of 'neutral' as a derogatory designation for the same feminists (Vranić, 1996). Some authors describe these positionings as almost identical to the abovementioned joint ones: criticism towards the regime and its nationalist and women-unfriendly politics, a conceptualisation of war rape which is based on gender and disentangled from the discourse of national victimhood, solidarity with women regardless of ethnicity, and cooperation with the Belgrade feminists (Benderly, 1997a, 1997b; Bilić, 2011a, 2012; Fischer, 1993; Irvine, 2007; Kleiverda, 1993; Knežević, 1994, 2004; Mikula, 2005; Pavlović, 1999; Zajović, 1995a). Once more, there are authors who report the nuanced gender-based positioning on the war rapes (Helms, 2013; Obradović-Draškić, 2004; Pollmann et al., 1993).

At times the Zagreb antinationalist feminists are named and portrayed in a fundamentally different manner: as rape and genocide revisionists who deny or silence the genocidal character of the war rapes committed by Serbs. These portrayals do not limit themselves to the early 1990s. They go back to Yugoslavia and present these feminists as privileged representatives of the socialist regime and a prolonged hand of the League of Communists and the Yugoslav People's Army – a covert way to suggest their allegiance to Serb politics. Their legitimacy is additionally challenged by the (implicit) portrayal of the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists and the women's NGOs they cooperated with as authentic and indigenous (Armanda & Nenadic, 1994; MacKinnon, 2006; Nenadic, 1991, 1996, 2010).

Belgrade Antinationalist Feminists

The positionings of the Belgrade antinationalist feminist NGOs and activists are separately depicted as a protest against the use of war rape for war propaganda and an accusation of all politicians of fascism (Fischer, 1993) or presented as having the form of a – not further elaborated – clear non-nationalist statement (Mladenović & Litričin, 1993). Zajović (1995b) portrays their positionings as entailing autonomy from the League of Communists and the Yugoslav People's Army, promotion of pacifism and self-determination, and a protest against the misuse of women for women-unfriendly nationalist and militarist aims. Zaharijević (2007), too, mentions the adherence to pacifism. She speaks of feminist pacifists who maintained the gender-based solidarity with women regardless of ethnicity and persisted in criticising the deeds of the Serb militaries.

Mladenović (2003) does not see pacifism as inherent to the Belgrade antinationalist feminists, whom she calls '[feminists with] antinationalist sentiments', 'anti-fascist feminists', and 'feminist anti-fascists'. When discussing the NATO bombings of the Bosnian Serb positions in 1995 and of Serbia in 1999, she explains that there were feminists who opposed all use

of arms and those who did not because of the extent of the Serb-inflicted suffering on ethnic Others. She does not consider, thus, this approval of violence as a 'nationalist' or 'pro-nationalist' positioning, as she does in describing the discussion on shooting in self-defence (Mladenović, 1995, 2003; Mladenović & Litričin, 1993).² What makes a difference is that the shooting in self-defence meant violence by Serbs, whereas the NATO bombings entailed violence against Serbs. Concerning the former, Mladenović sees the disapproval of the use of weapons as the only legitimate antinationalist positioning a Belgrade feminist could take. Regarding the NATO bombings, though, as long as the feminists foremostly speak of Serbs as perpetrators, Mladenović (2003) names them 'antinationalists' – even if they disapprove of the violence against Serbs. This means that she classifies one's positioning on the bombings based on another positioning: the conceptualisation of Serbs.

There are authors who express criticism of the Belgrade antinationalist feminists. Knežević (1994: 4) considers their disapproval of Serbia's responsibility for the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina 'very vague and seldom precise',³ and hardly existing regarding Kosovo. She criticises further these feminists' failure to accept that Yugoslavia does not exist anymore. Finally, she is displeased that they do not realise that their affiliation with the former country is the same as that which the Croat and Slovene female nationalists show towards their respective new states. So, although Knežević acknowledges these Belgrade feminists' rebuke of Serb nationalism, she suggests that they are Yugoslav nationalists.

A different type of criticism is expressed through the use of 'radical' and 'extreme'. The Belgrade antinationalist feminists' conceptualisation of Serbs only as perpetrators and non-Serbs only as victims is described as 'a radically anti-nationalist stance', 'antinational radicalism', 'extreme anti-nationalism', 'radical antinationalist', or as containing 'radical insensitivity'. The feminists with such a positioning are seen as insensitive to the suffering of Serbs, failing to comprehend the complexity of Yugoslavia's disintegration, i.e. the perpetrator's role of the other warring sides, or as demonising the Serbs (Bilić, 2011a, 2011b, 2012; Milić, 2002; Nikolić-Ristanović, 2008; Žarkov, 2002, 2007). A comparable, but less harshly expressed, disapproval is that of Nikolić-Ristanović (2000: 31), who states that some women's NGOs were 'less concerned about the problems of Serbian women, as opposed to those of non-Serbian women'.

Žarkov (2002, 2007) uses the term 'radical' for slightly different reasons. The first is these feminists' pre-war radical feminism wherein gender had the single utmost primacy for looking at societal problems. The second

2 See the analysis of the Belgrade Women's Studies Center in Chapter 4.

3 '[I]t is not enough to say that Milošević's regime is fascist, undemocratic, that what is going on in Bosnia-Herzegovina is a shameful crime' (Knežević, 1994: 4). See also note 23 in Chapter 4.

reason is their positioning on ethnicity: 'In a radical agenda, ethnicity and anti-nationalist feminism came to be regarded as incompatible' (Žarkov, 2002: 64). Therefore, '[the] women who did not refuse to acknowledge their own ethnic identities were simply declared nationalists' (Žarkov, 2002: 64). Continuity is suggested in the adherence to radical positionings, despite the factual difference in contents. Žarkov (2002: 64) states that although the radical feminists had initially refused to see any connection between war rape and ethnicity, later they included ethnicity only to 'declare the Serb government, Serb people and especially Serb men, as the ultimate war villains'. Her choice for the word 'radical' appears also to be related to her claim that in Serbia, unlike in Croatia, there were '*only* anti-nationalist feminists' (Žarkov, 2002: 62, emphasis in the original). More precisely, given that she designates all Belgrade feminists as anti-nationalists, she uses 'radical' to distinguish between them. As I show in Chapter 5, this depiction of (virtually) all Belgrade feminists as anti-nationalists was also present in the narratives of some Belgrade respondents.

Belgrade or Zagreb 'Nationalist' Feminists

There are no authors who speak about the Belgrade and Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists jointly. Some authors formulate their argument in such a manner that at first glance it gives the impression of referring to the 'nationalist' feminists all over the post-Yugoslav region or at least to those in Belgrade and Zagreb alike. Still, a closer reading of the text in question reveals that the statement actually concerns only the Zagreb cluster (Jansen, 2005; Korać, 2003; Stojšavljević, 1995; Uremović, 1995).

Zagreb 'Nationalist' Feminists

The Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists are commonly named 'nationalist' (Benderly, 1993; Bilić, 2011a, 2012; Fischer, 1993, 1997; Irvine, 2007; Pavlović, 1999; Stojšavljević, 1995; Uremović, 1995; Žarkov, 2002, 2007) and, less often, 'patriotic' (Batinić, 2001; Korać, 2003) and 'loyal' (Jansen, 2005; Zajović, 1995a). Batinić (2001) uses 'pro-nationalist', too. Some authors employ both 'nationalist' and 'patriotic' (Benderly, 1997a, 1997b; Helms, 1998, 2013; Knežević, 1995; Korać, 1998; Obradović-Dragišić, 2004; Pavlović, 1999; Zajović, 1995a). For other scholars, these feminists '[reacted in a spirit] related to clear national identification and, frequently, to nationalism' (Dobnikar, 2000: 363), '[had] patriotic as "national" belonging' (Kašić, 2006: 220), 'adopt[ed] the official ethno-national line' (Mikula, 2005: 91), and 'agree[d] with the nationalist politics of the ruling ideology [sic]' (Knežević, 2004: 256).

Although Benderly (1997a) uses 'nationalist' and 'patriotic' alike, she states, without elaborating further, that 'patriotic' might be a more accurate

designation. This usage is questioned by Žarkov (1999: 431, n. 12), who asks why the other Zagreb cluster cannot be called 'patriotic', too: '[I]f patriotism is (naively) defined only as one's love for one's country...why should a love expressed in criticizing one's government's nationalist policies be excluded?'⁴ Batinić (2001), however, approves of Benderly's choice. She justifies her own preference for 'patriotic' by saying that the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists 'developed articulate critiques of nationalism in general, and of nationalism of their state's enemy in particular' (Batinić, 2001: 20, n. 12). She apparently suggests that being patriotic entails paying explicit attention to the danger which one's state faces, and not paying such attention to the danger which that state poses to other entities.

Some authors mention that 'patriotic' was a complimentary name which this Zagreb cluster received from the Croatian media (Knežević, 1995, 1997; Žarkov, 2007) or from the media and politicians alike (Obradović-Dragišić, 2004). I could not confirm these claims; I found only one article which corroborated the claim on the media. 'Patriotic' was used there to approvingly describe the women's NGOs which, according to the journalist, had not remained apolitical and abstract, but had named the aggressors and victims of the (sexual) war violence in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia (Ramljak, 1993). As to the claim that 'patriotic' had been a self-designation (Obradović-Dragišić, 2004; Žarkov, 2007), I could not find any media record or organisational document in support of it. However, the 'nationalist' feminists might have implied this by, e.g., referring to the positionings of the other Zagreb feminists as 'unpatriotic' or 'insufficiently patriotic'. Some Zagreb antinationalist feminists have evoked such naming in connection to their decision to remain active in the Antiwar Campaign Croatia (Obradović-Dragišić, 2004; Popović, 1993; Winden, 1992).

The positionings of the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists are described as: identification with and support to the victimised Croatia and its regime's nationalist politics, use of an ethnicity-based conceptualisation of war rape in which Serb men are the exclusive perpetrators and Bosniak and Croat women the exclusive victims, perception of the rape of Bosniak and Croat women as a metaphor for the rape of the Bosniak and Croat nation, abandonment of the discourse of gender-based solidarity among women, and rejection of the cooperation with the Belgrade feminists due to their assumed ethnicity-based complicity with the Serbian regime. Some of these Zagreb feminists' conceptualisation of war rape as a tool of genocide has led to designations, such as '[those] claiming rape as genocide'

4 Primorac (2004: 95) conceptualises 'ethical patriotism' similarly: 'I ought to be concerned about immoral practices of my society, immoral laws and policies of my polity, since they tend to impose collective moral responsibility I, too, have to shoulder. I ought to be concerned that they be identified, acknowledged, and dismantled, and that their harmful effects be redressed'. Using this conceptualisation, the Belgrade antinationalist feminists (especially some of them) could be named, much to their surprise, 'patriotic'.

(Lindsey, 2002: 66) and ‘feminists with a genocidal rape approach’ (Helms, 1998, 2003), whereas the scholars who have cooperated with these feminists implicitly name them ‘genocide and rape acknowledgers’ (Armanda & Nenadic, 1994; MacKinnon, 2006; Nenadic, 1996, 2010).

The contributions of MacKinnon and Nenadic further differ from those of the other scholars in the (implicit) portrayal of the Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminists as autonomous by virtue of being underprivileged outsiders during socialism. This difference in the distance from the Yugoslav state and its ideology remains unaddressed by the other authors. When the latter implicitly name the Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminists not autonomous or uncritical, it is because of these feminists’ proximity to the Croatian state and some of its politics in the first half of the 1990s. MacKinnon and Nenadic do not mention this issue. Both groupings of authors accentuate, thus, some positions and positionings, while being silent about others.

The final discrepancy between the designations concerns the term ‘anti-war’. Whereas Batinić (2001) and Benderly (1997a) explicitly state – without giving examples – that both Zagreb clusters had an antiwar positioning, in Kašić (2006), Kesić (2002), Obradović-Dragišić (2004), and Zajović (1995a) one finds indications of a pro-war positioning of the Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminists. Such a positioning is also implied in the contributions wherein these feminists are presented as supportive of the Croatian state and its nationalist politics, but it is clearer in these four works. Kašić’s (2006) allusion to a pro-war positioning can be inferred from the explicit designation ‘antiwar’ which she assigns to the other Zagreb cluster. In Kesić’s (2002: 314) contribution it is implied from her statement that ‘the simple divisions of “aggressors and victims,” “our rights” and “their wrongs,” the differences constructed as insurmountable...[are] reductions needed for waging wars’. Obradović-Dragišić (2004: 40) suggests it by saying that the ‘feminists were holding two different positions on the issue of war and pacifism’ and that some Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminists spoke about the right to self-defence. Lastly, Zajović (1995a: 50) stresses that the identification ‘with male militaristic states means to assume the role of an accomplice in war and war propaganda’.

Belgrade ‘Nationalist’ Feminists

The Belgrade ‘nationalist’ feminists are the least addressed activists in the scholarship, and the covert references to them require much reading between the lines. As I explained in Chapter 1, unlike its Zagreb counterpart, the Belgrade ‘nationalist’ feminist cluster did not consist of NGOs, but of individuals who did not produce common statements. The demarcation of this cluster is further aggravated by the fact that the authors who write on these feminists give only implicit indications of who they are.

In the most often referred to article on the divisions among the Belgrade feminists in the early 1990s (Mladenović & Litričin, 1993), no feminist

activist or NGO is explicitly named 'nationalist'. The closest Mladenović & Litričin (1993: 117) come to such an explicit designation is when they speak of activists who 'were unable to keep their nationalist feelings out of their SOS [Hotline] work'. An even more implicit indication can be discerned from the description that besides the NGOs 'where the non-nationalist statement is clear', there were those which 'had many problems' (Mladenović & Litričin, 1993: 117) and whose members were divided. What exactly those 'nationalist feelings' and 'many problems' were, as well as what exactly a clear 'non-nationalist statement' entailed, is not elaborated. It is also unclear in which ways the nationalist feelings prevented the creation of a clear non-nationalist statement. By listing the questions – but not the answers – which have caused divisions, Mladenović & Litričin hint at the issues at stake:

Can a feminist be a nationalist chauvinist? Can a pacifist be a nationalist? Is a weapon an instrument of defence? Should the groups take clear attitudes toward nationalist questions (and therefore the war) and in that way lose some women? Should the groups avoid the issue of nationalism altogether?

(1993: 117)

The greater affiliation of some Belgrade feminists with their ethnic group or country, and their concomitant lesser criticism of it, is also implicitly suggested by Duhaček (1998: 492) who speaks of 'unresolvable differences in the critiques of nationalism' and asks: '[D]o women, in fact, have a country, or a nation?'. Mladenović (1995) clarifies somewhat more the points of contestation. In this later text of hers, the different positionings in the second half of 1991 are not situated among the Belgrade feminists in general, but only among the members of the SOS Hotline. It seems that Mladenović uses 'nationalist' to designate a firmer belonging to the Serb ethnic group which entails a discriminative attitude towards the allegedly inimical non-Serbs, a justification for the Serbs' use of arms in self-defence, and a disagreement with the claim that Serbia has a fascist regime:

A new issue among the [SOS Hotline] volunteers was the extent to which each of the volunteers felt as a Serb...All of a sudden some women said 'If they come to shoot at my daughter, I will shoot at them'. Others would say: 'Serbs need to defend themselves'. Suddenly, some of the 'ours' became 'theirs' – in one day. Many women quickly managed to switch to new terms, 'enemies' and 'theirs'...It took some of us a long time before we named the killings a war, before we realised that the government had become a regime and that that which the Serbian regime did was called fascism, as well as that the other regimes in the conflict were not much better...[S]ome of us did not manage to identify with the Serbdom...Since then a space for polemics was created: how to separate the national identity which gives to some

a warm feeling of belonging from the nationalism which discriminates against the others.

(1995: 36–37)

When describing the discussion on shooting in self-defence, Mladenović (2003) names the feminists who would approve of it ‘pro-nationalist feminists’, or ‘[those] with pro-nationalist feelings and interests’. Concerning the NATO bombing of the Bosnian Serb positions in 1995, Mladenović (2003: 162) says that the feminists with pro-nationalist feelings were against the ‘big power shooting at “their soldiers”’, but did not address those soldiers’ acts against non-Serbs. She explains further that the pro-nationalist feminists blamed NATO (instead of Milošević) for the bombing of Serbia in 1999, unanimously opposed it, and were silent about the Serb ethnic cleansing of the Kosovar Albanians. Mladenović (2003) names, thus, a Belgrade feminist ‘(pro-)nationalist’ if she primary conceptualises Serbs as victims and is silent about their perpetrators’ role.

The distance from the allegedly inimical non-Serbs is also observed by Zaharijević (2007). She does not speak of a fixed distance towards non-Serbs in general, but specifies that this distance varied based on whether those non-Serbs were Croat, Bosniak, or Kosovar Albanian women:

[A]lthough the majority of [Belgrade] feminists was able during the first vigil of Women in Black to stand behind the banner stating ‘The Croat women are our sisters’ (the message of sisterhood is particularly feminist because it conveys the insistence that we as women cross national and ethnic markers, and that women’s solidarity is more important to us than the national belonging and the loyalty to the nation/state), when the banner ‘The Bosnian [read: Bosniak] women are our sisters’ was to be held there were already those who were not all that easily convinced. The most controversial banner... ‘The Albanian women are our sisters’ repulsed many feminists despite its unchanged feminist message.

(Zaharijević, 2007: 243)

Zaharijević sees this gradual reduction of the number of Belgrade feminists who maintained the gender-based solidarity as illustrating the progressive divergence of the initially intertwined feminism and pacifism of the Belgrade feminists. In other words, there were fewer and fewer feminists who claimed that all wars were by definition wrong and that all women were sisters. Those who refrained from expressing these two positionings jointly had, in fact, chosen patriotism, which entailed loyalty to their ethnic group and country. Obviously, Zaharijević’s conceptualisation of pacifism differs somewhat from the already addressed one of Mladenović (2003). Zaharijević understands pacifism as opposed to patriotism: the abandonment of pacifism leads to patriotism and ends the solidarity with

non-Serb women. For Mladenović, such an abandonment does not necessarily mean a choice for patriotism. It could be just another antinationalist positioning, driven by the wish to preserve exactly this solidarity with the ethnic Other.

Although Zaharijević does not formulate this explicitly, by stating that some feminists forsook the particularly feminist message of sisterhood, she actually suggests that the feminists who chose patriotism (partially) gave up feminism. Another hint is that the feminists who did not express solidarity with Bosniak or Kosovar Albanian women did not consider these ethnic groups free from responsibility for the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, respectively. Put differently, the feminists who chose patriotism did not see the Serbs only as perpetrators, and the Bosniaks and Kosovar Albanians only as victims.

Žarkov (2002, 2007) disagrees with such classification by saying that in Belgrade there were only antinationalist feminists, albeit with indeed two different positionings on the Serbs. The ‘academic feminists’ – the term she uses for those whom I name Belgrade ‘nationalist’ feminists – ‘were wary of the demonization of “the Serbs” as much as of Serbian nationalism and...disagreed strongly with radical feminist views’ (Žarkov, 2002: 64). Her criticism and that by Bilić (2011a, 2011b, 2012), Milić (2002), and Nikolić-Ristanović (2000, 2008) suggest that the Belgrade ‘nationalist’ feminists were sensitive to the suffering of Serbs and the not black-and-white power dynamics between the warring sides. These authors, unlike Mladenović, do not consider the overt articulation of Serb victimhood an intrinsically (pro-)nationalist positioning, even when it is not preceded or followed by an explicit acknowledgement of Serbs’ role as perpetrators. In a similar vein, contrary to Zaharijević, the same four authors deem that to abstain from speaking of Serbs only as perpetrators and of non-Serbs only as victims does not necessarily indicate one’s patriotism.

Conclusion

The already scarce scholarship on the war-related Belgrade and/or Zagreb feminist activism in the 1990s becomes additionally limited when information is sought on these feminists’ positionings and divisions. There are many biases, lacunae, and repetitive re-referencing of the same few works. The analyses are influenced by the trends which dictate the relevant topics, and contain overgeneralisations, oversimplifications and misrecognitions, uncritical portrayals of the assenting voices and delegitimisation and silencing of the dissenting ones. All these problematic places urge the readers to maintain a critical approach even when examining texts of authors whose political views they (largely) share. Such a reading attitude is essential also when the works in question have been inspired by and belong to progressive emancipatory ideologies, such as feminism.

The exploration of the ways in which the feminist activists, NGOs, and war-related positionings are classified reveals the presence of a dichotomy. This dichotomy is commonly referred to as one between antinationalist or non-nationalist, and nationalist or patriotic feminists. Other (implicit) designations exist, too. One's choice of terminology is, however, left unattended to. Moreover, the same names can describe different things. For example, depending on the author, 'autonomous' can refer either to the Zagreb antinationalist or to the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists, and 'antinationalist' can denote the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists alike, but also the Belgrade 'nationalist' ones.

The Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists are sometimes jointly addressed. No such analysis exists of the two 'nationalist' clusters. Some authors present their argument as if it would include this Belgrade cluster, but actually provide information only on Zagreb. The combined descriptions of the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists, and the separate portrayals of the Zagreb ones show many resemblances. This indicates that also these joint descriptions are foremostly based on data from Zagreb and the splits induced by the 1991–1995 wars. This becomes even more obvious when the separate depictions of the Belgrade antinationalist cluster are included in the comparison. The presence of tensions in Belgrade and the absence of tensions in Zagreb regarding the NATO bombing of Serbia and the ethnic cleansing of the Kosovar Albanians in 1999 are glaringly missing from the collective portrayals. One can notice further the absence of other specific issues which have played a role among the Belgrade antinationalist feminists, but not among the Zagreb ones: the rejection of the affiliation with one's ethnic group, the continuity of the affiliation with the former country (Yugoslavia), and the NATO bombing of the Bosnian Serb forces in 1995.

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4 Positioning as a Process

Nine Episodes of Interaction

The nine historical episodes which are presented here help understand the differences and similarities among and between the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists in their war-related positionings, the changes which occurred in some of these positionings due to new information and/or new developments, as well as the forging and breaking of intra-feminist allegiances. Eight episodes are events (four gatherings, two speakers tours, one proposal for an NGO, and the war in Serbia), whereas one episode is a Belgrade feminist NGO.

A Yugoslav Feminist Umbrella NGO? (Spring of 1990)

The proposal of some Zagreb feminists for setting-up a Yugoslav feminist umbrella NGO divided the Yugoslav feminists – the first conflict which has been recorded as nationalism-related. This conflict seems to have initially occurred at the Third Yugoslav Feminist Gathering, which took place in Belgrade between 30 March and 1 April 1990. The contention apparently continued at the umbrella's constitutive assembly in Zagreb two weeks later.¹ However, the conclusions of the Gathering do not mention the proposal, whereas the umbrella's programme declaration does not even hint at the existence of disagreements. Not having come across the minutes from these two meetings, I foremostly base my analysis on written and oral interpretations, which were formulated after the eruption of war violence and, therefore, were most likely influenced by it.

Benderly (1990: 3) describes the objections to the umbrella as addressing the exclusion of some feminists from the 'earlier planning stages' and 'the hierarchical structure and elitism of the founding group'. Unlike her, Duhaček portrays the conflict as one of the occasions when the Yugoslav feminists had 'walked into the nationalist trap':²

1 See the description of the Independent Union of Women in Chapter 2.

2 This criticism largely overlapped with that which the Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists started expressing later. They reprimanded the other Belgrade cluster's sole scrutiny of Serb nationalism. Belgrade12N approvingly quoted exactly this criticism of Duhaček.

The feminists from Ljubljana absolutely refused to form any kind of movement at the Yugoslav level...The feminists from Zagreb did not agree among themselves whether or not to join. The feminists from Belgrade...were only critical of their own [nationalism] and refused to react to nationalism in other feminist groups.

(1993: 136)

By saying that the Ljubljana feminists had not been interested in any pan-Yugoslav organisation and by naming this 'nationalism', Duhaček implicitly criticises the Ljubljana (and one part of the Zagreb) participants for supporting the secession of Slovenia and/or Croatia from Yugoslavia. Another Belgrade feminist, Milić (1996), rebukes, too, the feminists from Croatia and Slovenia for not being interested in preserving Yugoslavia and sees their dissent as weakening the Yugoslav feminist movement. In her unique recollection, the conflict did not concern the umbrella, but the urge of the feminists from Serbia to write a joint declaration on Yugoslavia's future. Also Belgrade3AN pointed to the secessionist tendencies of Slovenia and Croatia: 'It was already clear that separate states would be formed and there was resistance towards it [the umbrella], and a person from Serbia was not supposed to insist too much on it.'

The last part of Belgrade3AN's statement indicates another significant dynamic. Some Belgrade feminists felt misunderstood by the Ljubljana and Zagreb ones. The latter objected to the former's comments and initiatives as advocating – similarly to Serbia's mainstream political and media discourse – a centralised Serb-dominated Yugoslavia. Such advocacy and concomitant negation of the right to secession of Yugoslavia's constitutive units is probably what two Ljubljana feminists, Dobnikar & Jalušič (2002), have in mind when they qualify as nationalism Duhaček's (1993) accusation of nationalism. Jalušič (in: Dobnikar & Jalušič, 2002) sees this accusation as additionally malicious because it was not communicated to the Ljubljana feminists in person, but published in an US book. Such a struggle for legitimacy when interacting with foreign (feminist) audiences and a lack of direct, precise, and person-to-person communication regarding one's alleged nationalism typify the war-related dynamics between and among the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists.

Ljubljana3EXT and Zagreb7AN expressed a related type of criticism. Ljubljana3EXT generally disapproved of the 'slight colonial arrogance' of the Belgrade feminists. As members of the largest ethnic group and inhabitants of the biggest constitutive unit in Yugoslavia, they had been unwilling to understand the risk of rebuking one's less numerous ethnic group in a smaller geopolitical setting, such as Slovenia or Kosovo. Zagreb7AN, too, criticised the Belgrade feminists for not taking into account their privileged position in Yugoslavia. She reproved of their reluctance to learn Slovenian, at least at the passive level, instead of taking advantage of being the native speakers of the *lingua franca* in Yugoslavia. In Zagreb7AN's view, the

greater geographic and linguistic distance between Belgrade and Ljubljana (as opposed to that between Zagreb and Ljubljana) had made the Belgrade feminists more susceptible to the Serb propaganda about the Slovene anti-Yugoslav and separatist tendencies.

Dobnikar and Jalušič express their disagreement with Duhaček's (1993) accusation in other texts, too. That the Ljubljana feminists 'did not support the idea of an umbrella organization...is no proof of their nationalism but rather the result of the anti-power monopolization sentiment and grassroots consciousness of the new feminist groups within socialism' (Jalušič, 1999: 117). In addition to designating the proposed top-down structure as the contested issue, Dobnikar further rejects Duhaček's interpretation by portraying the conflict at the Third Yugoslav Feminist Gathering as one between theoreticians and activists:

[A] group of theoreticians...put forward an initiative to found an umbrella Yugoslav feminist organisation...We activists opposed this idea, claiming that co-ordination and co-operation among feminist groups and individuals already existed...[L]ater, a certain theoretician [Duhaček, 1993] interpreted this refusal in a foreign publication...as nationalism on the part of the feminists from Slovenia and Croatia...[T]he author...obviously did not know that the initiative was also refused by feminists from Serbia, but above all, she missed the point of why the initiative was refused.

(Dobnikar 2000: 367)

According to Ljubljana1EXT, the proposed centralised umbrella resembled the state women's organisations in Yugoslavia. To establish a similar organisation in times of political decentralisation and formation of autonomous women's NGOs was, according to the opponents of the initiative, a reactionary move. Zagreb7AN backed these views. She, her fellow members of Women's Help Now, and the Ljubljana feminists had argued against a hierarchical structure and advocated a horizontal grassroots network. Contrary to this, the recollections of Zagreb11AN approximated those of Duhaček (1993) and Milić (1996). Zagreb11AN's impression was that the Ljubljana feminists had been more opposed to something carrying the prefix 'Yugoslav' than to the proposed organisational structure. This was corroborated by Ljubljana3EXT's general criticism of the positionings of the Ljubljana feminists around that time. She rebuked their conformity with the mainstream pro-independence political stance in Slovenia, but acknowledged that this compliance might have been contextually influenced: A pro-Yugoslav discourse had meant political suicide.

Duhaček's (1993) observation that the Zagreb participants were divided on the creation of the umbrella is also recalled by Jalušič (in: Dobnikar & Jalušič, 2002). She depicts this division as mirroring the earlier one between established (older, theoreticians) and newcomer (younger, activists)

Zagreb feminists. In the above quote from Dobnikar (2000), the split on pro-umbrella theoreticians and anti-umbrella activists is stated, too. The absence of geographical markers suggests that her observation concerns all participants of the Gathering, but I have not found any indications of such a conflict among the Belgrade or Ljubljana feminists. Dobnikar and Jalušič's take on the situation in Zagreb was implicitly confirmed by Zagreb11AN. She disapproved of the umbrella because the initiators had bypassed the feminists who had worked very hard at a grassroots level against violence against women (mostly feminists from the younger generation). However, given that Zagreb11AN was an established feminist herself, her anti-umbrella stance means that the categories 'established (academic) feminists' and 'supporters of the umbrella' did not fully overlap, just like the categories 'newcomer (activist) feminists' and 'opponents of the umbrella'.

My interviews with Zagreb7AN and Zagreb21ANA indicate that the division between the Zagreb supporters and opponents did indeed at least partially mirror the power differences. As I mentioned, Zagreb7AN recalled that the activists of Women's Help Now had pleaded for a network of equal members. In Zagreb21ANA's even firmer view, all Zagreb feminists had opposed the umbrella because its structure collided with the basic feminist principle of equality of all. Her account of a homogenous Zagreb positioning against the umbrella is surprising because some of its initiators (Slavenka Drakulić, Rada Iveković and Đurđa Knežević) were Zagreb feminists. I presume, therefore, that the phrase 'all of us' which Zagreb21ANA used referred to the younger generation of Zagreb feminists to which she belonged, unlike the above three established professionals.

As to the Belgrade participants, Duhaček (1993) reproaches them for applying double standards in their criticism of nationalism: being silent about the anti-Yugoslav nationalism of the Ljubljana and Zagreb participants and only speaking out against the nationalism in their midst. She does not specify, though, what the latter nationalism consisted of nor what the Belgrade participants' positioning on the umbrella was. Her criticism suggests that she supported the proposal, which means that at least one Belgrade participant did so. Ljubljana1EXT alluded to a diversity of views: '[F]or sure some from...Belgrade...were against the founding of such an organisation'. One could conclude, thus, that there were Belgrade participants who endorsed the proposal, but this was contradicted by Belgrade15N – an outspoken advocate of non-hierarchical organisational structures. She explained that she and the other Belgrade participants had been against and had seconded Dobnikar's plea for grassroots cooperation.

So, similar to the Zagreb situation, where not all established feminists have supported the creation of a hierarchical umbrella, not all future Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists perceived its rejection as an indication of the separatism of the Ljubljana and Zagreb feminists. Moreover, some future Belgrade antinationalist feminists shared the latter perception. This heterogeneity warns against the creation of simplified dichotomies and

reminds the scholars to always ask what one's alleged nationalism or antinationalism actually entailed and in which context the positioning in question was produced.

Speakers Tour in Germany (November 1991)

The speakers tour in November 1991 was a three-week series of public discussions throughout Germany. Three Belgrade and three Zagreb peace activists (two of the speakers from each city were antinationalist feminists, too) presented their activities and views on the situation in Croatia and Serbia, in particular with regard to the war in Croatia. Next to offering to the German public the perspective of the directly involved activists, the tour was meant to raise funds for their peace work. The idea came from a German peace activist – a friend of one of the Zagreb participants. They subsequently asked one of the Belgrade participants if there were any Belgrade activists interested in joining.

Almost three months before the tour began, the Yugoslav People's Army and the Serb paramilitaries started to intensively shell the besieged town of Vukovar in eastern Croatia, demanding the surrender of the much less numerous and much worse equipped Croat forces. On 18 November 1991, during the tour, the completely devastated town fell into Serb hands, leading to the execution of more than 200 (wounded) Croat soldiers and male civilians, and the expulsion of the town's non-Serb population. On the other side of the border, in Serbia, there was no war violence, but the situation was not peaceful either. The state conducted a mass conscription of men for the purpose of the never declared war in Croatia and the Army's heavy artillery passed through Serbia (including Belgrade) on its way to Vukovar. The Croatian electronic and print media could no longer reach Serbia and vice versa. All bus, train and plane connections between the two republics were discontinued, and the phone lines and postal services suspended.

Starting from August 1991, thus, there was an intensification of the war violence and a gradual disappearance of the means of communication between the two republics. That led to a growing information gap between the Belgrade and Zagreb activists. The augmentation of biased media reporting contributed to the differences in perception, despite the activists' awareness of the warmongering propaganda and critical attitude towards their states. Zagreb20EXT recollected that in her three-week absence from Croatia the intensity of the propaganda had tremendously increased. Upon her return she was additionally thunderstruck by the significant narrowing down of the perception of the peace activists who had remained in Croatia and had not received insights from Serbia. Having had such exposure at the beginning of the war strongly influenced her subsequent views on (the) war and (the) media reporting.

So, not only did the Belgrade and Zagreb participants set off for Germany from already different contexts, but during their absence the two republics became even more dissimilar and alienated from one another. Germany's fervent support of Croatia's independence caused uneasiness among the Belgrade participants who spoke about preserving Yugoslavia. Furthermore, they were unpleasantly surprised and felt stigmatised by the anti-Serb propaganda in the German media. The Zagreb participants, for their part, expressed the right of each republic to peacefully secede. They felt misunderstood by the leftist voices in the audience which idealised Yugoslavia as the promised socialist and self-managing land³ and made them feel as if they were nationalists. In short, the Belgrade and Zagreb participants alike felt that the others were treated better and that their message was more favourably received, i.e. considered more legitimate.

The tour's duration and contents added to the tensions between the participants. They were exhausted by being on the road for so long and having to recurrently participate in the same kind of painful and frustrating discussions. The audience wanted unambiguous explanations of and positionings on a situation which was everything but unambiguous. Moreover, the events at home were completely novel to the speakers who belonged, just like the majority of Yugoslav feminist and/or peace activists, to the post-World War II generations which were raised with the idea that a (violent) disintegration of the country was inconceivable. The fall of Vukovar, which the German media extensively reported upon and illustrated with photographs of the ruined town, refugee streams, and Serb militaries wearing Chetnik⁴ insignia, increased the participants' anger, fear, guilt and pain, and further contributed to the tensions between them. However, these tensions were absent from the German newspaper reports of the tour (Achenbach, 1991; Lang, 1991; Slotwinski, 1991). It is possible that the frictions were not publicly expressed and/or were too subtle to be noticed by outsiders. The journalists portrayed the Belgrade and Zagreb participants as like-minded activists who worked against nationalism and war, assisted draft resisters and deserters, tried to spread less biased information, and – in the case of the Belgrade activists – organised street protests.

In Četković (2000), the prominent Serbian politician and peace activist Vesna Pešić – who was not on the tour – explicitly praises the performance

3 Zagreb23AN recalled her similar experience in a meeting with Italian activists. Unlike the Serbian activists, the Croatian ones were suspected of secessionist nationalism because they supported Croatia's independence and did not mourn Yugoslavia's disintegration. As Belgrade14AN remembered, Yugoslavia had been so important to some Italian activists that they had found it difficult to hear her criticism of Milošević. They saw his discourse of preserving Yugoslavia only as a commitment to the dream of a socialist world. See further in Cigar, Magaš & Žanić (2001), Oklobdžija (1993) and Secor (1999) on the perceptions of Yugoslavia as a leftist utopia.

4 The Serb collaborators of the Nazis.

of the Belgrade participants and reproves that of the Zagreb ones. According to Pešić, the former

were on principle against violence and war, [and] for a non-violent conflict resolution, but did not hide behind that generalised and comfortable positioning. We criticised very clearly Milošević's war politics and Serb nationalism, but did not wear sackcloth and ashes as if we, the peace activists, were guilty of something only because we were Serbs. We rejected the idea of collective guilt which was imposed upon us at each step as the only just and most radical peace standpoint.

(Ćetković, 2000: 141)

Pešić implies that whereas the Belgrade participants – and the other Belgrade peace activists – rebuked their politicians and the nationalism of their ethnic collective, the Zagreb ones did not. This criticism is more explicitly expressed several sentences later, when she says that 'the colleagues from Croatia insisted on the premise that the Croats were only victims' (Ćetković, 2000: 142). She illustrates this with her confrontation with an activist of the Zagreb women's NGO Rampart of Love, which she explicitly names 'nationalist'. By not stating that the Zagreb participants disagreed with this NGO, Pešić suggests that they were nationalists. The Belgrade participants are portrayed as resisting the demands of the Zagreb participants to assume collective responsibility for the war crimes committed in the name of Serbs. Once more an important fact is omitted: two Belgrade participants were members of Women in Black, which seven months after the tour called on the citizens of Serbia to assume their responsibility for the deeds of the Serbian regime (Žene u crnom, 1992). The impression is created, thus, that all Belgrade peace activists were unanimous regarding the Serb collective responsibility and that their positioning differed greatly from that of the – equally erroneously homogenised – Zagreb activists. Pešić's criticism was not appreciated by the two Zagreb participants whom I interviewed, but they have never published their objections nor produced any other public record of the tour.

In Bilić (2011, 2012), a Zagreb participant explains that the Belgrade participants could not really grasp what it meant to live in a context in which (the threat of) war was a daily reality. Her worry that her grandmother was unable to leave her village because of its occupation by the Serb forces has been understood as a lamentation over territories. The Zagreb participants felt further that the other side downplayed their fearful reactions to air-raid sirens by commenting that those sirens only served to mobilise consent for Tuđman's warmongering politics. Their dissatisfaction with this lack of empathy was possibly amplified by their effort to send the invitation to the Belgrade activists. Not only were the postal and telegraph services between Croatia and Serbia barely functioning in early October 1991, but the accomplishment of every errand

in Zagreb was hampered by the air-raid sirens. In a similar manner, Zagreb1N disapproved of her friend, a Belgrade 'nationalist' feminist, whereas Zagreb6N spoke of a Belgrade antinationalist feminist who had trivialised the air-raid sirens in Ljubljana. Thus, Belgrade 'nationalist' and antinationalist feminists alike played down the situation elsewhere, and both Zagreb 'nationalist' and antinationalist feminists rebuked that stance. One's perception of the danger was apparently greatly influenced by one's geographic location, i.e. the proximity of violence.

Another issue the Zagreb participants were annoyed about was that, unlike the Belgrade participants, they could not talk about being involved in antiwar protests. The public space in Zagreb was dominated by the protests of conservative NGOs, such as Rampart of Love, which supported Tudman. Their message of peace diverged from that of the Antiwar Campaign Croatia wherein the Zagreb participants were active. Due to this unavailability of space, the constant danger of air raids, and the fighting and shelling elsewhere in Croatia, the Zagreb activists felt that protests were not the right means for communicating their call not to exclude and demonise the (Croatian) Serbs. Instead, they published an antiwar magazine, planned reconciliation activities between the ethnic Croat and Croatian Serb villages, and worked on the implementation of the right to conscientious objection regarding conscription. However, these activities did not have for the Western audiences the flair of great resistance deeds as the actions of their Belgrade counterparts.

The Belgrade participants had their grievances, too, but have not recorded them either. They felt that they were misled, i.e. that their presence in Germany and their open criticism of Milošević and Serb nationalism was used – also by some Zagreb participants – for the purpose of supporting Croatia's independence. They were furthermore irritated by the mainstream German black-and-white understanding of the war and Yugoslavia's disintegration which entailed that Serbia and the Serbs were the only guilty side. In this conceptualisation, there was no mention of the perpetrating deeds of the Croat militaries, such as the besieging of the barracks of the Yugoslav People's Army in Croatia and the cutting off of their electricity, food and water supply. Such a conceptualisation did not leave space either for the anti-Milošević antiwar voices in Serbia. A Belgrade participant criticised a Zagreb one for remarking that the war was not waged in the former's vicinity (read: Serbia). This disturbed the Belgrade respondent because Vukovar was geographically closer to Belgrade than to Zagreb and she saw the whole territory of Yugoslavia as her space. To her, the war felt as real as to those living in Zagreb.

Obviously, the Belgrade and Zagreb participants alike felt that their experiences and emotions were (partially) invalidated by the participants from the other city. The fact that they were expected to speak as activists who understood each other and worked on bridging to one another only increased the tensions between them. By disagreeing among themselves on

the responsibility for and victimisation by the war violence and the possibilities for its cessation, the participants appear to have felt that they were losing the legitimacy as peace activists which was why they had been invited to Germany in the first place.

Meeting in Venice (February 1992)

The Italian Women in Black organised the meeting in Venice as a space where (post-)Yugoslav feminist and/or peace activists would exchange their experiences of the country's violent disintegration. Although intended for listening to one another and expressing solidarity and support, the gathering would end up in anger, disbelief, disappointment and pain, as well as cessation of friendships. At the same time, this outcome would inspire the creation of other networks and friendships. The activists of Women in Black from Belgrade and Pančevo (Vojvodina) would decide to organise an international women's peace and solidarity gathering in summer of the same year. It would prove so successful that it would be organised throughout the 1990s.

The meeting in Venice confronted the participants with the constitutive power of violence. Not only had their immediate surroundings drastically changed in the meantime, but also their war-related positionings and understanding of feminism:

Something totally unexpected, especially for feminists, arose. The relation towards the homeland and the nation [ethnic group] became contested. Some women showed solidarity and identified themselves with their ethnic collective; they experienced it as a victim. A deep gap emerged between the women from Serbia and Croatia. The threads of women's solidarity were not woven as we had expected.

(Žene u crnom, 1993a: 38a)

A few years later Staša Zajović (1995: 50) from the Belgrade-based Women in Black explained the division more precisely: 'I was very shocked when I realized that there were nationalist feminists, that not all feminists are pacifists...Some feminists from Zagreb erected a wall...dividing us: we women from the aggressor state, and they from the attacked state'. For the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists the general categories of 'women' and 'men' were, thus, no longer applicable as such in the war context, but had to be supplemented with an ethnic marker (Korać, 1998; Lipparini, 2005). Moreover, these feminists subordinated the gender marker to the ethnic one and treated the Belgrade antinationalist feminists as co-responsible: '[T]he Serb women did not want to believe that their fathers, brothers and husbands did this [war rapes] to the Croat women who were till just recently their neighbours and friends' (Ott, 1992).

Mirjana Čupić (1993), a Zagreb participant, illuminates the dynamics from a different angle. During the introductory round she shared how touched, pleased, and proud she had been to receive, at the time when the tanks had been heading to Vukovar, the supportive and empathic telegram of her friend – a Belgrade antinationalist feminist. She replied while in a basement because of the danger of air raids (an instance when the warnings proved justified). Actually, this meeting was the first occasion after that exchange when the two directly involved feminists met again. It was also the first time after the beginning of the war in Croatia that those three Belgrade antinationalist and three Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminists came together. The atmosphere was made even more pregnant by the presence of a Zagreb-based Croat refugee woman who spoke about fleeing from Vukovar and not having news from her husband, a prisoner of war. So, very soon after its joyful start, the meeting took another turn:

I met the women from Belgrade....Joy of seeing [each other]. Laughter. I want to talk, hear them and tell them everything. Talk till the morning. On the first day, instead of a conversation, I heard essays, reports on actions, theses... I listen to them and wonder where my friends are...It is hard to think about our further conversations; when will they take place and where. Our further conversations (at this moment) could resemble cockfights in an arena...The audience senses the call of fresh blood and flesh...That will be a real fight with a lot of blood.

(Čupić, 1993: 44)

The heated interactions between the Belgrade antinationalist and Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminists regarding the war in Croatia can be better understood using the example of Kosovo. A Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminist presented in Venice the following premise: ‘We deem that...the displacement of the crisis hotbeds in Kosovo, Slovenia and Croatia...basically supposes the same agent of aggression’ (Kodrnja et al., 1991: 2). Although the authors did not explicitly define the agent in question, it was obvious that they referred to Serbia and considered it the sole perpetrator.⁵ At that time, however, the Belgrade antinationalist feminists treated both sides in

5 The fact that Serbia and/or the Serbs were not explicitly mentioned indicates how difficult and sensitive the creation of a heretical positioning was in the beginning for some Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminists. This becomes even more visible if the preceding sentence is considered: ‘The peace movements name as a rule the agent of aggression’ (Kodrnja et al., 1991: 2). Thus, although the authors began with a general normative claim on the importance of naming, when it came to naming the concrete actor they could not move beyond producing an implicit indication. The use of the more indirect construction ‘agent of aggression’ instead of the direct term ‘aggressor’ is an additional case in point.

the war in Croatia as equally responsible and victimised. That they were yet to start as a matter of principle to single out the Serb responsibility – as they already did regarding Kosovo – is visible from the essay which Zajović (1993b: 47) read in Venice: '[T]here is no difference between the "defenders of the fatherland, home thresholds and hearths" [Croats] and those who are named aggressors [Serbs]'. She said further to be 'very suspicious of the...claim about being ethnically endangered in a state in which "their ethnic group" is dominant. The endangerment of...the minority ethnic collectives is a completely different thing given that in ethno-fundamentalist states they are exposed to oppression' (Zajović, 1993b: 46).

In view of the Belgrade antinationalist feminists' acknowledgement of the power difference between the oppressing (Kosovar) Serbs and the oppressed ethnic Albanians, the above statement was not peculiar. Nonetheless, it became very problematic when read to an audience which partially consisted of people from Croatia, three months after the fall of Vukovar. By formulating the matter in such a black-and-white manner, Zajović glossed over the fact that although the Croats were the dominant ethnic group in Croatia, in some areas they were targeted by the Croatian Serbs. Albeit less numerous, the latter were the dominant ones then due to the support which they received from the Yugoslav People's Army and the paramilitary units from Serbia.

No Zagreb antinationalist feminist was present in Venice. Considering the constitutive power of violence, it is quite likely that they, too, would have criticised those utterances. Actually, if the speakers tour in Germany and the meeting in Venice are compared, a partial overlap is visible between the positionings of the Zagreb 'nationalist' and the Zagreb antinationalist feminists: Members of each of the two nascent Zagreb clusters accentuated that the war took place in Croatia, not in Serbia, and that not all sides were equally responsible and victimised. Nonetheless, the positioning of the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists was more accusatory in tone towards everything and everybody coming from Serbia, including the Belgrade antinationalist feminists. The Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists seemed not to always differentiate between those who created, endorsed and carried out Serbia's politics and those who – like Women in Black – publicly protested against those politics. Moreover, the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists approached the Belgrade participants with distrust. For example, after hearing the estimated number of draft resisters in Belgrade, a Zagreb 'nationalist' feminist insisted to hear the figures for the rest of Serbia (Žene u crnom, 1993b).

What happened, thus, was that once the existence of dissimilar positionings and experiences became clear, the meeting turned into a field in which a struggle for legitimacy took place between the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists. The Belgrade antinationalist feminists sought endorsement for their risky antiwar resistance and (broad) definition of aggressors

and victims.⁶ The Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminists wanted to obtain recognition of their (narrow) definition of aggressor and victim, and the great differences between the suffering and destruction in Croatia and that in Serbia. A few not war-related, but nonetheless legitimacy-related, issues added to the latter feminists’ displeasure: the larger number of participants from Serbia, the inclination of the Italian organisers to share the positioning of the Belgrade feminists, and the unequally distributed task division in which a Belgrade feminist exercised a lot of control over the discussions by being a facilitator and interpreter alike. Zagreb16N explained why she had been particularly upset with Zajović’s conceptualisation of all politicians as acting in the same manner and being members of the same masculine fraternity:

I did not think that Tuđman and Milošević had made a deal because it was Tuđman’s land which was destroyed...whereas there [in Serbia] no house was destroyed...[T]o me that did not look like a normal agreement between two politicians; that they had agreed that the one would destroy...one fourth of the houses of the other and make one fifth of the population homeless.

The Zagreb participants were, thus, very critical of the claim that both sides were equally responsible and victimised. However, already that positioning clashed with the mainstream one in Serbia which conceptualised the Serbs only as victims. To speak in Serbia in 1991 and early 1992 about all victims was to commit ‘the maximal act of rebellion’ (Stojanović, 2012). This positioning was publicly manifested in, e.g., the four-month daily silent vigils in front of the Presidency of Serbia, whereby candles were lit for all victims of the war in Yugoslavia. In spite of its deviation from Serbia’s political mainstream, this positioning was criticised also by the Zagreb antinationalist feminists who considered it, too, as not doing justice to the situation in Croatia. The insufficient understanding for and recognition of each other’s (difficult) experiences resulted in tensions both between the antinationalist feminists from the two cities, and between the Belgrade antinationalist and the Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminists, but did not bring the two Zagreb clusters any closer. Nadežda Četković, a Belgrade participant, recounts the difficulty of the Belgrade antinationalist feminists in Venice to communicate that their positioning was all but comfortable:

I felt that the discussion was, in a way, the imposition of guilt upon us. We had already been protesting on the street...and...exposing our

6 In late March 1999 a Belgrade participant linked the non-recognition of her pain in Venice in 1992 to the NATO bombing of Serbia: ‘Maybe after the suffering in destroyed Belgrade my pain will also gain legitimacy?’ (Četković, 1999: 12).

bodies against the regime. That wasn't naive, because we were approached by people who were spitting at us, pushing us, pulling our hair out, shouting that we are traitors...[A]ll that...hadn't been recognised as sufficient, and I couldn't figure out what we were supposed to do – to go to Zagreb and to let the bombs fall onto our heads?! The frustration was enormous, and I did try to understand, but my feelings were hurt.

(Korać, 1998: 36)

Another important issue which Ćetković addresses is the (imposed) feeling of guilt among the Belgrade antinationalist feminists with regard to Serbia's politics and the Serb war crimes. This was the only cluster which regularly engaged with the feeling of guilt either by expressing it or rejecting it – an issue which became even more pertinent with the outburst of war and war rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Fridman, 2006; Jeremić, 1993; Mladenović & Litričin, 1993; Winden, 1992). One of the instances in Venice when this guilt was evoked concerned the affiliation with Yugoslavia. During the introduction a Belgrade participant said: '[I] was hundred percent Yugoslav, now I have lost my country, I feel like a person who does not belong anywhere' (Vera, in: *Žene u crnom*, 1993c: 40). Another pointed to the miscellaneous parts of Yugoslavia where she had resided: 'I was born in Zagreb, lived in Slovenia,...in one Serbian village, [and] two years in Mostar [Bosnia-Herzegovina]' (Nadežda, in: *Žene u crnom*, 1993c: 40). The next day, the refugee woman from Vukovar rebuked these statements:

You women from Serbia declare yourselves as Yugoslavs. When one of you said something like that...all of you were crying. But...when we were listening to the women from Kosovo...talking about their great suffering, I did not see tears.

(Melita, in: *Žene u crnom*, 1993b: 42)

The Kosovar Albanian participants were explicitly critical of the consequences of Serbia's politics for them. I am not aware, though, that they accused the Belgrade participants of anything. On the contrary, prior to Melita's rebuke, a Kosovar Albanian had explicitly expressed her gratitude to the Belgrade women for their support. Still, it is quite imaginable that the gravity of the accounts of the Kosovar Albanian participants contributed to the feeling of guilt of (some of) the Belgrade ones. They became subsequently more cautious about publicly expressing their affiliation with Yugoslavia. In a later meeting, the same Vera as above recollected the scene in Venice: 'At one gathering with women from Zagreb...I said that I felt Yugoslav...maybe because I felt sadness because of Yugoslavia. But then I realised that it was not legitimate to say that you were Yugoslav' (in: Lipparini, 2005: 30). Another participant, Belgrade3AN, remembered

that the woman from Vukovar had said: 'A few days ago I left the cellar in which I had spent two months with the children. My husband is in Serb captivity, I have no idea what has happened to him. I have no need or energy to cry for the state which had done this to me.' Belgrade3AN continued to explain the effect of this statement on her:

I have never shared my Yugoslav story again. I felt guilty for defending that whole [Yugoslav] space as my space. I did feel it as my own, intimate [space], not as a state. But then I saw that that offended some people. That some women had a different feeling of belonging. That that feeling [of mine] was linked to a state which was their enemy and that they experienced that Yugoslavia as an inimical construction, whereas their national state felt safe to them. I stopped with that because I felt that when you were from Serbia, you had a great burden on your shoulders and you could not have any claims to Yugoslavia... [Y]our hands are tied.

The Belgrade antinationalist feminists' affiliation with Yugoslavia was not only criticised by those with a stronger attachment to their nation state or ethnic group. It was also criticised by some Zagreb antinationalist feminists. Zagreb23AN recollected: 'You realise in time that that mourning of Yugoslavia slowly starts to irritate you. Now we have this situation and it is over, you cannot go on with crying...Yugoslavia was not the best one possible, just think of Kosovo'. Some even implied that these Belgrade feminists were Yugoslav nationalists (Knežević, 1994).

The irritation of the Zagreb antinationalist feminists was additionally – and maybe even more significantly – triggered by their Belgrade counterparts' nostalgia for the Croatian part of the Adriatic Sea. The latter's use of the pre-war denomination 'our sea', even when retrieving one's pre-war summer holidays, school trips and love stories, added fuel to the fire. Some Zagreb antinationalist feminists saw the expressions of loss, related to the impossibility of visiting the Croatian coast during the war in Croatia, as resembling the Serb expansionist tendencies or as inability to accept the new geopolitical reality.⁷ Zagreb11AN told me how irritated she had been in the early 1990s by the Belgrade feminists' statements on how much they

7 Jansen (2005: 225) correctly observes that the nostalgia for Yugoslavia should not be per se seen as an act of antinationalist resistance to the regime, given that in Serbia 'the hegemonic Yugoslavism and nationalism formed a bizarre team'. More concretely, one of Milošević's rationales for his politics was the preservation of the Yugoslav federation against all secessionist forces (Vasiljević, 2008; Zaharijević, 2007). A telling difference existed between the Belgrade feminists on this issue. Three of the four 'nationalist', as opposed to none of the nine antinationalist, feminists stated that the Yugoslav entities which had seceded from Yugoslavia were far from being better-off as independent states.

loved Dubrovnik.⁸ This annoyance was strengthened by the fact that during the war some parts of the coast were not easily accessible to the Zagreb feminists either, due to the Croatian Serbs' blockade of the direct transportation routes from Zagreb. Many Belgrade antinationalist feminists found it very difficult to encounter such reactions. In the words of Belgrade4AN, 'There has been and there still is a feeling here...of being treated unfairly because of the perception that everything pro-Yugoslav is actually pro-Great-Serbian, a domination'. I will return to this issue in the analysis of the meeting in Medulin.

Gathering Women in War in Zagreb (October 1992)

Women in War was the first international event where the existence of war rapes in the wars in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina was discussed. Already during its preparatory phase the split between the Zagreb feminists started gaining publicity in Croatia and abroad (mostly in Europe). Although the different war-related positionings and related tensions among the members of Women's Help Now had started manifesting from July 1991, the final split occurred in April 1992. The antinationalist feminists' faction registered a separate entity called Autonomous Women's House Zagreb. At the time of Women in War this NGO gathered the Zagreb antinationalist feminists, whereas the 'nationalist' ones were active in Kareta, Women's Help Now or Trešnjevka.

The German funder FrauenAnstiftung allocated money to Women's Help Now for the organisation of the Fifth Yugoslav Feminist Gathering. In the meantime Yugoslavia violently ceased to exist, so the members of Women's Help Now decided to call the event International Feminist Gathering Women in War. The idea of convening feminists from all over the former country was to be maintained. However, after the split those who had left could no longer exert influence on the format of the meeting. Given that the main contact person for FrauenAnstiftung had remained in Women's Help Now, this NGO proceeded with the preparations, but invited Kareta to be the co-organiser. Even before the gathering took place it became a subject of controversy because of the organisers' decision not to invite any Belgrade feminists. The donor was not happy with this exclusion, but did not withdraw the financial support: This was to be the first such meeting and a way to mobilise more international feminists for engaging against the wars and their consequences for women. After the gathering FrauenAnstiftung decided not to support the two organising NGOs anymore and to focus instead on those which were committed to peace work, such as the Autonomous Women's House Zagreb.

8 A historical and tourist centre on the Adriatic coast and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It was heavily damaged in the shelling by the Yugoslav People's Army in the autumn of 1991.

The texts written by third parties around the time of the gathering (e.g., Dobnikar, n.d.) stated that the organisers justified the non-invitation with wanting to respect the sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia⁹ and by claiming that the Belgrade feminists had failed to unambiguously distance themselves from Serbia's politics and acknowledge that Serbia was the main aggressor. In the interviews, however, four of the organisers mentioned other reasons for their decision. Zagreb16N said that she had been informed by the Croatian Ministry of Interior that the Belgrade feminists would not have been allowed to enter Croatia. Another reason, which was also evoked by the three other respondents, was the attendance of (raped) refugee women victims of Serb atrocities in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The organisers wanted to give these women a safe space to speak about their war experiences and suffering. Had the Belgrade feminists been present, the safe space would have been endangered and the purpose of the meeting sabotaged. In the organisers' view, the exclusion of Serb women from an event featuring victims of Serb war crimes was analogous to the practice of not allowing men at the Zagreb SOS Hotline for women and children victims of male violence. Moreover, the refugee women had agreed on sharing their stories on the condition that nobody from Serbia would attend.

The Belgrade feminists were never informed why they had been bypassed. In fact, the organisers did not produce any official explicit statement on the non-invitation. Their criticism of the Belgrade feminists (and the Zagreb antinationalist ones) can be inferred, though, from one of the two handouts which accompanied the invitation letter:

[T]he war in Croatia...has divided once solidar [sic] organizations and individuals into those from the countries which are victims of aggression (Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo), those from the countries-aggressors (Serbia and Monte Negro [sic]) and those from the countries-observers (Slovenia and Macedonia)...[F]eminism was caught red-handed...Once leading feminists have not yet presented a relevant feminist picture and analysis of the war, while some of them got lost in inarticulate peace initiatives not daring to take up the position.

(Women's Help Now & Kareta, 1992a)

In the other handout, the organisers' goals were explained, but the exclusive invitation policy and the planned survivors' speak-out were not mentioned.

9 The relevant paragraph 8c of the UN Security Council Resolution 757 (1992) concerned the suspension of cooperation, exchanges, and visits 'involving persons or groups officially sponsored by or representing the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia'. However, the Belgrade antinationalist feminists were neither sponsored nor formally representing the state whose citizens they were, but publicly protesting against its politics.

Its wording shows a mixture of the pure gender-based positioning on (war) violence and the emerging ethnicity-based one:

We particularly want to describe the war to the women of Europe who should and must come face to face with the fact that it is the first occupatory [sic] war to be waged on our continent after World War 2... [W]oman has become [sic] a 'war target' or 'war aim'; its [sic] sex has become not only the area for demonstration of military superiority but the area and territory of occupation. We want to present our story, the story of women from an attacked country hoping that we are going to stimulate women[']s organizations and feminists to take more active part on international level in preventing wars generally.

(Women's Help Now & Kareta, 1992b)

The organisers decided, thus, not to use the funds for their original purpose: a continuation of the cooperation and exchange between the (post-)Yugoslav feminists undeterred by the wars and the newly erected state and ethnic boundaries. Instead, they secretly chose another priority: to have women war victims testify in order to mobilise international feminists to act in favour of ending the wars and war rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia (the mass war rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina were disclosed two months earlier).¹⁰ Besides the Belgrade feminists, the other Zagreb cluster was almost fully excluded as well, whereas the number of potentially dissenting voices from Ljubljana was strictly limited. It seems that the organisers used a threefold strategy in their attempts to, on the one hand, stop the wars and war rapes and, on the other, obtain a broad legitimacy for their definition of these forms of violence. They drastically reduced the chances of dissent, invited war victims whose testimonies supported their own positioning, and increased the number of seats available to foreign feminists. Despite these efforts, an uninvited antinationalist feminist who lived and worked both in Belgrade and Zagreb – and could enter Croatia with her Croatian passport – came into the conference room. She got the chance to speak about the peace activities in Belgrade thanks to a German participant who had deliberately given her the floor. The organisers reacted with an uproar. In the interviews, three of them explicitly scolded this act for being insensitive and harmful towards the (raped) refugee women.¹¹

10 The US journalist Roy Gutman (1992a, 1992b) is considered to be the first person to break the news about the (Serb-inflicted) war rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina in August 1992.

11 Not all refugee women seemed to object to the presence of somebody (partially) from Belgrade. Ljubljana1EXT recalled that one of these women had confided to her to be pleased with the criticism of the absence of Belgrade feminists, whereas the uninvited Belgrade/Zagreb feminist told me that she had afterwards been approached by Vukovar women who were eager to talk to her in private.

Thereby, they implicitly portrayed themselves as the only sincere advocates of these women's interests and well-being.

Two critical statements were read at the gathering. The first statement was authored by a Ljubljana feminist, whereas the second was signed by nine Ljubljana feminists, four Zagreb antinationalist ones, and the uninvited Belgrade/Zagreb feminist (Balen et al., n.d.; Dobnikar, n.d.). The signatories did not disapprove of the endeavour to publicise the existence of war rapes and advocate for their cessation and criminalisation. Nonetheless, they criticised the covert modification of the purpose of the gathering, the exclusion of the Belgrade feminists despite their anti-Milošević positionings, and the betrayal of the agreement to maintain the gender-based cooperation and solidarity among the post-Yugoslav feminists. Several strategies were proposed on how to repair the mistake and restore the exchange.

The organisers did not respond to these statements. A demarcation line, which would remain largely intact up to the present day, came into existence. It separated the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists from the other Zagreb cluster and the Belgrade and Ljubljana feminists. The Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists – and, to a lesser extent, some from Ljubljana – continued to cooperate. They kept underlining their gender-based solidarity, although in reality this solidarity did not extend to the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists. Also important is that the cooperation between the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists did not indicate an absence of tensions and disagreements, but a presence of a sufficient overlap between their positionings. As Zagreb22EXT explained, '[w]hat was shared between them was much larger than that which was not'.

Related Developments after the Gathering

The framing of the acclamation which the organisers of Women in War received from the Croatian pro-state tabloid *Globus* deserves a separate analysis. The article in question (Globusov investigativni tim, 1992) received worldwide attention because of the defamatory statements and insults which were addressed to five prominent female intellectuals from Croatia: the journalists Vesna Kesić and Jelena Lovrić, the philosopher Rada Iveković, and the writers Slavenka Drakulić and Dubravka Ugrešić. These women, whom the tabloid named 'witches', were severely attacked because of their individually made claims that women, not ethnically specific women, were raped. To make the accusation even more explicit, the article was entitled 'Croatian Feminists Rape Croatia!'.¹² Furthermore, (falsified) parts of their biographies were published to underline their alleged absence of loyalty towards the new Croatian state and its suffering, as well as their

12 Although the article stated that all five women were feminists, only Drakulić, Iveković and Kesić declared themselves so.

supposed privileged life during socialist Yugoslavia. Both characteristics had the status of a serious crime in Croatia in the early 1990s (Drakulić, 1999; Iveković, 1994; Kesić, 1993; Ugrešić, 1996).¹³

These intellectuals' gender-based positioning on the war rapes was contrasted with that of Women's Help Now and Kareta. The latter were commended for arranging such a gathering, creating space for the victims, and assisting them in making the war rapes '*the international feminist problem number one*' (Globusov investigativni tim, 1992: 42, emphasis in the original). The accused women were rebuked for not using their alleged access to international media and political institutions to draw attention to the suffering of the Bosniak and Croat women. Actually, the praise for the organisers functioned as an additional argument against the five intellectuals. In an ironic twist, thus, the same members of Kareta who had in April 1991 commemorated all women burned as witches were used in December 1992 to fan the flames against the 'five witches'.

Although the article abounded with (misogynous) hate speech, no Zagreb 'nationalist' feminist reacted to it. The Zagreb antinationalist feminists, including Kesić, sent immediately a press release to their foreign contacts and the Croatian media. It was signed with 'Women's Lobby Zagreb' – their informal pressure body which had been established just the month before. The Lobby forcefully rejected the contents of the article without criticising Women in War and its organisers. Two Croatian dailies published the press release, but even then the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists remained silent. By reacting to the article's claim that Serb soldiers were the only rapists, the Lobby expressed its positioning on the war rapes:

[A]re we really incapable to imagine...that WOMEN of other nationalities are getting raped as well and that this is also the doing of the Cro-army [Croatian army] soldiers...The assessments...make clear that [the] rapes of women are a psychological strategy of [the] Serbian and Montenegrin army, that these rapes occur more often and are more systematic...However, it is the matter of personal and national honor to accept the deplorable fact that 'our boys' are also doing it. 'Our boys' which we should renounce of if we want to be just in this unjust war.

(Zagreb Women's Lobby, 1992: 1, upper case in the original)

By underlining that Croatia had to recognise and rebuke the Croat war rapes, these feminists diverged greatly from the other Zagreb cluster, which

13 When the article was published, the author's name was not disclosed. Later it was revealed that it had been written by Slaven Letica – a sociologist and former advisor of Tudman. It is hardly coincidental that such an inflammatory article was authored by somebody acquainted with labelling theory. His analysis (Letica, 1997) of the labels used by politicians and the media regarding the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia does not include, though, his most (in)famous act of labelling.

refrained from publicly positioning itself on those rapes. Another difference concerned the Lobby's careful singling out of the Serb rapes, while denying their alleged disentanglement from the omnipresent male violence against women. The dissimilar conceptualisations of perpetrators and victims notwithstanding, both Zagreb clusters demanded a treatment of war rape as a war crime and a weapon of war, the closing down of all war camps where women were sexually violated, and the establishment of support centres for the survivors.

In its later mission statement from December 1992, the Lobby did not single out the Serb rapes: 'Women are potential victims of war violence firstly because they are women, [and] only afterwards because they are Croat, Muslim or Serb' (Centar za žene žrtve rata, 1994: 120). Just like in its first press release (Ženski lobby Zagreb, 1992), the Croat rapes were only implied. Such shifts of accent were not noticeable in the statements of the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists. Their positioning on perpetrators and victims remained unaltered even after the beginning of the Bosniak-Croat war in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the spring of 1993. Although the Bosnian Croat militaries, supported by Croatia's government, initiated this war and started to ethnically cleanse the Bosniaks, as Obradović-Dragišić (2004: 43) aptly observes, the 'enemy was already constructed and it was all Serbs'. This continuity meant that the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists never publicly spoke of the Bosniaks or Croats as perpetrators. A case in point is the June 1993 statement of Vladimir Šeks, the then vice prime minister of Croatia. In an interview on the Croatian national television, he said that the Croatian government was reconsidering its policy on the Bosniak refugees residing on its territory:

The Croatian government is in a very difficult position [in trying] to defend them from the justified rage of the Croat people. It will have to seriously re-examine their further survival [sic] and...treatment because it is unimaginable that [Bosniak] soldiers fight and commit pogroms and genocides...against the Croat people...whereas Croatia provides for and accommodates their families.

(Hrvatska radiotelevizija, 1993)

In its letter to the Croatian government and media, the Center for Women War Victims denounced these proclamations as 'a classical example of hate speech and discrimination which...can be understood as an invitation for persecution' (Centar za žene žrtve rata, 1993). The Croatian government was to distance itself from Šeks' words and bring him to account. Biljana Kašić (1993) from the Women's Lobby Zagreb additionally criticised him and the rest of the Croatian government for treating the ethnic groups as homogenous entities and installing fear and uncertainty among the Bosniak refugees. The Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists remained silent.

My interviews with these feminists confirmed Obradović-Dragišić's (2004) conclusion that for them the construction of the enemy had been a *fait accompli*. They did not approve of or deny the Croat war rapes; some were even very critical of those and other Croat war crimes. Nevertheless, my question about their silence on those rapes was understood as an accusation which had to be rejected. Some respondents distinguished the Croat war crimes from those of the Serb forces. The former were incidental, sporadic and intrinsic to each war, unlike the premeditated latter, which were conducted on a large scale for the purpose of ethnic cleansing or genocide. A range of other reasons was given as well: not knowing about the Croat war crimes, not having the resources to extend one's activities, being focused on seeking legal redress for the victims of Serb war crimes, and not having contacts with the victims of Croat crimes because those people did not flee to Croatia.

I would argue that this non-adjustment to the restructuring of the battlefield was predominantly a result of the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists' wish not to endanger their legitimacy and efforts to criminalise the Serb war rapes. Being the heretical challengers in the Zagreb feminist field and the majority of Western feminist fields, they had invested a great amount of capital and work in trying to establish themselves as legitimate victims of and experts on the (sexual) violence by the Serb forces. Any modification of their conceptualisation of Serbs as the only aggressor – which they exploited in the struggle for legitimacy – carried the risk of losing the already gained symbolic capital. Moreover, a readjustment of the positioning required a readjustment of their future advocacy strategies. This was not, apparently, something these feminists wanted to engage in either.

I found only two exceptions to this silence. Neither represents an official organisational positioning. The first exception is a brief comment from June 1993. In an US documentary (Laughlin, 1993), Trešnjevka's activist Žana Stanzl says: 'Till this time, when there were only Muslims and Croats together, against Serbians, it was...easier. Now you don't know anymore...It is a very difficult situation...You don't know now who kills whom and why, in the name of what?'. The second and much more significant exception concerns the publication of the Croatian translation of Brownmiller's (1975) capital work on rape *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape*. Her use of the gender-based conceptualisation of rape regarding the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina was heavily criticised by MacKinnon (Brownmiller, 1993; MacKinnon, 1994; Rejali, 1996).

Željka Mrkić, the feminist who published the translation in 1995, did so only after she had withdrawn from organised feminist activism and, thereby, left the former struggle for legitimacy behind. The Bosniak-Croat war has made her realise the primacy of the gender dimension of the war rapes and she wanted to educate the public about their repetitions throughout history. Mrkić's foreword to the Croatian edition contributes to the exceptional character of this move, although she does not openly

depart there from her previous positioning. She speaks of 'the Serb aggression on Bosnia-Herzegovina' (Mrkić, 1995: i), but does not say anything about the Croat one. Furthermore, the possibility that the (Bosnian) Croat – and Bosniak – forces might have committed war rapes is only implied: '[T]here exists no victorious army which would not rape. Often, unfortunately, the attacked one rapes as well, as was the case with the Red Army soldiers during their conquest of Germany' (Mrkić, 1995: iii).

When slightly more reliable estimations of the number of raped women appeared (Cherif Bassiouni, 1994; Mazowiecki, 1992, 1993; Warburton, 1993), it turned out that both Zagreb clusters were partially right. The 'nationalist' feminists were correct to point from the beginning to the by far largest extent of the Serb-committed war rapes against non-Serb women, whereas the antinationalist feminists rightfully maintained that the Croat and Bosniak forces raped women of Serb and, respectively, Bosniak and Croat ethnicity. These reports did not, however, stop the struggle for legitimacy between the clusters.

International Women's Solidarity Meeting in Zagreb (February 1993)

The International Women's Solidarity Meeting (initially: International Women's Tribunal) was a one-day meeting which further elucidated the war-related positionings of the Zagreb 'nationalist' and the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists. The German NGO Perspective Berlin summoned female politicians and feminist activists – foremostly from Western Europe – for the purpose of writing a joint resolution, which would be used to advocate the end of the war rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the criminalisation of war rape as a crime of war, and the establishment of an international war crimes tribunal. Having the meeting close to the war zones was seen as benefitting its international visibility, whereas Zagreb was considered safe enough for the foreign participants. Still, fearing tensions, no local women were invited. Mate Granić, the then vice prime minister of Croatia with whom Perspective Berlin discussed the terms of the organisation of the meeting, objected that absence. Instead of fulfilling his wish to have only members of Rampart of Love represent the (raped) women of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, the organiser negotiated a compromise solution. With last minute invitations, the Women's Lobby Zagreb, as well as Kareta, Trešnjevka and Women's Help Now, participated, too. The Lobby was, actually, the initial local organiser, but it withdrew in protest of the plan not to invite women from the post-Yugoslav region and to involve politicians of Croatia's ruling party in the preparations (Balen, 1993; Modrić, 1993a, 1993b; Pollmann et al., 1993).

Similarly to the incident at the Women in War gathering, the unexpected presence and address of somebody (partially) from Serbia caused again a tumult in one part of the audience. This time it concerned Vesna

Božić, who could enter Croatia as a US citizen. Having been given the floor by a British participant, Božić read out the declaration to the meeting written by the Belgrade antinationalist feminists. The text made evident the (imposed) feeling of guilt of the Belgrade antinationalist feminists and their need to underline their distance from Serbia's official politics:

Some of us feel guilty because of belonging to the aggressor's nation... *Having a Serb name does not entail agreement with Serbia's politics, just as having a Croat name does not entail support to Croatia's politics...*[F]or those who still suspect, *we want to repeat that there is a small but strong women's opposition in Belgrade already since the first military interventions of the Yugoslav People's Army in Slovenia.*

(Žene u crnom, Grupa za žene et al., 1993: 116–117, emphasis in the original)¹⁴

Immediately after Božić had begun to speak, the participants from Rampart of Love and the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminist cluster left the room. According to a media report (Modrić, 1993b: 6), Rampart of Love said that those 'whose husbands and brothers kindle, rape and bomb' had no right to speak in Zagreb – a reaction which, as the above quotation shows, had been already anticipated and responded to. Informed about the contents of the declaration which they had chosen not to hear, the activists of Rampart of Love stated that they had acted out of principle. Those utterances will probably have reached the Belgrade antinationalist feminists. In their letter to a gathering in Amsterdam in March 1993, they took a much harsher and more determined tone than in the declaration:

[W]e refuse to be seen as sisters, wives and daughters of men who rape and kill in this war. We have faught [sic] toghether [sic] with many feminists around the world for years to be seen as autonomous individuals and not as properties of men, therefore our political views are only ours and each woman is responsible for herself. We refuse to be seen as prisoners of our names, [and] national origin.

(Women in Black & Group for Women, 1993: 1)

- 14 Radović (2002a) gives an example of extreme distrust in the Belgrade antinationalist feminists' factual opposition to Milošević: her interaction with MacKinnon at the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in June 1993. After having listened to MacKinnon's address, in which she had called for a military intervention against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Radović gave her a copy of a publication of Women in Black and informed her that there were also people in Belgrade who actively opposed the regime. MacKinnon reacted by asking: 'Where did you get the money for this [the publication] from, and if it was against the war, how come that Milošević has not killed you yet?' (Radović, 2002a: 71; see also Kesić, 1994b).

In the declaration, Women in Black, the Belgrade Women's Lobby and the Group for Women Raped in War (later: the Autonomous Women's Center) acknowledged that Serbia's regime had started the war violence with the goal of ethnic cleansing, rape and abuse of women's bodies and reproductive functions. The Bosniak women were the gravest and most numerous – albeit not the only – victims. Whom these women had been victimised by was only implied: 'We know very well that women and men were not abused nor was Croatia's natural and cultural-historical heritage destroyed by the Croats themselves' (Žene u crnom, Grupa za žene et al., 1993: 116). This simultaneous presence of acknowledgement of the general responsibility of Serbia's regime and reluctance to state its responsibility for concrete deeds shows the gradual creation of the new Belgrade orthodox feminist positioning on (sexual) war violence. In February 1993 the Belgrade antinationalist feminists no longer used a strict gender-based positioning and no longer spoke of equal victimhood and responsibility. Nevertheless, they have not yet begun to firstly and foremostly speak of the Serb (sexual) war crimes. This change – which resulted from the appearance of more trustworthy reports on the war rapes and these feminists' interactions with Zagreb feminists – becomes additionally clear if two other Belgrade texts are compared: one written before and one written after the above declaration.

The leaflet which the Belgrade antinationalist feminists had produced in late December 1992 and which was distributed at the Solidarity Meeting contained their general criticism of the war rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the politicians' instrumentalisation of the war rapes and the raped women for spreading hate, inciting violence, and advocating armed intervention. War rape was seen as a military strategy which all armies used and which needed to be globally recognised as a war crime. This positioning overlapped to a great extent with that which the Zagreb Women's Lobby expressed in its press release from 5 December 1992 (see the previous analysis). But unlike their Zagreb counterparts, who had cautiously indicated that the Serb militaries were possibly employing war rape more extensively, the Belgrade antinationalist feminists expressed equidistant criticism. They asked the

international community and public to put pressure on and make responsible the regimes of Slobodan Milošević, Radovan Karadžić, Alija Izetbegović, Mate Boban and Franjo Tuđman so that they would disband all concentration camps, private jails, military brothels, and other institutions where women's sexual slavery is legitimised.

(Žene u crnom, SOS telefon et al., 1993: 99)

In a text published in early March 1993, the Belgrade antinationalist feminists abandoned this discourse of equal responsibility and victimhood. The gender-based positioning was not discontinued, but supplemented with ethnic markers. War rape was described as a gender-based historical

occurrence which did not bring any legal and societal repercussions to its male perpetrators, although it was detrimental for women. Nonetheless, ethnicity mattered, too:

The feminists of Belgrade and Serbia do not agree with the premise about the symmetry between the...warring sides in Bosnia. They are aware that Karadžić's more powerful and better armed military and political forces...have on their conscience the largest number of rapes...The above average number of raped Muslim women...is not a reason to forget the [other] raped women...The feminists will advocate help to all women victims of rape...as well as the bringing to a war crimes tribunal of all rapists and those who have given them the order. (Žene u crnom, 1993d: 90a)

Dafinka Večerina from Women's Help Now criticised the Belgrade anti-nationalist feminists for their leaflet which had been handed out at the Solidarity Meeting. She disapproved of their lumping together of the Bosniak, (Bosnian) Croat and (Bosnian) Serb leaders, whereby their equal responsibility for the war rapes was suggested. By stating not to want to show hospitality to the Belgrade feminists, Večerina possibly hinted at the choice of her NGO and Kareta not to invite them to the gathering in October 1992: 'I cannot accept...that they equate the victim and the aggressor... That...was the reason why we could not listen to the woman from Serbia [presumably, Božić]...As long as the war lasts...I cannot reconcile with being their host and showing hospitality' (Matošić, 1993: 36).

Also Trešnjevka's activists found it unacceptable to have a person from Serbia as one of the speakers. The letter to their German partner organisation makes it clear, though, that Božić's ethnicity had not been the only contested issue, but that the struggle for legitimacy had played a role as well. To be invited to the gathering only the night before indicated to them that they were perceived as less legitimate agents than the Belgrade activist(s):

It is impossible to describe our feelings when we saw...that one of the first speakers [sic]...were Serbian woman [sic] from Chicago...She spoke in the name of 15 serbs Women in black from Beograd [sic]. That was so much...In my country, victim of Serbian aggression... where European women came to support women raping in Serbs [sic] rape/death camps, they [sic] can talk without any problem. And we must wait for favour...Afterw [sic] this humiliation we had no nothing [sic] to do there.

(Kadić & Mrkić, n.d.: 2)

The Solidarity Meeting was further characterised by the disturbance which was caused by the banner of an Austrian radical feminist and lesbian initiative: 'Rape is not a question of nationality, but a worldwide war of

men against women'. This gender-based positioning provoked a strong disapproval among the representatives of Rampart of Love, a few of whom immediately rushed to pull it down, leading to a great commotion (Modrić, 1993b). Already prior to the meeting the Croatian pro-state weekly *Danas* criticised the gender-based positioning of the German organisers and the activists of the Women's Lobby Zagreb who spoke about wars in an abstract manner¹⁵ and considered women eternal victims. Rampart of Love, Kareta, Trešnjevka, and Women's Help Now were overtly praised for their patriotic positioning which did not conceptualise all warring sides as equally guilty, i.e. did not deny the Serb aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, and the Serb war rapes for the purpose of ethnic cleansing (Ramljak, 1993; see also Ujević, 1993).

The Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists and the non-feminist women's NGOs they cooperated with regularly reproved the gender-based positioning as not corresponding to the reality. Because of its inapplicability to the national situation, Zagreb1N called this positioning 'international' or 'supranational', whereas Zagreb16N considered it peacetime and universal. It was used by people who lived in peace, as those who had hung up the banner, unaware that there was no war in Serbia at the time. Given that she could not dismiss the Zagreb antinationalist feminists as coming from a peacetime context, she suggested their lack of expertise in working with victims. Unlike her, these activists have distanced themselves from the reality by sitting behind their desks and travelling abroad to conferences. This manner of delegitimising the Zagreb antinationalist feminists by the Zagreb 'nationalist' ones was particularly strongly articulated during the MADRE speakers tour.

MADRE Speakers Tour in North America (Spring of 1993)

Whereas the Women in War gathering and the International Women's Solidarity Meeting made the split among the Zagreb feminists known among the European feminists, the MADRE speakers tour (whose official name was Mother Courage II) transported it to the North American continent. By organising the tour, MADRE – a New York-based women's

- 15 Women's Help Now, too, used the terms 'abstract' and 'neutral' to disapprovingly describe the positionings of the Zagreb antinationalist feminists:

[W]e were particularly concerned to maintain and apply...the basic feminist principles, such as identification of the aggressor (the perpetrator) and solidarity with the victim (the woman or the war victim). Those principles have determined the feminist approach which grew out of the experience of exactly this war, and the differentiation between Women's Help Now and some other women's NGOs whose starting point is abstract internationalism and lack of understanding of the specific war circumstances of the imperialist or conquering war.

(Kodrnja, n.d.: 1)

human rights NGO – wanted to dissipate information on the (sexual) war violence in the (post-)Yugoslav region, address the worldwide use of rape as a weapon of war and advocate its criminalisation, as well as demand increased attention for women's human rights at the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in June that year. The tour was further a fundraiser for the antinationalist Belgrade and Zagreb NGOs supported by MADRE: the Antiwar Campaign Croatia, the Autonomous Women's House, the Independent Union of Women, the SOS Hotline, Women in Black, and Women's Infoteka. Vivian Stromberg, MADRE's executive director, explained the omission of the 'nationalist' feminists as follows: 'You can't have a nationalist perspective and...invite people from 10 other countries. It doesn't make sense unless what you want to do is fight' (Hamilton, 1993b: 5).

The strict invitation policy did not prevent serious disagreements from emerging. It only displaced them from the conference spaces to the letters, press releases, and journalist and academic articles. A few days before the tour began Kareta's collaborator Natalie Nenadic sent to the MADRE office and the tour's stops the protest statement of four Zagreb women's NGOs: Kareta, BISER, Women B&H, and Rampart of Love.¹⁶ Earlier that year they and Women's Help Now had started working with Catharine MacKinnon on the civil lawsuit against Radovan Karadžić (Hamilton, 1993a; MacKinnon, 2006). The signatories stated:

As representatives of Bosnian and Croatian women's groups and some of us survivors ourselves who have been working with victims of genocidal rape since November 1991 and therefore have the most experience with this particular genocidal war crime, we write to express our concerns about the national tour being sponsored by MADRE...Most of our members and members of these other groups literally work 17 hour days, too completely immersed in horror, to perhaps have the same access to Western women's groups which wish to assist survivors as do women's groups which were formed and empowered during the communist regime and which have only begun dealing in some way with this issue in the aftermath of the media attention...[MADRE] should have researched genocidal rape more thoroughly...and in a manner more representative of and accountable to victims and to the political context in which these rapes are occurring.

(Kareta et al., 1993: 1)

To invite the signatories and fundraise for them would have been, thus, the right choice; the other NGOs worked in bad faith and did not benefit the survivors. The legitimacy which MADRE had given to the Zagreb

16 The non-alphabetical order of the signatories suggests Kareta's greatest share in the creation of the statement.

antinationalist feminists was further challenged by the claim that instead of working with survivors, they spent their time enlarging their Western networks and increasing the privileges which they had been enjoying since socialism. MADRE and the Zagreb antinationalist feminists were additionally reprimanded for not calling the war rapes by their real name. These rapes were not to be considered a universal weapon of war, but a historically unprecedented Serb weapon of genocide against Croats and Bosniaks. Those who employed the former conceptualisation silenced the victims and equalised them with the Serb aggressor, thereby sustaining its strategy and obstructing a more determined international intervention.

In the same vein, the signatories rebuked the Belgrade antinationalist feminists' gender-based conceptualisation of the war rapes. Like the earlier quoted statement by Večerina from Women's Help Now, this criticism also helps understand why the organisers of Women in War had not put much effort in securing the presence of the Belgrade feminists:

Because of this lack of acknowledgment of genocidal rapes...and because Muslim and Croatian (and Albanian) women are continuously violated in public forums by Serbian women's position on this (as by that of the very unrepresentative women you have selected to speak for Croatian women), we feel we cannot engage in such forums until Serbian women's position becomes accountable to the genocide...[T]o place Muslim and Croatian women in forums which force on them women of the group committing the genocide...might be something like forcing Jewish women to 'debate' with German women while the Holocaust were still going on – and German women who don't even want to acknowledge that a genocide is happening – and then simply calling the whole thing a war.

(Kareta et al., 1993: 3)

The use of the particularly laden reference to the Holocaust was not unique to this document. Kareta, including its close associates MacKinnon and Nenadic, and Trešnjevka regularly made an analogy between the Shoah or the Nazi ideology and the treatment of the non-Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia by the Serb forces. Unlike Trešnjevka, though, Kareta extended this parallel to the Zagreb (and Belgrade) antinationalist feminists. These activists were accused of collaboration with the Serb perpetrators, cover-up of the rapes, and genocide revisionism (Armanda & Nenadic, 1994; Böhm, 1993; Kadić, 1993; MacKinnon, 2006; Nenadic, 1996, 2010).

Two participants, the Zagreb antinationalist feminists Vesna Kesić and Đurđa Knežević, were additionally put in the pillory. Their portrayal as working against the interests of women, rape survivors in particular, resembled to a great extent Nenadic's (1991) criticism (see Chapter 3) and the defamatory article on the 'five witches' (Globusov investigativni tim, 1992). For example, 'victims are simply distrustful of and do not wish to

work with women who were so deeply implicated in the regime which is destroying them and with those who actively participated in the sexual abuse of women through pornography' (Kareta et al., 1993: 4). This was a reference to Knežević's former post as the 'director of the Museum of the Communist Revolution which was essentially a weapons warehouse in the middle of Zagreb' (Kareta et al., 1993: 4) and Kesić's previous employment as 'a writer and occasional editor of the Yugoslav pornography magazine *Start*' (Kareta et al., 1993: 4, underline in the original). The signatories hinted twice, thus, at these feminists' presumed collaboration with the enemy: The weapons which had been exhibited in the museum were used by the Serb forces, and the allegedly pornographic magazine had inspired the Serb war rapes. A few months later MacKinnon (1993) would repeat the latter suggestion in her infamous article 'Turning Rape into Pornography: Postmodern Genocide'.

So, not only the positionings of Kesić and Knežević were criticised, but also the cultural, economic, and social capital which they had apparently accumulated in the previous system and continued to increase through their interactions with various Western agents. Nothing was said on the capital of the Belgrade antinationalist feminists. Although the MADRE tour was one of the Western feminist fields in which the Belgrade feminists participated as well, the 'nationalist' feminists from Kareta did not compete that much with them. The more important struggle was to be perceived as the legitimate Zagreb or Croatian feminist experts on war rape. This struggle was partially rooted in the tensions in Zagreb in the 1980s between the already professionally established feminists and those who were still students.

In their written reaction, Kesić and Knežević rebuked the statement's defamatory discourse and the signatories' self-representation as the only legitimate speakers on war rape. The two feminists acknowledged the latter's efforts to publicise the existence of war rapes, but criticised their recurrent use of inflated figures and talk of mass rapes in Croatia, given that 'such (massive genocidal) rapes have not been confirmed by independent monitors' (Kesić & Knežević, 1993: 3). Without ever explicitly naming the four NGOs 'nationalist' or 'patriotic', they pointed to their agreement with Croatia's politics and implied that Kareta's work might not be based on feminist principles:¹⁷

'Kareta & Others'...seemingly, deny all other interpretations and understanding of this tragic phenomenon but the national one, under the state-imposed ideological slogan: 'We are the victims, they are the aggressor'. Everything else – for instance, the legitimate feminist

17 Although Kesić and Knežević spoke about 'Kareta & Others', the questioning of the feminist approach was solely directed at Kareta – the only self-declared feminist NGO among the signatories.

approach, in which war rapes are looked at from a historical and global perspective (without denying that Serbian militias rape in massive numbers and for the purpose of genocide) – is forbidden because it differs from the only approved truth.

(Kesić & Knežević, 1993: 3)

In an interview during the tour, Kesić underlined the feminist component of the work of the Zagreb antinationalist feminists. She portrayed their approach as the legitimate and classical – one could say, orthodox – one, while showing ambivalence regarding the feminism of the other cluster:

I definitely belong to this one which decided to stay on the feminist positions...There are also many other projects which I believe are also very good and built on feminist principles, but they just don't have the same approach...[A] feminist approach...[which entails] that we are going to help any women doesn't matter what nationality she is, is legitimate. So our projects start from those classical principles.

(Kesić, in: Douglas, 1993: 8–9)

Kesić and Knežević also addressed the accusation of being privileged under socialism. First, drawing an analogy between the past and the present, they implied that the four signatories might have been involved in the construction of the case of the 'five witches':

When we started the women's movement...we were accused...of 'importing decadent bourgeois ideology'...[W]e are now being accused of 'national treachery'...[J]ust as the official, 'ideologically correct' women's organizations took part in such witch hunts then, some new 'correct' women's groups are doing the same now.

(Kesić & Knežević, 1993: 2)

Second, they clarified that Knežević's directorship of the museum – 'a monument of the antifascist appraisal of the people of Croatia' (Kesić & Knežević, 1993: 4) – had not lasted long. Soon after she had become its director, Tuđman's newly elected party in power shut it down. As to Kesić's involvement in a pornographic magazine, they explained that the pin-up girl on the cover had been the only pornographic element in the otherwise liberal magazine, which featured affirmative articles on feminism, gay and lesbian rights, antimilitarism etc.: 'Even pornography itself was written about critically. At least one of "Kareta & Others" should know this, because an article of her's [sic] was also published' (Kesić & Knežević, 1993: 4). Kesić's (1994a, 1994b) important rebuttals of MacKinnon's claim that the Yugoslav pornography had been one of the main causes of the Serb genocidal war rapes echo these and the other issues among the Zagreb feminists which were discussed during the MADRE tour.

I have not come across published information on frictions between the Belgrade and Zagreb speakers. Similarly to the coverage of the speakers tour in Germany in 1991, the North American articles on the MADRE tour portrayed the Belgrade and Zagreb speakers as cooperating with each other, supporting (raped) refugee women, and working against nationalist politics (Carr, 1993; Helwig, 1993; Hobbs, 1993; Krause & Douglas, 1993). Kesić (in: Douglas, 1993: 8) hints at the disagreements between the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists, but does not specify whether they occurred during the tour: 'The character of the war – we don't have to agree. This is a legitimate issue to discuss, who is guilty in this war and up to which extent'. The comparison of the recorded utterances does not reveal either much difference between the positionings on the war rapes. The speakers used a gender-based positioning, which was supplemented with ethnic markers. Kesić & Knežević (1993: 3) explain that they look at the rapes 'from a historical and global perspective (without denying that Serbian militias rape in massive numbers and for the purpose of genocide)', and Kesić (in: Douglas, 1993: 14) affirms that 'there are gang rapes by Croats...[but] if we even try to say that...people are angry. All the militaries are doing it...They really hate us when we say that'. In the same interview, the Belgrade participant Lepa Mladenović asserts:

Serbs are raping Muslim and Croat women and the way it is done... [is] genocide...You know that...[Serb] women have been raped...and that's all true. But the media portray all that in a nationalist way... [I]t's a woman's issue but it's also a political issue because if it's done in a massive and systematic way and as instrument of 'ethnic cleansing,'... it's not only a women's issue.

(Douglas, 1993: 14)

Nonetheless, in the interviews with me, one Belgrade and one Zagreb participant evoked an example of the discontent which had been caused during the tour by a speaker from the other city. Belgrade10AN talked about the guilt which was repeatedly imposed on them by the Zagreb feminists from both clusters. She implied that the Zagreb antinationalist feminists were not as critical of Croatia's politics as they expected their Belgrade counterparts to be regarding the politics of Serbia. Zagreb11AN remembered that whereas she had addressed the rapes committed by Croat and Serb militaries alike, a Belgrade participant had preferred to speak in abstract terms against militarism and male violence against women. This had been unsatisfactory for Zagreb11AN, who had expected unambiguous positionings on the deeds of the Serb forces. In both cases, thus, the other party was criticised for insufficiently accentuating the responsibility of the politicians and militaries of the state she was a citizen of – a recurring source of annoyance for the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists.

The MADRE speakers tour was seemingly the last event which was heavily coloured by the conflict between the Zagreb 'nationalist' and the Zagreb (and Belgrade) antinationalist feminists. At the UN conference in Vienna in June 1993, MacKinnon expressed her strong doubts on the veracity of the Belgrade antinationalist feminists' opposition to Milošević,¹⁸ but no conflicts between the clusters appear to have occurred. The feminists from the opposing clusters simply did not talk to one another. Furthermore, the session where MacKinnon spoke began with the live testimony of a female Bosniak war rape survivor. Although MacKinnon's accusation that the feminists with a gender-based positioning were whitewashing those genocidal rapes was strong enough to incite fierce reactions, the gravity of the Bosniak woman's story left no space for debates (Flanders, 1993; MacKinnon, 1994; Radović, 2002a).

I propose a three-fold explanation for the gradual disappearance of such conflicts, despite the ongoing mass war rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina. First, those rapes lost their political and media significance both locally and internationally. Second, once the existence of different positionings among the feminists and the depth of the split became clear, nobody attempted to bring together – let alone reconcile – the opponents. Third, the heretical challengers, the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists, moved to different (feminist) fields. They established their own networks and did not come across the Zagreb (and Belgrade) antinationalist feminists anymore. In consequence, the struggle for legitimacy between them became obsolete.

Meeting in Medulin (March 1995)

The meeting in Medulin summoned many Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists who had encountered each other throughout the war years at events in third countries. This occasion to discuss the conflicts among them was directly inspired by the dispute at the women's consultation in Geneva in the spring of 1994.¹⁹ The consultation was supposed to end with a joint peace declaration, but the Belgrade and Zagreb participants clashed over its contents.²⁰ A Zagreb respondent recalled that the women from Belgrade had been unwilling to state the extent of

18 See note 14 above.

19 I do not analyse this event because of the insufficient information.

20 In her short report on the consultation, Savić (1995) observed that the organisers had not taken into account that three days would not suffice to neutralise the differences in positionings which were partially due to the very divergent war experiences of the participants. A similar omission on the part of the organiser was the choice to have the International Women's Solidarity Meeting in Zagreb last only one day. Without wanting to absolve the post-Yugoslav participants at these meetings from their part of the responsibility for the conflicts, the role of the Western organisers should not be underestimated either. See also the criticism by Helms (1998, 2013) of the selection of participants from Bosnia-Herzegovina on the MADRE speakers tour.

Serbia's role as a perpetrator, whereas three Belgrade respondents recollected the same, *mutatis mutandis*, about the Zagreb participants. Radović (2002b) notes that the women from Bosnia-Herzegovina reacted angrily – 'We do not want to be at the receiving end of this exchange of shots between Belgrade and Zagreb' – and left the room. Their statement, uttered at a time when the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina was still raging, left the involved Belgrade and Zagreb participants with a bad taste in their mouths. They decided to call a meeting to bilaterally discuss those and similar disagreements:

The theme of the meeting is conversation and dialogue about what we think of one another, and whether our thoughts and relations have changed since the beginning of the war, nationalism, and societal hatred. Further: how much are we shaped by the territory we live in; ethnic identity vs. gender identity; feminist solidarity in war; conflicts at international gatherings.

(Feministkinje Beograda, 1995)

The US donor STAR Project of Delphi International agreed to fund the reunion, which would take place in the seaside resort Medulin, in the Istrian region of Croatia – a sentimental choice of the Belgrade feminists. Although the war in Croatia was not over and one part of its territory was still held by the Croatian Serbs, Istria had remained untouched by the direct war violence and was a safe and tolerant enough location for such an event. The intention to tackle the sensitive issues was also visible in the presence of a US conflict resolution trainer whose role was to assist the dialogue. Due to the closed character of the meeting, the Istrian human rights activists who provided logistical support did not attend the working sessions (Ćetković, 2000; Feministkinje Beograda, 1995; Radović, 2002a; Savić, 1995; Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 1994).

Mladenović (1998), Mladenović & Kesić (1996), and Mladenović & Miličević (1996) address this get-together. If combined, the texts give a good indication of the issues which played a role during those few days. Their further weight is that they belong to the scarce (first-hand) accounts on the existence of serious disagreements and misunderstandings between the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists. However, none of the three contributions mentions the superfluosity of the conflict resolution trainer – one of the first issues which the participants recollected in the interviews. The anecdote, which was narrated with pride, entailed the following: Soon after the meeting had started the participants realised that the presence of an outside person for whom everything had to be translated into English hampered the process instead of assisting it. Having felt skilled enough to deal with the pain and frustration by themselves, they decided to continue alone.

The meeting would prove cathartic, especially for the Belgrade feminists. Zagreb9AN attributed its special character, besides being held in one of the warring countries and focused on the past conflicts, to the fact that the participants had not been supposed to represent their ethnic collectives in front of an audience:

[A]ll other meetings were...foremostly a performance...The three of us from Zagreb and the three from Belgrade did not get the chance [in Germany] to sit for three days to chat with each other and see where the differences between us were and what we have experienced. Instead we were [announced as] peace activists and put on the stage...You talk about something, but only there on the stage, in front of those who ask, you realise that you do not actually agree about some things or you do not really understand one another properly. Something similar happened in Venice, Geneva, MADRE...All that was a game: 'We brought you peace activists, ask them'...[In Medulin] [w]e had the opportunity to talk without that pressure from the public.

Put differently, there was no struggle in Medulin to obtain recognition from foreign audiences, produce a joint statement, or precisely inform on the character and prevalence of the war rapes. The only agenda points were the participants and their (previous) dynamics. That even a limited outside audience – the conflict resolution trainer, her translator, and an US journalist – was not welcome in the end, additionally shows how needed such a secluded encounter was for those who attended it. The presence of audiences and conference agendas, as well as the absence of privacy and time, had not been, though, the only reasons why the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists had not managed to discuss the differences between them earlier. To do so would mean entering a political and emotional minefield, as witnessed by the following recollection of a Zagreb feminist:

We kissed and hugged and kept [sic] each other's hands, sat embraced all the time. We cried a lot, and laughed a lot...[but] we were afraid to talk. We actually talked a lot, but there were themes we never opened up. Who is guilty? Who started it all? Is everybody equally responsible?...There were too few of us left. We could not bear to lose one more with a wrong question.

(in: Žarkov, 2002: 61)

What made the Medulin meeting additionally unique and laden for the Belgrade participants was its seaside location. This was the first time since the beginning of the war violence in the summer of 1991 that they saw the Adriatic Sea from the Croatian coast, but now as citizens of a different country: '[We] saw our sea. Whose sea? It is not ours any longer.

The sea was the same as always, calm and blue, but we are foreigners in the land of sea. We need passports and visas' (Mladenović & Miličević, 1996: 10). This fragment seems to have been partially inspired by the scene in which the exclamation 'Our sea!' by a Belgrade participant was met by the comment of a Zagreb participant that it was not their sea anymore. This was a very painful moment for the Belgrade participants, who did not get the apparently teasing character of the reaction. For them, the Medulin meeting was at once a reminder of their pre-war life, a reality check, and a promise of a better future:

[T]here were much more emotions than a text could contain...But all of us were singing the last evening...So that we would grasp the idea of new states, so that we would leave behind the images of concentration camps and...dead people with which we lived because we cared about the suffering of people, so that we would start making plans for the future, this meeting cleansed us and brought us closer to our Zagreb friends. We started loving one another a lot.

(Mladenović & Miličević, 1996: 10)

In the interviews, the Belgrade participants recollected the encounter in a similar passionate manner. They mentioned the tears which they had shed intensively not only during the joint bus ride with the Zagreb participants from Zagreb to Medulin, but also at the meeting. Belgrade5AN was among those for whom it was particularly emotional to look at the sea. She had chosen earlier in the 1990s to explicitly distance herself from Yugoslavia and the reference 'our sea'. Being aware that many Serbs with a pro-Yugoslav orientation ended up manipulated by Milošević, Belgrade5AN decided to – as she put it – radically assume her responsibility:

I was living by that [pro-Yugoslav] concept and when the war started, I had to deconstruct everything which I loved so much and believed in...Because of all those big crimes and tensions, I said that I would never again utter that that was our sea...[T]hat was an excellent decision because I broke with one type of sentiment...A sentiment pulls you towards something which is politically problematic.

It seems that the meeting did not have such a charge for the Zagreb participants, although it did not leave them cold either: They recurrently recollected the crying of the Belgrade participants and their reaction to the sea. The gathering exposed once more – but this time very explicitly – the irreversibility of time, the dissimilar war experiences, and the fact that one part of the participants (those from Belgrade) came from the country which had attacked that wherein the other participants (the Zagreb ones) lived:

Women from Belgrade wanted the sisters from Zagreb to hear and know why some of them were crying already on the bus to Zagreb. Some women from Zagreb wanted their sisters from Belgrade to know why they had decided: 'never again [to go] to Belgrade'.

(Mladenović & Kesić, 1996: 14)

The need of the feminists from each city to communicate their experiences to and be heard by the feminists from the other city indicates the shared feeling of not being understood and not having one's suffering recognised by the other side. Mladenović (1998) notes the absence of trust and the 'us' and 'them' divide which existed prior to the meeting. These issues started playing a role already during the first wartime encounter between the antinationalist feminists and peace activists from the two cities – the speakers tour in Germany in November 1991. So, next to the burning need to have the other side acknowledge one's difference, there was an urgent need to reconnect as women and sisters exactly because these differences threatened the future gender-based solidarity and cooperation. The insistence on the gender-based reconnection is already observable from the title of the text by Mladenović & Kesić (1996): 'Laughter, Tears, and Politics: Dialogue – How Women Do It'. With the exception of the above quotation which states the dissimilar experiences, the rest of the text speaks of the similar – if not the same – manner in which women do things, including the linking of personal histories and societal issues through dialogue:

A women's dialogue starts from personal stories and arrives at the political level. A women's dialogue begins from tears and laughter, a five-hour singing in an Istrian tavern, from the level mum/dad/me, from childhood, and our grandmothers' stories. A women's dialogue starts and returns to the personal experiences of war, genocide, home, state, [and] nation and develops afterwards to the exchanges of our political thoughts and standpoints.

(Mladenović & Kesić, 1996: 15)

Although the reunion was meant to create space to address the conflicts at international encounters, none of the interviewed participants gave a concrete example of such a discussion. Many mentioned, though, the moment when they realised that among them were the daughters – one Belgrade and one Zagreb feminist – of men who had been on opposite sides in World War II. In May 1945 the father of the Belgrade feminist had participated, as a partisan, in the summary killing in Bleiburg of the Ustasha²¹ prisoners of war among whom was the father of the Zagreb feminist. Two Belgrade participants recalled this episode as follows:

21 The Croat collaborators of the Nazis.

I had not even heard about Bleiburg before that. You can imagine how that looked; something just pops out, resurfaces...I was bewildered, and I think the others were, too, [about] how multilayered each of our stories was, and [about] the layers which you could inherit.

(interview with Belgrade5AN)

The anger of this [woman] from Zagreb, the guilt of this [woman] from Belgrade...[A] conversation started about where our fathers and mothers were, on which side in the wars...[A]most everybody's parent was a participant, a victim, or a witness of some terrible war crimes! *Each of us* had some crime...in her family heritage...*Lives were changing* because of the crimes...The point was...that we, feminists, end the hatred that our parents might have had because of the crimes which had determined their lives and deaths. You cannot even grasp what kinds of crimes there were; my generation did not learn much about that at school.

(interview with Belgrade13AN, emphasis in the original)

This realisation and the ensuing discussion exposed the existence of silenced places in the Yugoslav historiography which still vibrated in the family histories of individuals. Furthermore, even among the feminists there were immensely important topics which predated the then ongoing wars but had never been touched upon. The Yugoslav feminists-in-becoming had mobilised themselves by stressing their shared gender-based experiences and problems. This had left no space for discovering and articulating the differences among them – a phenomenon which was further strengthened by the equalising character of the communist ideology. The Medulin meeting provided this very needed forum for a more profound understanding of each other's backgrounds and positionings, i.e. for connecting the personal to the political and historical.

In spite of the cathartic moments and the importance of the meeting for the participants, the three above texts are the only published records of it. Besides the reasons which I gave in Chapter 3 for the general lack of (scholarly) contributions on the conflicts and differences between the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists, I would argue that the omission of this specific episode is also due to its anomalous character (Douglas, 1966). The encounter both enabled the participants to reconnect as fellow women (sisters) and made them aware of the dissimilarities and tensions among them. In other words, the event strengthened somewhat their capacity to transgress boundaries, while simultaneously diminishing it partially. The safest way to deal after the meeting with such an empowering and disturbing anomaly was to be silent about it. This silence not only manifested in the scarcity of analyses, but also in the fact that the meeting format has not been repeated. The Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists kept avoiding another such joint questioning of their accustomed

self-portrayal as feminists whose unceasing gender-based understanding of and solidarity with each other defeated the divisions based in ethnicity, country of residence, or personal histories.

Women's Studies Center in Belgrade (throughout the 1990s)

The Belgrade Women's Studies Center gathered from the very beginning antinationalist and 'nationalist' feminists. Even its two main organisers belonged to different clusters – a situation which would be unimaginable in Zagreb. This cooperation suggests a likelihood of war-related tensions, but their intensity remains very unclear if one is to form conclusions from the very limited and nebulous published information. In the earliest text which reports on war-related frictions among the Belgrade feminists (Mladenović & Litričin, 1993: 117), the Center is conspicuously neither listed among the NGOs 'where the non-nationalist statement is clear' nor among 'all other groups [which] had many problems'. Two other contributions which are exclusively dedicated to the Center (Dojčinović-Nešić, 1998; Dojčinović-Nešić & Popović, 2002) are silent on this topic. The latter essay portrays the Center's split in 1998 as simply resulting from the branching out of its activities. Duhaček hints, though, at the presence of (covert) tensions from the start:

[W]as it...that while assuming the anti-nationalist foundations of our Centre we actually wished to avoid clarifications concerning the matter so as to avoid conflicts? Later...this did erupt in individual conflicts and unresolvable differences in the critiques of nationalism which, in time, we learned to live with.

(1998: 492)

In a later work, without mentioning the split which had occurred in the meantime, Duhaček makes a similar suggestion when discussing the internal debate on the institutionalisation of women's studies:

The suspicion that the academia would lose sight of activism, and should therefore be monitored, was in direct conflict with the argument that theory should have some independence from ideology...[P]ositions of unwavering feminist activism...were in some rare cases unclearly positioned, and in even rarer cases, leaning toward Serbian nationalism.

(2004: 44–45)

Duhaček implies, thus, an intertwining of a war-related dichotomy with a non-war-related one: a certain overlap between those who were inclined towards activism and nationalism, as well as between those with a preference for academism and antinationalism. It is left out, however, that

this dichotomy referred at least to the two main organisers. The ‘nationalist’ one was more grassroots-oriented, whereas the antinationalist one was more of a theoretician. Finally, Zaharijević (2007: 247–248) – as the only one to do so – links the split exclusively to the different positionings on one’s state, i.e. to the ‘regrouping of the women in relation to...the famous standpoint of Virginia Woolf’.²² Such an approving reference to Woolf’s (self-chosen) non-affiliation with her state is expressed solely by Belgrade antinationalist feminists (Duhaček, 1998; Korać, 1996; Stojanović, in: Mladenović & Hughes, 2000; Zajović, 1993a, 1997). That was, in fact, typically welcomed, if not expected from them, at international forums (Duhaček, 2010; Gjurgjan, 1992; Helwig, 1993; Iveković, 1991; Janković, 1996; Kašić, 2002).

The second indication of dissimilar war-related positionings within the Center is a discussion from the early 1990s around the question of how justifiable it would be to shoot to defend oneself and one’s children should an armed soldier appear at the door. Duhaček (1998) and Mladenović (2002, 2003) use this discussion to point to the differences among the Belgrade feminists in their positionings on nationalism and the (post-)Yugoslav wars. Due to the lack of information, this book cannot outline the positionings of concrete feminists. Duhaček (1998: 493) explains that Mladenović and Zajović were adamantly and on principle against the use of arms, whereas other feminists – whose names are, quite tellingly, not disclosed – ‘were ready to use weapons at least in order to defend themselves’. Mladenović (2003: 161) speaks of pro-nationalists who justified ‘shooting in defence some of the time, but not all of the time’ and feminist pacifists or antinationalists who were against all shooting. In the slightly earlier contribution, besides addressing the fragility of trust even among women who have worked together for several years, Mladenović makes an important connection between that discussion and the then recently changed outside context:

Because we did not know how each of us would reply, the concentration among us was incredible. Everybody was surprised by the answer of the other...Those who said ‘Yes, I will shoot in defence’ felt that they did not have trust in those who would not shoot because, had they happened to be together, the person at the door would have shot them both. Those who said ‘I will not shoot’ felt uncomfortable when they realised that many others would shoot in defence because of what that meant in the context in which shooting in defence was the basic ideology of the Serb war violence in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. All of us were antiwar, but that term was obviously very broad.

(2002: 12)

22 See note 9 in Chapter 1.

It is surprising that the participants were (implicitly) named one way or another based on how they would react in a hypothetical one-to-one violent situation. However, in light of Mladenović's above reference to the outside context, it seems that the underlying question was not one's hypothetical reaction on a micro-level. The real issue was, apparently, one's positioning on the actual wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, i.e. the macro-level right of self-defence of an ethnic collective. The mystifying, fragmentary, and ambiguous manner in which this episode has been recorded both illustrates and reproduces the silence on the war-related disagreements among the Belgrade feminists. Moreover, it warns against a simplistic referencing of the above works.

The third indication is the conference Women's Rights and Social Transition in the FR Yugoslavia which the Center organised in June 1997 – an event which has, most probably, caused internal frictions, but I only learned about it when I came across its proceedings (Nikolić-Ristanović, 1997) after the fieldwork. The conference organiser and editor of the proceedings has made a revealing choice regarding the three contributions on women's rights and war. One essay discusses the treatment of war rape at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) without giving any indications on the ethnicity of the perpetrators and victims. Another analysis addresses the rapes of Bosnian Serb women in Bosnia-Herzegovina and criticises ICTY's unethical and depreciatory approach towards those rapes, unlike its treatment of the Serb rapes of Bosniak women. The ICTY was to treat all rapes as systematic, widespread, and aimed at ethnic cleansing. The third text addresses the plight of refugee women from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia who live in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Their ethnicity is not stated, but it is to be expected that most of them are of Serb ethnicity, as fleeing to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was the safest option for them. No essay in the proceedings focuses explicitly on Serbs as perpetrators and non-Serbs as victims. Mladenović, otherwise one of the most articulated Belgrade antinationalist feminists regarding the collective Serb responsibility for the (sexual) war crimes against non-Serbs, is featured with a non-war-related article on lesbian human rights.

To understand why this example is indicative, it is important to summon the Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists' positioning on the perpetrators and victims in the (post-)Yugoslav wars. Without ever denying the Serb (sexual) war atrocities, these feminists – all of whom were involved with the Women's Studies Center – were not as outspoken about them as the other Belgrade cluster would become from March 1993 onward. Furthermore, the Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists did not underline the foremost perpetrator's role of the Serb militaries nor insist on assuming collective Serb responsibility. Instead, they generally criticised the nationalism of all ethnic groups and the (sexual) war crimes committed by all sides against people of all ethnicities. The Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists, thus, kept

using the positioning of equal responsibility and victimhood – which had been, too, the initial positioning of the other Belgrade feminists – but usually focused on the suffering of Serbs (Blagojević, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1999a, 1999b; Milić, 1993, 1994, 1999, 2002; Nikolić-Ristanović, 1994, 2000, 2001, 2003; Nikolić-Ristanović et al., 1995, 1996). Finally, they sometimes referred to the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovenia as a ‘civil war’. This reference was avoided by the Belgrade antinationalist feminists who saw it as wrongly equalising the responsibility and military power of all warring sides.²³ Belgrade11AN explained the war-related differences in the Center as follows:

There were those who were not ready to accuse...the state politics of Serbia that much, and *especially not* the Serbs – that was markedly out of the question. They were not fools not to see what was going on, what was destroyed and how many people were killed...[but] [t]here was a refusal to see that that was a consistent state politics which was actually supported by the majority of the population. That was the conclusion which was hard to cope with.

(emphasis in the original)

The example of the Belgrade conference in 1997 is reminiscent of the situation in Women’s Help Now, wherein before the official split in April 1992 one could find two types of war positionings coming from the same NGO (see Chapter 2). Similarly to this, such a conference was organised by the Center, although some of its council members had already started to point to the Serb responsibility (Duhaček, 1995; Mladenović, 1994; Papić, 1994). Dojčinović-Nešić’s (1998: 213) mystifying description might be explaining exactly this co-existence: ‘The selection of lecturers is, let’s say, very delicate. The question of “ideological suitability”...is rejected, but not the requirement that the lectures fit by their theme and contents into women’s studies whereby the basic criterion is their quality’. I would argue that one’s ideological suitability was not discussed, not because it did not matter to the members, but because two other issues mattered more. First, the Center’s priority was to assemble a broad expertise in a

23 A respondent of Fridman (2006: 117) explains why the formulation ‘civil war’ is problematic: ‘[S]ome [anti-Milošević] voices were not crystallized enough in what their position was; they usually say it was a civil war, but what civil war? It was a war of aggression against all these states’. This quotation is further significant because of the use of the word ‘crystallized’, i.e. the notion of clarity and precision, to convey that one’s positioning has insufficiently condemned Serbia’s politics. Knežević (1994: 4) speaks of a ‘very vague and seldom precise [criticism]’ and Duhaček (2004: 45) mentions ‘unclearly positioned’ activists. Some statements have been ‘insufficiently politically nuanced’ or ‘insufficiently clearly [formulated]’ (interview with Belgrade11AN), whereas Belgrade5AN recollected that there were those who ‘did not possess a political clarity and sharpness regarding the war’.

setting where scholars with an interest in women's issues were scarce. Therefore, one would not raise a laden issue which one knew or suspected would be contested by the dialogue partner and potentially cause one's departure from the Center. Second, the war-related topics were as much as possible kept at bay in order to create the impression of like-mindedness and safety, which many activists needed as an antidote to the violent context.

The fourth and last indication of different war-related positionings in the Center is the absence of the topics of nationalism and war from the first three women's studies curricula: the experimental one of the spring of 1992 and the two regular ones of 1992/1993 and 1993/1994. Considering the omnipresence of nationalism in Serbia at the time, and the vicinity of war violence, it is very likely that these topics were at least touched upon during some lectures, such as that on population politics in 1992/1993 and 1993/1994. This does not, however, take away the question why these topics were not paid any overt attention in the curricula before the academic year 1994/1995. That year's programme and the following ones – 1995/1996, 1996/1997, and 1997/1998²⁴ – explicitly announced at least three lectures on nationalism and war.

Belgrade11AN explained that she had always been a proponent of integrating the Belgrade women's studies in Serbia's system of university education. At the same time, none of the initiators of the women's studies had any idea what these studies should look like. Therefore, she had asked some acquainted US feminist scholars to send her reading materials and examples of university curricula in women's studies. To have a programme which would to a great extent mirror those of the established and institutionalised women's studies was for Belgrade11AN a way to have the Belgrade women's studies be recognised by the state. Consequently, the topics of war and nationalism, which had not been given much attention in the obtained US women's studies curricula, did not receive much attention in the Belgrade curriculum either. A lack of a more solid theoretical knowledge on nationalism seems to have contributed to this gap. Despite the increase of nationalist discourses all over Yugoslavia in the late 1980s and at the turn of the decade, nationalism remained for the Yugoslav feminists – including the future women's studies initiators – a phenomenon which, while being a priori severely criticised and rejected, was not comprehensively analysed. It is, therefore, possible that nobody initially felt confident enough to lecture on nationalism and war, especially because they were a daily reality. A Zagreb feminist hints at this in her interview with Jansen:

[At] the beginning of the war or just before the war...exactly because the women [from Belgrade, Ljubljana, and Zagreb] who engaged with feminism were uneasy regarding the issue of nationalism, or at least

24 I was unable to find the curricula for 1998/1999 and 1999/2000.

because the Marxist feminists thought that nationalism was an issue which was not to be questioned because we were all allegedly a priori internationalists and...antinationalists, an uneasiness, a problem, and a confusion took place...I reckon that there was no theoretical basis among the feminists for a substantiated conversation about what was nationalism and what was ethnic identity.

(2005: 68)

Nor did Belgrade13AN consider the absence of painful discussions of nationalism to be unique to the Center:

[F]or many years nationalism was not discussed *at all* in the Women's Studies [Center]...None of us was capable in the beginning to articulate her standpoint and confront her friend who thought differently. Those were not differences in thoughts and standpoints; lives were in question...[I]n those years we *never* talked about nationalism in any women's group...That was such an emotional issue to everybody that we could not distance ourselves and discuss it...Each of us was defending herself, totally emotionally...We, who were radically against nationalism, considered it as contributing to death. The [feminist] patriots perceived us as traitors...That issue was emotionally intense for them, it was emotionally intense for us and...we did not exchange our points of view...I do not know whether there has been any other such taboo topic at the time, a *total* taboo. The Belgrade feminists have talked *only* about [the nationalism of] a third person.

(emphasis in the original)

This respondent saw the avoidance of expressing different positionings on nationalism as being particularly strong in the early 1990s and implied that it had been resolved later. However, my interviews, the respondents' reactions to and interventions in the interview transcripts, and the continual scarcity of publications dealing with this subject show a perseverance of this avoidance among the Belgrade feminists. As the following and final analysis in this chapter – that of the NATO bombing of Serbia and the intensified Kosovo war – will show, the variations in the positionings on the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia have not been the only silenced topics among the Belgrade feminists.

NATO Bombing of Serbia and the Intensified Kosovo War (Spring of 1999)

In 1998 there was a gradual escalation of the clashes between the vastly superior Serbia's (para)military forces and the Kosovar Albanian units. The failure of the peace negotiations and the exacerbation of the killing, harassment, and expulsion of the Kosovar Albanians by the Serb forces

gave NATO the rationale to start the bombing on 24 March 1999. During the 78-day intervention the Serb forces expelled more than 800,000 Kosovar Albanians to the neighbouring Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro. Following the peace agreement from 9 June 1999, NATO suspended the bombing the next day.

The Belgrade feminists whom Mladenović (2003) classifies as 'pro-nationalist' in connection to these occurrences exempted Milošević from responsibility. They only spoke of the NATO-induced suffering of Serbs and destruction of Serbia, while being silent about the Serb ethnic cleansing of the Kosovar Albanians. Other Belgrade feminists, whom Mladenović names 'anti-fascist(s)', rebuked Milošević for the bombing and ethnic cleansing alike. Among them there were those who approved and those who disapproved of the bombing. They debated 'whether it was a realistic... or an idealistic option to take a pacifist positioning against both NATO and [the] Serbian fascist ethnic cleansing' (Mladenović, 2003: 164). Earlier in the text, she expresses a stronger normative claim on the importance of supporting the bombing at least partially. While acknowledging the related hardship and fear in Serbia, she hints that the feminists should have, nonetheless, empathised with the Kosovar Albanians. Those who endorsed the bombing

were disgusted with ten years of constant Serbian fascism and regarded the international military intervention as the only way to stop this. Anti-fascist feminists [sic] in Serbia who were not so explicitly against military intervention wanted to...understand the feelings and positions of feminists from Kosova. Many other feminists in Serbia... did not have any doubts that they were against military intervention, now that it happened over their heads.

(Mladenović, 2003: 163)

The same text contains, thus, different attitudes towards those who have fully disapproved of the bombing. This variation indicates, in my opinion, that the Belgrade feminists have not sufficiently articulated those tensions – a situation which results from their more recent nature, the ongoing strife between Serbia and Kosovo regarding the status of the latter, the general silence among the Belgrade feminists concerning their war-related divisions, and the recurring dilemma regarding the justification of such military interventions.

Although my interviews were conducted six years after Mladenović's essay, these divisions proved not to have lost their explosiveness. This was especially true for the frictions among the antinationalist feminists, including the Women in Black activists. Discussing their public utterances of empathy with women from allegedly inimical ethnic groups – Albanian, Bosniak and Croat – Zaharijević (2007) observes that the banner declaring sisterhood with the Kosovar Albanian women proved

most problematic.²⁵ She does not state when this occurred, but most likely her claim concerns (also) the 1998–1999 period. As several antinationalist respondents confirmed, the then exacerbation of the situation in Kosovo and the (threat of) bombing made the articulation of such support increasingly pertinent for some Belgrade feminists and progressively controversial for others. In addition, Zaharijević (2007: 249) contrasts Women in Black's anti-bombing positioning to that of a Belgrade feminist, who has criticised the 'global women's movement' for its 'quasi humanitarian and antiwar positioning', unanimous full support for the 'NATO aggression',²⁶ and discrimination between 'nations-victims' and 'nations-aggressors' – a positioning which resembled that of the Serbian government.

Both Mladenović (2003) and Zaharijević (2007) suggest that one's opposition to the bombing should not be immediately understood as being a principled antiwar positioning, but first checked against one's positioning on Serbia's politics on ethnic Others, the Kosovar Albanians in particular. To obtain more insight into these claims, I looked at eight texts of Belgrade feminists written during the bombing or shortly afterwards (Blagojević, 1999b; Božinović, 1999; Ćetković, 1999; Milić, 1999; Nikolić-Ristanović, 1999; Papić, 1999; Tešanović, 1999; Zajović, 1999). The works can be divided into two categories based on the author's treatment of the role of Milošević and the suffering of Serbs and the Kosovar Albanians. In short, four antinationalist feminists decry first the politics of Milošević and only afterwards the bombing. They accentuate the suffering of the Kosovar Albanians, but also mention that of Serbs. Their criticism of NATO, the international community and the media for their role in the bombing and the Kosovo war is formulated without undermining the primacy of Milošević's responsibility. The other authors – one antinationalist and three 'nationalist' – primarily rebuke NATO, the international community and/or the media for the bombing, suffering and demonisation of Serbs. Milošević's responsibility is stated, but given secondary importance. The expulsion of the Kosovar Albanians is briefly acknowledged or overlooked.

As an illustration, whereas Zajović (1999: 140) introduces her text with: 'Yesterday it was very difficult to write: I didn't have much time, but mainly it was because of the powerful impact of listening to friends from Kosov@',²⁷ Milić (1999) opens her essay by mentioning three children with non-Albanian names who have been killed in the bombing. Papić's (1999)

25 I addressed this example also in Chapter 3.

26 The outspoken critics of the Serbian regime for its responsibility for the ethnic cleansing and bombing did not speak of 'NATO aggression'. This formulation is, therefore, a good indicator of one's positioning.

27 By writing 'Kosov@', one avoids choosing between the Albanian toponym 'Kosovë (Kosova)' and the Serbian one 'Kosovo'. I use the latter because it is also the official English toponym.

contribution is titled 'War in Kosov@, Feminist Politics and Fascism in Serbia', compared to Nikolić-Ristanović's (1999) 'NATO Aggression of Yugoslavia: Structure, Causes and Consequences of the Victimisation'. In their diaries written during the bombardment, Četković (1999) and Tešanović (1999) evoke their friendship and past interactions with the same Kosovar Albanian activist, but whereas Četković places the accent on feeling cheated and betrayed by her, Tešanović focuses on the latter's victimhood. Finally, Blagojević points to the Albanian-induced discrimination against ethnic Others in Kosovo:

[T]he discrimination regarding the ethnic minorities in all republics and provinces was negligible (with the exception of Kosovo, where starting from the 1970s, the non-Albanian population was exposed to intensive discrimination by the Albanian administration and the Albanian population in general).

(1999b: 31–32)

Božinović, however, addresses Milošević's reversal of Kosovo's autonomy which drastically discriminated against the Kosovar Albanians:

[In 1989] occurred...Milosevic's [sic] unconstitutional act. He annulled Kosov@'s and Vojvodina's autonomies. The Albanians' response was a general strike. The Serbian regime then sent [to the] employed Albanians notices terminating them [sic] from all paid activities and hiring replacements for their functions.

(1999: 174)

During this time, unlike before, the antinationalist feminists did not function as a cluster, i.e. did not undertake joint activities. Some of them wrote statements with other activists. Such is the case of the appeal of 27 intellectuals from mid-April 1999 (Cerović et al., 2002). Writing to Milošević, the representatives of the Kosovar Albanians, and the leaders of NATO, the European Union and the United States, the signatories asked for an immediate cease-fire and use of non-violent means for reaching a compromise. They condemned the ethnic cleansing regardless of whether it was conducted by the Serbian army and police or the Serb paramilitaries, but they linked the deterioration of the situation in Kosovo and the refugee flows primarily to the bombing, not Milošević's politics. This formulation became one of the points of contestation even among the Belgrade activists who were not silent about the suffering of the Kosovar Albanians (Fridman, 2006). Some underlined that, contrary to what Milošević was claiming, the Kosovar Albanians did not flee Kosovo because of the bombing, but because of being driven out of their homes by the Serb (para)militaries. These activists stated that the appeal should have been

addressed only to Milošević.²⁸ Others found it necessary not to gloss over NATO's responsibility for the human losses, the material destruction, and the rally-'round-the-flag homogenisation of Serbs, which further thwarted their anti-Milošević and peace efforts.

Two Belgrade respondents were among the signatories: an antinationalist feminist and an antinationalist peace activist, both of whom were often involved in the activities of Women in Black. Rereading the text ten years later, Belgrade11AN said that she was not sure whether she would sign it again. She observed that some utterances had been softened and insufficiently clearly formulated, and disagreed with the construction 'NATO aggression' and the claim that the bombing had caused the displacement of the Kosovar Albanians. She assumed that she had placed her signature because the appeal rightly and explicitly condemned the ethnic cleansing of the Kosovar Albanians. Belgrade9EXT questioned her own endorsement of the appeal as well. In hindsight she considered it problematic that the text did not state that Kosovo had been 'the epicentre of the bloody drama':

There were people who thought that it [the bombing] was *the only* way to stop the actions of...the Serbian state against others...I was wondering what to do. It seemed to me that it was a positive move to speak in one voice...but at the same time, that voice was too benevolent for the regime we were under. In fact, the question is whether you had at the time two enemies: Slobodan Milošević and the NATO pact...Those were very difficult moments because you were aware of both your friends in Kosovo and your friends here.

(interview with Belgrade9EXT, emphasis in the original)

It remains a question how many activists and intellectuals residing in Belgrade at that moment would have dared to put their name under a statement which primarily, if not exclusively, denounced Milošević's politics and linked him to the ethnic cleansing – an act which had been possible before. A good example of this previously existing space is the May 1998 statement of the Autonomous Women's Center, the Belgrade Women's Lobby and Women in Black which opened as follows:

The autonomous Belgrade women's groups address the public to condemn the violence of the Serbian regime in Kosovo. The Kosovo war has definitely started. The violence by the Serbian regime is a

28 In an interview for a Serbian daily, Nataša Kandić – a prominent Belgrade peace activist who refused to sign the appeal exactly for this reason – shortly reflects upon this controversy. She indirectly corroborates the comment that the bombing has brought hitherto unprecedented divisions among the Belgrade (feminist) peace activists: 'When the NATO bombing started, all of us showed our true faces' (Radovanović, 2013; see also Dragović-Soso, 2014).

continuation of the politics of apartheid which the regime has been conducting in the past ten years.

(Žene u crnom et al., 1998: 148)

Another example is the action of Women in Black in October 1998 – one month after NATO had threatened with air strikes for the first time and Vojislav Šešelj, the then Serbian deputy prime minister, had warned Women in Black and the other ‘quislings’ of what would happen to them should NATO bomb Serbia (Zajović, 2007). During that action on Belgrade’s main square each activist declared her continuous commitment towards ‘firstly denouncing the murderers’ from her country of residence and ‘opposing the Serbian regime’s politics of repression, apartheid and war against the Albanian population in Kosovo’ (Žene u crnom, 1998).

During the bombing even Women in Black did not articulate their positioning as explicitly as in May and October 1998. The NATO intervention altered the context. Due to the martial law another penal legislation was in place. More importantly, many Belgrade activists felt anxious after the daytime murder of the prominent oppositional journalist Slavko Ćuruvija in the centre of Belgrade (Ćetković, 1999). In its appeal to the governments of the NATO member states, besides demanding an end to the bombing, Women in Black (1999a: 148) requested provisions which would enable the return to Kosovo of the ‘refugees, expelled and displaced’ or their move to third countries. Milošević and the Serbian politics were not mentioned at all. Given the unfavourable circumstances, this telling silence might have been an implicit way for Women in Black to maintain that the Serbian authorities were the major culprit. Some activists of this NGO were, however, in favour of an explicit and foremost rebuke of Milošević’s regime. This can be read from Mladenović’s open letter – one of the scarce indications of dissonant positionings on the bombing among the Belgrade antinationalist feminists:

[T]he Serbian regime is responsible for the beginning and continuation of the NATO air militarist campaign against this state. This means that the necessity of opposing the Serbian regime and its leader has increased. At the same time, this political activity was prohibited. Unless I am allowed to publicly utter ten thousands of oppositional statements per day against the Serbian regime, I will not publicly position myself...I will not articulate either my opposition to the other militarist formations which did not originate from the country whose passport I hold. I do not equalise the responsibility.

(1999: 1)

Such positionings of Women in Black activists could have been the reason why some respondents claimed that this NGO had endorsed the bombing, despite its (co-authored) statements which explicitly stated its disapproval.

It is further possible, as Belgrade6AN and Sarajevo2EXT suggested, that Women in Black's unceasing support for the Kosovar Albanians and accusation of the Serbian authorities were understood as an endorsement of the bombing. In this interpretation, opposition to the bombing and opposition to Milošević's politics against the Kosovar Albanians were seen as incompatible. And yet, the third option – being able to say 'neither/nor' (Cockburn, 2000) – was exactly that which Women in Black officially, albeit not always explicitly, advocated. For example, in its appeal to the NATO member states, Women in Black (1999a: 148) declared that given that it had 'always been engaged against militarism, that is, against all forms of military intervention', this time it opposed the bombing. In an earlier statement, produced at the time of the peace negotiations, the activists unambiguously stated that '[s]igning the agreement...is the ultimate act of patriotism and failing to sign it means [a] continuation of [the] killing and destruction' (Women in Black, 1999b: 138).

My interviews additionally confirmed the claims of Mladenović (2003) and Zaharijević (2007) on the differences among the Belgrade feminists regarding the Kosovar Albanians. None of the five Belgrade feminists – the four 'nationalist' and one antinationalist – who had been described to me as having a nationalist positioning (also) on the bombing and the Kosovar Albanians, evoked their highly exacerbated situation in 1998–1999. In addition to these respondents, two antinationalist feminists did not address the suffering of the Kosovar Albanians either and spoke only of the destruction and victimhood in Belgrade. These seven feminists firstly decried NATO and only afterwards – if at all – Milošević. The criticism of Milošević was mentioned incidentally, whereas their criticism of NATO was more elaborated. It concerned the impossibility of bringing lasting peace by militarist means, the glossing over of the existence of Serbs who opposed Milošević, and the falsity of the premise that NATO was only after Milošević. The rebuke of the dichotomised portrayal of Serbs as perpetrators and the Kosovar Albanians as victims was also visible in some respondents' appeal for a recognition of the suffering of Serbs, as well as disapproval of the attitude of the Kosovar Albanian women's activists at international meetings: e.g., their exaggerated portrayals of the situation in Kosovo and their unwillingness to communicate with the Belgrade feminists.

The other antinationalist feminists addressed the suffering of the Kosovar Albanians, whereas their positioning on the bombing varied from full support to full rejection. All respondents who at least partially approved of the bombing underlined that it had not just happened to the Serbs, but that there had been a good reason for it: Serbia's politics. They elaborated more on the expulsion of the Kosovar Albanians than the two antinationalist respondents who were decidedly against the bombing. It is quite telling that the latter feminists reacted with irritation to the suggestion of an analogy between Zagreb (1991–1995) and Belgrade (1998–1999) regarding the split

on antinationalist and 'nationalist' feminists. They might have understood this analogy as implying that their positioning was a nationalist one, or at least less antinationalist than that of others. One of these critics of the bombing, while expressing her awareness of the Serb-inflicted suffering of the Sarajevans and Kosovar Albanians, repeated her claim that Serbs, too, had the right to feel bad:

[The] bombing was disgusting and only a fool can say: 'Great that they have bombed us because we had deserved it'. Although, of course, that was crossing my mind as well and it was then in particular that I understood Sarajevo. At the same time, Kosovo's horror was present in me, but the one did not block the other. Both were present.

(interview, name withheld)

The other respondent rebuked the Belgrade antinationalist feminists for not participating in the creation of joint statements with other activists. Belgrade14AN rejected their separatism (read: singular interest in women's issues and women-only events) as a pretext for not getting involved in risky activities. She was also very critical of the activists who, driven by a 'heroic feeling of guilt because of the situation in Kosovo', asked for sharper positionings without thinking about the activists' safety. Further reacting to the analogy, this respondent underlined that her anti-NATO positioning had nothing to do with the bombing and differed from the anti-NATO positioning of the advocates of Great Serbia, anti-cosmopolitanism and so-called Yugoslavism.

The bombing and ethnic cleansing revealed once more the differences among the Zagreb feminists, but those positionings do not appear to have led to confrontations similar to the earlier ones. The feminists sent out their press releases, but no interaction followed. This confirms that the main struggle for legitimacy between the Zagreb 'nationalist' and antinationalist feminists had taken place during the wars in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The 'nationalist' Network of Multicultural Help and O-zona sent out two statements, one of which was co-signed by Nona. They expressed their support to the Kosovar Albanians, asked the ICTY to press charges against Milošević and his collaborators, and created an analogy between, in their words, the genocide which the Serb forces were carrying out against the (female) Kosovar Albanians and the previous Serb genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. They also called for the entrance of NATO ground troops into Kosovo and the opening up of the borders of the neighbouring countries for the Kosovar Albanian refugees (Radić & Vidović, n.d.; Radić, Vidović & Miklaužić, 1999).

The Zagreb antinationalist feminists were less critical of Serbia's politics and less supportive of NATO. B.a.B.e. (n.d.) declared its condemnation of 'all use of military force, including that of NATO', but also expressed its

hope that 'the destruction of Milošević's war industry will prevent further combat activities'. B.a.B.e. praised the work of Women in Black and ended its antimilitarist message with a strict gender-based positioning on the perpetrators and victims of war violence. Women's Network Croatia, while condemning the ethnic cleansing, underlined Croatia's duty to host the Kosovar Albanian refugees and all opponents of Milošević's regime. In addition, Croatia was supposed to enable the return of the 'Croatian citizens of Serb ethnicity who live in the areas which are affected by the war' (Ženska mreža Hrvatske, n.d.). This referred to the Croatian Serbs who, after having been expelled from Croatia in 1995, were resettled in Kosovo, as part of Milošević's politics of increasing the percentage of ethnic Serbs there. The call of the Women's Network Croatia conveyed, thus, implicit criticism of Tuđman's politics for driving out the Croatian Serbs in 1995 and obstructing their post-war return.

Summary of the Process

The initiative for founding a pan-Yugoslav feminist umbrella organisation, which was put forward by several Zagreb feminists in early 1990, was not welcomed by all Yugoslav feminists. Some interpreted that opposition as indicating nationalism. Others negated that and pointed to the problematic hierarchical structure, the tensions between the established and newcomer feminists, and those between the academics and the activists. The related absence of a direct exchange between the concerned parties and presence of indirect transmission through essays in (Western) publications or oral accounts to third parties are exemplary for the way in which the war-related frictions and accusations were dealt with. These communication models aimed at increasing the legitimacy of the speaker and decreasing that of the criticised feminists, but did not contribute to a better understanding of each other's positionings and struggles. Given that one's legitimacy was related to access to funds, networks, conferences, trainings, and other resources, the attempts at (de)legitimation were far from insignificant.

In the first months of the war in Croatia the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists were confronted with a growing gap between them. They became as good as unfamiliar with the situation in the other country, given their exposure to domestic propaganda and the blockage of the communication and transportation channels between Croatia and Serbia. The subsequent divergent perceptions of the war and the responsibility of each warring side caused tensions and severe accusations. Those from one city felt misunderstood, disrespected, and hurt by their (former) sisters from the other city. On each side there was anger, confusion, disappointment, disbelief, distrust, and pain. In addition, a serious split was coming into existence among the Zagreb feminists. The 'nationalist' ones started using war-related positionings which resembled to a great extent those of the Croatian state

and offered a black-and-white portrayal of Croatia as the innocent victim of the Serbian aggression. They extended this dichotomy to the Belgrade feminists and ceased the communication with them. The Zagreb antinationalist feminists maintained that exchange despite the differences in positionings and the risk which such a choice entailed in Croatia. These Zagreb feminists held a more complex perception of the war: one which attended, too, to Croatia's responsibility and the utterances of Croat nationalism.

An intense struggle for legitimacy between the Zagreb clusters followed. It was foremostly carried out in the interactions with Western audiences and included the use of positive self-ascribed designations and negative ones for the other cluster. After the practice of war rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina was disclosed in the summer of 1992 the two clusters adopted different positionings, but provided similar assistance to (raped) refugee women: e. g., psychosocial support and easier access to humanitarian help and health services. The antinationalist feminists focused on the gender component of the rapes and underlined that men regardless of ethnicity raped women regardless of ethnicity. From late 1992 onward these Zagreb feminists nuanced their positioning and started speaking – albeit not always equally explicitly – about the greater prevalence of the war rapes committed by the Serb forces. They recurrently pointed out, though, that Croat soldiers raped, too, and criticised all use of exaggerated war rape stories and figures, including that by the other Zagreb cluster. When the Bosnian Croat forces, supported by Croatia, started fighting with the Bosniak units in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the spring of 1993, the Zagreb antinationalist feminists rebuked these Croat politics and war crimes.

The Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists put great efforts into challenging the gender-based positioning on the war rapes which was not only the dominant, orthodox, positioning among the Yugoslav feminists, but also among the Western ones. Their task was additionally laborious because they had on average poorer networks than the Zagreb antinationalist feminists. In trying to increase the legitimacy of their definition of the war situation and their own legitimacy as the only authentically motivated advocates of the (raped) refugee women, the 'nationalist' feminists resorted to denouncing the other Zagreb cluster and, to a smaller extent, its Belgrade counterpart. They accused the Zagreb antinationalist feminists of working against the interests of women – (raped) refugee women in particular – and being covert endorsers of the Serb genocidal politics against Bosniaks and Croats. The lower status which the heretical positioning of the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists had in the feminist fields resulted in a lack of a public reaction to the Bosniak-Croat war. Not wanting to undermine their conceptualisation of the (Bosnian) Serbs as the only perpetrators, these feminists chose not to pronounce themselves at all on this war.

The Belgrade antinationalist feminists made, too, the daring choice not to cease the communication with the Zagreb feminists. However, when

meeting them (especially the 'nationalist' ones) at conferences abroad, many Belgrade antinationalist feminists felt that the other side made them feel guilty. Although their positioning of equal victimhood and responsibility of all warring sides was already very divergent from that of the Serbian state – which portrayed the Serbs only as innocent victims – the Zagreb feminists criticised them for insufficiently accentuating Serbia's foremost responsibility. At the same time, these Belgrade feminists disapproved of the positionings of the Zagreb clusters. The positioning of the Zagreb antinationalist feminists was also quite unlike that of the Croatian state, but their Belgrade counterparts did not consider it sufficiently explicit on the Croat responsibility and (sexual) war crimes. Another contested issue among the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists was the former's uninterrupted affiliation with the vanished federation – the Croatian part of the Adriatic in particular – which manifested, *inter alia*, in feeling of loss and use of the pre-war reference 'our sea'. These Zagreb feminists experienced their counterparts' utterances as irritating because of not taking the new geopolitical reality into account and resembling the Serb expansionist discourse. The Belgrade feminists felt hurt and offended by such remarks which silenced their memories and emotions.

Although the Belgrade antinationalist feminists had started off with a strict gender-based positioning on the war rapes and spoken of equal responsibility and victimhood, by the spring of 1993 they began to accentuate the Serb responsibility. Hereby, the positioning of the Belgrade antinationalist feminists on the (sexual) perpetrators and victims approached the corresponding one of the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists. This change of positioning was caused, first, by the appearance of more reliable accounts and figures regarding the preponderance of the Serb war rapes. Second, it was a consequence of these Belgrade feminists' encounters with Zagreb feminists, during which the latter had demanded from the former a straightforward acknowledgment and sharp criticism of Serbia's greatest share in the violence. The focus on the Serb responsibility meant that the Belgrade antinationalist feminists became the heretical challengers in the Belgrade feminist field. The Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists maintained the previously dominant positioning. Due to the greater number of antinationalist feminists and their much more extensive interaction with Western feminists and funders, the heretical positioning soon became the orthodox one and the Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists ended up as heretical challengers with less legitimacy on war-related issues. Their positioning – which was foremostly expressed in scholarly works – was also nuanced by adding ethnicity. Whereas the other Belgrade cluster accentuated the Serb responsibility, the 'nationalist' feminists focused on the Serb victimhood. Nonetheless, they acknowledged that Serbia was not innocent and occasionally explicitly disapproved of its politics (although not in such fervent terms as the antinationalist feminists).

The dissimilar positionings did not, however, lead to such a clearly pronounced split in the Belgrade feminist field as had been the case in

Zagreb. The extensive participation of Serbia and the Serb militaries in the (sexual) war violence in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, as well as the state positioning of pure Serb victimhood, made it impossible for the feminists to exempt Serbia from any responsibility. At the same time, the antinationalist feminists who wanted to (slightly) depart from the dominant feminist positioning and also speak about the Serb victimhood did not do so publicly. They were afraid that their fellow antinationalist feminists would perceive them as nationalists. This internal struggle for legitimacy among the Belgrade antinationalist feminists and the absence of such struggle among the Belgrade 'nationalist' ones points to the difference between these clusters, i.e. the caution which is needed when treating the 'nationalist' feminists as a cluster. Next to not struggling among themselves for legitimacy, at least not within the feminist field, the Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists did not compete much with the Belgrade antinationalist feminists either. This was also due to the different fields in which they predominantly moved. Most main Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists were academics and the antinationalist ones were mainly grassroots activists. Even when feminists from the two clusters worked together in the Women's Studies Center up to its split in 1998, the legacy of Serbia's politics and the importance of offering diverse expertise and a safe space silenced the (extensive) articulation of opposing positionings.

A more profound and disturbing, but not more extensively recorded, split among the Belgrade feminists was that regarding the NATO bombing and the intensified Kosovo war in the spring of 1999. The bombing was the first time in the 1990s that direct military violence was experienced in Belgrade and Serbia proper. Its constitutive power, as well as the dilemma regarding the justification of such interventions, divided the antinationalist feminists. Some were for the intervention due to the anger and despair because of the perseverance of Serbia's warmongering politics. These feminists' rebuke of the Serb ethnic cleansing of the Kosovar Albanians was shared by the antinationalist feminists who disapproved of the bombing as a method of exerting political pressure. Other feminists from this cluster avoided talking about the suffering of the Kosovar Albanians or, at best, mentioned it in passing. They accentuated the victimisation which was induced by the bombing, i.e. addressed only the suffering of Serbs. This was also the positioning of the Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists, as well as of the Serbian government. Given this overlap, the antinationalist feminists who fervently disapproved of the bombing (while also rebuking the ethnic cleansing) felt that their legitimacy as antinationalists was endangered.

This time there was no turmoil between the Zagreb clusters. Their divergent positionings were expressed through statements, but no direct confrontation and struggle for legitimacy took place. The 'nationalist' feminists were supportive of NATO and spoke about a continuum between the earlier Serb genocidal politics in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, and the present ones in Kosovo. Unlike them, the Zagreb antinationalist

feminists opposed the bombing and Serbia's politics alike. These feminists did not homogenise the Serbs and pointed to the existence of (feminist) opposition. Finally, they were also more pronounced than the other Zagreb cluster about Croatia's duty to accept the Kosovar Albanian refugees, and did not forget to remind the Croatian government about its responsibility for driving out the Croatian Serbs in 1995.

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5 Revisiting the 1990s

A View from a Distance?

The preceding Chapter 4 went to great lengths to demonstrate how the ‘nationalist’ and antinationalist feminist war-related positionings were gradually coming into being in the 1990s, and to point to the various factors which influenced that process. This chapter attends to the same dynamics, but from a different angle. No historical events are reconstructed here and the accent is placed on the comparison of the ways in which the respondents framed their descriptions of the past interactions or more or less avoided discussing them. More specifically, how did the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists speak at the time of interviewing (in 2009 or 2010) about the war-related intra-feminist divisions in their city in the 1990s? Did they address the process of naming at all? What did their depictions of (un)authentic (anti)nationalism contain? The answers, presented per cluster, are to be found in the first part of this chapter. Unlike the rest of the respondents, none of the four Belgrade ‘nationalist’ feminists referred to herself in connection to the other feminists from her cluster. Given this absence of the ‘we’ form, their narratives are outlined separately. The second part of the chapter gathers the accounts of the silence regarding the 1990s. One topic – the participation of a Zagreb antinationalist feminist in the war in Croatia – is singled out due to its uniqueness. Because of the limited material, the other elaborations in this part are presented per city. The juxtapositions of the views of the direct actors offer important novel insights. Unexpected differences among members of a same cluster are revealed, as well as surprising similarities between members of clusters with an opposite prefix. The war-related intra-feminist dynamics in each city at the time of interviewing becomes clear as well.

Authentic (Anti)nationalism and Naming

Zagreb Antinationalist Feminists

No antinationalist feminist doubted the existence of two clusters – Zagreb5ANA described them as ‘two parallel worlds which...never established a dialogue’ – but it was often implied that the distance between the

positionings had been smaller than that which the designations ‘anti-nationalist’ and ‘nationalist’ suggested. Zagreb3AN, too, reflected upon this:

In hindsight, I wonder whether we really had to engage in such a bloody feud. At that moment probably we had. That was our *differentia specifica* and it helped us in some way to survive the war and remain normal – to consequently stick to our ideas and somehow rationalise the whole story.

The antinationalist feminists assumed that the ‘nationalist’ ones appropriated the Croatian state and mainstream media propaganda to become good and acceptable feminists instead of witches and enemies. The ‘nationalist’ feminists were described as expressing a more limited solidarity than the previous gender-based one regardless of ethnicity. However, some shared their doubts about the actual rigour of the other cluster’s claim to provide assistance only to Bosniak and Croat women. Despite the existence of original documents which contained that positioning, as well as witness accounts of hearing such utterances against Serb women, those respondents were not sure that the ‘nationalist’ feminists really would have refrained from helping a Serb woman. A broader actual conceptualisation of sexual perpetrators was suggested, too. As various respondents observed, although the ‘nationalist’ feminists had unambiguously equated the categories ‘rapists’ and ‘Serbs’, they had never publicly denied the possibility that the Croat and Bosniak forces had perpetrated war rapes.

Proximity between the clusters was additionally implied by pointing to the overlapping positionings and the later alterations in the positionings of some ‘nationalist’ feminists. Zagreb9AN stressed that a ‘nationalist’ feminist had published the Croatian translation of Brownmiller’s plea for a gender-based positioning on war rape.¹ Zagreb17ANA recalled agreeing with the criticism which one ‘nationalist’ feminist had directed at the Commission for Equality Issues of the Croatian government in November 1997, and Zagreb12AN reported a similar experience regarding some points made by the same ‘nationalist’ feminist in a television appearance during the war in Croatia. Zagreb10ANA proposed that the ‘nationalist’ feminists had modified their positionings as a result of the then recent changes in the political and media landscape in Croatia, i.e. the decreased legitimacy of the ethnicity-based definition of perpetrators and victims:

[N]owadays...it is much more openly said that not all Serbs were aggressors; all of a sudden some Serbs are revealed who fought in Vukovar [on the Croatian side]. Now you can read that, but not ten years ago. It is not a wonder that women who thought so then, that

1 See the closing paragraphs in the analysis of the gathering Women in War in Chapter 4.

they maybe also changed their views in time...If you are so much influenced by something, but that changes, all of a sudden it turns out that your positioning does not make sense either. It is nothing but normal to negate it.

There were also diverse views on the suitability of the terms 'nationalist' and 'patriotic' for describing the feminists from the other cluster and their positionings. Some respondents used the designation 'nationalist' without questioning its appropriateness. Others were uncertain about this reference to nationalism, and yet others proposed that 'patriotic' might be a better, because more euphemistic, term. Zagreb7AN considered nationalism a too simplistic explanation: It did not take into account the variety of reasons which might have influenced the positionings, such as fear of the war or jealousy regarding the backgrounds and competences of some anti-nationalist feminists. In the absence of a more apt designation, she had chosen 'patriotic' inspired by a pro-state weekly wherein the term had been employed to favourably portray the 'nationalist' feminists.

Their articulated preference for 'patriotic' notwithstanding, some respondents ended up using 'patriotic' and 'nationalist' interchangeably. Zagreb11AN favoured 'patriotic feminists'. It disclosed the oxymoronic character of this combination of ideologies, i.e. the simultaneous loyalty and resistance to patriarchy. Moreover, calling somebody 'a nationalist' was the worst thing to say to them, as nationalism was the warmongering state ideology. Nonetheless, she considered these feminists nationalists and found their positionings on the (sexual) war violence as exemplifying and further contributing to downright nationalism. Zagreb22EXT was reluctant to employ 'nationalist' although it was antonymous to 'non-nationalist', which she used for the other cluster. She did not believe that the 'nationalist' feminists had deliberately supported Tudman's regime and doubted that 'patriotic' could have been their self-designation, given their sharp criticism of states, armies, and men. Still, she employed 'patriotic' to refer to these feminists' black-and-white conceptualisation of the war violence, and considered their oft-used analogy between the raped bodies of Bosniak and Croat women and the raped bodies of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia a nationalist positioning.

The absence of consensus on naming the 'nationalist' feminists can be further inferred from the depictions of concrete activists. Different anti-nationalist respondents described the same one feminist as a true nationalist, a nationalist who had become one due to fear, confusion, or character, or as not really a nationalist. Sometimes the respondents refrained from pronouncing themselves because of not really knowing the feminist in question. Hence it seems that the perception of concrete 'nationalist' feminists was greatly influenced by one's direct experience with them and not necessarily based on their war-related positionings. For example, Zagreb12AN, who is of partially Serb ethnicity, recalled that a particular

'nationalist' feminist had stated that she would speak with Serbs only through a gun-sight. However, given that that had not been said to her face, Zagreb12AN chose not to hold a grudge. Zagreb21ANA spoke of closely interacting – without ever discussing their war-related positionings – with one 'nationalist' feminist, whose art and work with refugee women she wanted to support.

The respondents who invoked the process of naming did it critically, regardless of whether they addressed the naming performed by their cluster or the other. None of them said that 'nationalist' or 'patriotic' had been self-designations. In fact, some stated clearly that the two names had been ascribed by their cluster to the other. They were aware that the 'nationalist' feminists might not have appreciated the designations which made them feel as though they had to exonerate themselves. Zagreb9AN saw this process as sometimes related to the competition for funds, whereby the attribution of a negative name served to denigrate the other and make oneself a more eligible grantee. She recalled that the 'nationalist' feminists used denunciations, too, such as the accusation of a prominent antinationalist feminist of writing for a pornographic magazine. This struggle for resources and legitimacy had a different form, depending on the field in which it was carried out. Consequently, the power imbalance between the Zagreb clusters took two contradictory shapes, as Zagreb3AN explained:

[W]e felt threatened within the country. Objectively speaking we were not threatened because we were women, so we did not really matter, but the positionings which we had back then were inadvisable, they were not mainstream ones... We felt a bit unsafe, whereas they thought that we were rolling in money and that we were the darlings of the international community, which was correct. But, what does 'rolling in money' mean? [We had] [m]oney for activities.

After this rejection of the claim that the antinationalist feminists were only interested in personal gain, Zagreb3AN admitted that they had felt more powerful than the other cluster in interacting with international audiences. They possessed better networks and were more often recognised as relevant actors which meant that their self-ascribed and ascribed-to designations were more widely accepted.

Two respondents focused on the names which they had received from the other cluster. Zagreb12AN spoke of a newspaper article in which the antinationalist feminists were defamed for being pro-Yugoslav and not singling out the enemy. She insinuated that these classifications must have hurt those who had, unlike her, a shared pre-war history with the 'nationalist' feminists. Zagreb11AN pointed out that her cluster had not started the public delegitimation of other feminists, but used that approach only after having been subjected to slander, including accusations of treason. She felt especially wronged by the episode in which one 'nationalist'

feminist NGO had joined forces with a Zagreb NGO established by refugee women from Bosnia-Herzegovina. They had published a press release attacking her for being a pro-Serb collaborator of the Yugoslav People's Army. Besides the particularly uncomfortable situation of being thus targeted by victims, Zagreb11AN additionally felt unfairly treated because of her NGO's wartime efforts to secure funds for the women's NGOs in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Zagreb 'Nationalist' Feminists

Apart from the respondent who denied any war-related divisions among the Zagreb feminists, the other 'nationalist' feminists acknowledged the split. They spoke of two truly different clusters, albeit by no means one anti-nationalist and one nationalist (or: non-nationalist and patriotic). Most respondents decisively negated that they or their positioning on perpetrators and victims could be named 'nationalist' or 'patriotic', and equally resolutely defended that positioning as empirically based. Particularly indicative was the justification which Zagreb13N gave for her use of inflated figures of raped women. She evoked her broad expertise thanks to which she had been aware – unlike other feminists – that only such figures could ensure the allocation of large assistance funds and the establishment of the ICTY. Zagreb13N explained, though, that her calculations had not come out of thin air, but from the statistics on concrete war rape cases in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, and the historical data on war rapes elsewhere. Zagreb6N did not find that use problematic either: 'If you have several thousands or tens of thousands of reported rapes, should you be silent only to avoid having it [your figures] called propaganda?'

Discussing the differences between the clusters, the respondents repeatedly underlined that they had been so immersed in assisting (raped) refugee women that they had not had the time, money, or interest to write texts, travel to conferences, and contemplate about nationalism and war. Hereby they also justified their non-involvement with the relevant (Western) scholarship. Some of them vindicated likewise their absence of cooperation with the Belgrade feminists. Additional reasons were provided, too: impossibility to travel to Belgrade, deep disappointment after the meeting in Venice,² and anger because no Belgrade feminist had inquired about the respondent's situation. Zagreb13N assumed that her unwillingness to engage in such a collaboration had led to her being named 'nationalist' by some German feminists, one in particular:

She insisted on cooperation, intense cooperation, in those most difficult war conditions, and she brutally discounted all of us who had refused that. And once that process started rolling, there was no way back. We

2 The historical episodes which are mentioned here are described in Chapter 4.

were unable to do anything anymore. It is enough to get a tiny label and everything is gone.

Not all respondents were upset by this issue. Some simply established the non-existence of exchange and proceeded to recount the first post-war encounter. Zagreb4N spoke about how wonderfully she had been received by the Belgrade feminists and added that she had always considered them as fellow feminists and never as enemies. Zagreb8NA recalled being stupefied by the courage of Women in Black despite being threatened, wiretapped, and arrested. She observed that the Zagreb feminists had never had to deal with such dangerous situations.

The 'nationalist' feminists tended to distinguish themselves from the other cluster also by describing the latter as 'pro-Yugoslav' or as advocating Yugoslavia's preservation. Still, more often than not these respondents did not explicitly speak of themselves as being pro-Croatian, i.e. did not articulate unbridled enthusiasm regarding Croatia's independence from Yugoslavia. Instead, they expressed prosaically their acceptance of the new polity. So, on the one hand, most 'nationalist' respondents delegitimised the other cluster in the same way as they had done in the 1990s, when that form of defaming Tuđman's critics had been widespread in Croatia. On the other hand, though, they were wary of presenting themselves as supporters of the Croatian state. Presumably they wanted to avoid being associated with the designations 'nationalist' and 'patriotic' which they so strongly rejected and felt harmed by. Their distancing from the antinationalist cluster was at times manifested by attending to the differences in societal position. The other feminists were portrayed as being privileged in the previous system by virtue of belonging to the 'red bourgeoisie'. They were, therefore, more committed towards securing the undisturbed continuation of Yugoslavia and the communist system. This conceptualisation corresponded to the classification of feminists with and without resources to contemplate, travel, and write.

A majority depicted itself as not hesitating to specify the enemy (the Yugoslav People's Army and/or the Serbs) and call the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia by their name: aggression, ethnic cleansing, or genocide. The antinationalist feminists were described as being bothered by such clear-cut definitions and, therefore, describing the (sexual) violence in neutral and gender terms. Most 'nationalist' feminists considered their own positionings detached from politics. Somewhat differently, Zagreb1N acknowledged that their positionings had corresponded to those of the Croatian state and covertly disapproved of their a priori rejection only because of that correspondence:

[S]ome collision would always occur regarding whether, if we interpret the war in Croatia as aggression, whereby it is exactly known who conducted it, whether that is then the official interpretation, which

was so, or we have to have another interpretation which will circumvent the official one.

Zagreb13N portrayed the split as being purely related to the foreign financial incentives, which had also been why the antinationalist cluster continued cooperating with the Belgrade feminists. Asked why then did the scholarship treat nationalism as the cause of the division, Zagreb13N answered: 'Who would admit it? Just as a battered woman says that she has fallen, the women who have made a career and a living out of that money – and still live from it – would not concede it'. One of Zagreb8NA's explanations, too, involved the foreign funding. Only those who would spit on Croatia at conferences abroad would prosper. Much of what the anti-nationalist feminists had done stemmed from their obligations towards the donors, whereas the members of her NGO could work independently thanks to being employed elsewhere. It turned out that anxiety had played a role in this respondent's absence of criticism of the state: She said that after those conferences she would have had to return to Croatia and continue living there. Zagreb8NA's other interpretation of the split invoked the interpersonal rebellion and vanity: 'If you think that, then I will not. I will really oppose it'. Finally, and somewhat reluctantly, she suggested that the divide might have had to do with one's positioning towards the Serbs or the Bosniaks.

Zagreb6N described the other cluster as being blinded by its ideology and unable to see that the 'nationalist' feminists had not chosen their ethnic identification, but that it had been imposed upon them by the perpetrators. According to her, the antinationalist feminists had demanded such rejection of ethnicity also from the refugee women they had provided assistance to. Zagreb6N suggested thereby an additional and particularly ethically laden difference between the clusters – the treatment of vulnerable people:

[W]e would occasionally get the information that the women who went to them to receive humanitarian help felt a bunch of times blackmailed by them into saying... 'Who has set us against each other, yo?' and 'They are all the same'... Out of gratitude they [the refugee women] showed submissiveness, which in this case meant showing equal contempt towards all ethnic collectives and the ethnic identification as such. As if that was something which was forbidden, sick and politically incorrect.

To understand the implications of this quotation, it is important to keep in mind that both formulations – 'Who has set us against each other, yo?' and 'They are all the same' – connote a positioning on the (post-)Yugoslav wars in which all warring sides are seen as equally guilty. It is particularly indicative that Zagreb6N used the first utterance. It is attributed to people

from Serbia and is regarded as especially notorious because the expressed ignorance conveys a denial of Serbia's responsibility. Even more serious was her suggestion that the antinationalist feminists had harmed the war victims: The former had not allowed the latter to say by whom they had been victimised, thereby denying and silencing their victimhood.

The questions about the designations 'nationalist' and 'patriotic' led to a lot of commotion. Nobody spoke about these terms as self-designations and the typical first reaction was their rejection as unsubstantiated, stupid, or mean imputations. Some respondents shared how upset and hurt these names had made them feel. They found it particularly problematic to be called 'Tudman's fans' because none of them had been a member of his party or applauded his politics. Zagreb4N emphasised her opposition by recalling pulling down his party's electoral posters and crying after he had won the elections in 1990. Another telling distancing from the term 'nationalist' was Zagreb1N's reference to the approaches to war violence among the Zagreb feminists. In the 'international' or 'supranational' approach war was seen as violence against women. She did not name the other approach, which she had felt closer to, but descriptively referred to it as 'paying attention to the context' – a covert way of saying that it distinguished ethnically marked perpetrators and victims. Zagreb1N avoided, thus, the terms 'antinationalist' and 'non-nationalist' for the first approach and was careful not to use 'national' for the second, although that adjective was antonymous to 'international' and 'supranational'.

The initial rejection of 'nationalist' and 'patriotic' notwithstanding, some respondents could reluctantly concede to at least one of these terms. Zagreb13N was offended by my research because it suggested a link between her and nationalism, and expressed her hope that I would revise those concepts (thus, implicitly, clear her name). Nevertheless, her narrative also contained a more positive conceptualisation of nationalism. Zagreb13N first contrasted it with chauvinism, only to employ it later for describing patriotism:

I simply cannot be a nationalist. *I cannot*. A nationalist – yes, but not a chauvinist...[N]ationalist is a person who strives for the identity and the rights of their people, but not at the cost of others. Those are chauvinists...[They] extol their people or nation at the cost of others...and, of course, produce the sense of threat...How will they solve their problem? By killing the others...[Patriotism] is...fighting for...one's country. It might be, actually, very similar to nationalism because you do everything possible so that your nation obtains the status each nation deserves. (emphasis in the original)

Zagreb4N rebuked the ascribed-to name 'Croat nationalist' but interchangeably used the concepts 'defensive nationalism' and 'healthy patriotism' in relation to the beginning of the war in Croatia. She affirmatively

described them as benign, justified, and necessary ideologies for mobilising people into defending the attacked country. Still, even then Zagreb4N did not explicitly describe herself as this kind of nationalist or patriot. At the same time, she severely criticised the 'Croat aggressive nationalism' which was manifested by Croatia's participation in the division of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the genocide against Bosniaks and, later, Croatian Serbs. Zagreb16N rejected the designation 'patriotism' because of its relation to patriarchy. She lashed out at some Croatian male academics for distinguishing between (the bad) nationalism and (the good) patriotism because patriotism could never be positive. She could resign to being brought in connection to patriotism only if this term were to refer to the feeling of responsibility for the attacked territory, i.e. the acknowledgement of the factual situation. Zagreb6N's justification of her singular acceptance of 'patriotic' was along the same lines:

I think that my motives were patriotic in the sense that it could really happen that I would be there [in the war zones] or my parents and that they would get hurt. And that it concerned my country. And that somebody did not allow me to state whether I would like to remain married or not.³ For me that was at that moment patriotic. A question of loyalty to my homeland.

Zagreb1N had two conceptualisations of 'patriotism', each from a different time period. The earlier one, which she had created at the beginning of the war in Croatia, entailed the right to feel Croat and express that without being derogatorily perceived as an Ustasha. Her later conceptualisation of patriotism was inspired by Primorac (2004):⁴ an intertwining of an affective closeness to one's country and a critical distance from it. In Zagreb1N's words, it allowed one 'to be patriotic by expressing shame because of the dark sides of one's country', i.e. the war crimes of the Croat forces. She accentuated the change of her positioning on these militaries through her disapproval of one 'nationalist' feminist who still rejected the possibility that defence forces could commit atrocities.

Concerning the depictions of concrete antinationalist feminists, the 'nationalist' respondents took a more homogenising approach than the former and mainly did not speak of individual feminists. To the limited extent that some did, it was to emphasise their reproof. An exception was Zagreb8NA's and Zagreb13N's praise of one feminist for her work against male peacetime violence against women. Zagreb8NA commended two more antinationalist feminists, but this laudation referred to the late 1980s when they had worked together. Lastly, no 'nationalist' respondent questioned

3 The metaphor refers to Croatia's unilateral secession from Yugoslavia. Also used in Kodrnja (2008).

4 See note 4 in Chapter 3.

her perception of the antinationalist feminists or attended to the possible 'mitigating circumstances' behind one's positioning.

In addressing the process of naming, the respondents portrayed themselves as wronged, silenced, marginalised, and disempowered activists. Zagreb13N blamed the antinationalist feminists for having destroyed her and her colleagues, and impeded their potential to achieve anything. Zagreb14N and Zagreb6N articulated similar accusations. Zagreb6N stressed that this practice had forced them to always first exonerate themselves before saying anything else, whereas Zagreb14N considered it a psychologically aggressive smear campaign which had made her feel as if she had been raped. She asserted that the ascription of names benefited the Serb war goals and that the antinationalist feminists were manipulated into promoting that agenda. Quite differently, Zagreb4N saw the process of naming as resulting from the inability to envisage the category 'women' (or 'feminists') as consisting of individuals of the same gender, but with divergent biographies, experiences, and positionings. This incapacity had led to the exclusion through naming of those who had been perceived as too dissimilar. Although Zagreb4N sometimes spoke of the two clusters as equally naming and excluding one another, she foremostly rebuked the antinationalist feminists. Moreover, she described only their acts of naming as erroneous, *mala fide*, and unfair.

Zagreb6N adopted the self-representation of a victimised agent even when she referred, as nobody else from the 'nationalist' feminists, to their ascription of names to the other cluster. She admitted that they had amongst themselves referred to the antinationalist feminists as 'Yugoslav women' (read: pro-Yugoslav) for the purpose of delegitimising them as equal collocutors. However, they had only done so in reaction to the 'lies, falsifications, and malice' of the other feminists, and out of despair because of being unable to compete with their money streams and international media influence. Zagreb6N did not consider the terms 'pro-Yugoslav' and 'nationalist' equally laden. Unlike the latter which – just like 'right-wing' and 'fascist' – denied access to 'some respectable circles', as she put it, 'pro-Yugoslav' did not have the power to disqualify somebody that much, especially not abroad. Omitting this term's deeply negative connotation in Croatia in the 1990s, she remarked that the current widespread Yugonostalgia aptly illustrated its benignity.

Belgrade Antinationalist Feminists

A lack of unanimity and an abundance of implicitness characterised the discussions by the antinationalist respondents. Belgrade3AN and Belgrade14AN decidedly warned against inferring that a war-related split had occurred in Belgrade only because it had in Zagreb. Belgrade3AN was further resolute that no Belgrade feminist had become a nationalist and criticised the portrayals of personal and leadership conflicts as nationalism-related. The other respondents depicted one or more feminists as 'nationalist' but

preferred not to mention names. They spoke instead of ‘some feminists’ or ‘certain women’. Given that the divisions during the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia were usually distinguished from those during the war in Serbia, the two dynamics are addressed separately.

Concerning the war in Croatia, it was clear that Serbia was the aggressor...Some sort of schism must have taken place...but I do not know. The war in Bosnia was clear as well: faced with Sarajevo, you were unable to really dispute. Little could you deviate before becoming a complete nationalist...I have not seen big incidents nor witnessed debates.

(interview with Belgrade5AN)

Besides pointing out that the war situation had been too obvious to argue about it, Belgrade5AN explained her unawareness of conflicts also by her work solely with feminists with a ‘totally clear’ positioning, i.e. with those who accentuated the Serb responsibility. Nevertheless, elsewhere she said that at least some activists of the SOS Hotline had a different take on that responsibility. Belgrade14AN remarked that the variety of positionings there had hampered even the internal articulation of criticism of Serb nationalism – a situation which had eventually made her leave that NGO: ‘I decided to go only to places where I could explicitly talk against war, nationalism, and militarism’. The participation in the vigils of Women in Black had been another contested issue. Belgrade14AN abstained, though, from disclosing any details. Much more explicit was Belgrade13AN’s portrayal of two distinctive groupings of Belgrade feminists which had been equally rigid regarding the righteousness of their positioning: ‘We, who were radically against nationalism, were of the opinion that it contributed to death, whereas the pro-patriots considered us traitors’.

More commonly, the antinationalist respondents distinguished between themselves, who primarily addressed the Serb responsibility and the non-Serb victims, and those who spoke of equal victimhood and responsibility of all ethnic groups, but accentuated the Serb victims. Some respondents addressed the importance of acknowledging the Serb victims. The cautious – and sometimes contradictory – way in which this issue was articulated shows how loaded it was for these feminists. They struggled to express their positioning while being aware of Serbia’s responsibility and the risk of losing legitimacy if they were to be seen as Serb nationalists:

[V]ery dear and close activists...went in the direction of Serb nationalism: that the Serbs must defend themselves, that they are in fact endangered. Unfortunately, that was also true, so when they would use those arguments, you were unable to say: ‘No, there were no killed soldiers of the YPA [Yugoslav People’s Army]’. *When there were.*

(interview with Belgrade11AN, emphasis in the original)

I think that there was not any difference among us; that we supported one another and encouraged each other's rage. I suppose, though, that some would not defend the Serbs even when they would be generally accused...I would...That ['All Serbs are guilty'] is simply not true.

(interview with Belgrade10AN)

The difficulty of attending to the Serb victims was also discernible from Belgrade5AN's guilt vis-à-vis family friends who had been, as Croatian Serbs, affected by the war in Croatia. Being focused on the Serb responsibility, she said not to have had the capacity to acknowledge and engage with their fears – some of which had originated from their experiences in World War II. Another respondent, whom I anonymise here, commented that some antinationalist feminists would accuse her of Serb nationalism only for mentioning the Serb victims. Upon sending me her authorised transcript, and despite my confirmation that I would not quote anybody by her real name, she wrote:

One part of the interview is very sensitive, [that] where I speak of the Serb side. If you use [it], please send me the quotation you would place. If it is quoted in an unbalanced manner [read: only her utterances on the Serb victims], I might look like a nationalist!

(Personal communication, name withheld)

It seems, thus, that some antinationalist feminists had begun to abandon their full support of the orthodox positioning on perpetrators and victims but refrained from saying so publicly. Belgrade7ANA described this silent change and her reasons for it as follows:

[M]any women...wanted to say that there was also a Serb truth...I did not have such a Serb identity, but later it occurred to me that we were maybe putting too much burden on ourselves, that it was not exactly so that we were the only ones who had incited the war...One hard core of feminists persists that that is not done: that we are guilty of everything, that there are no Serb victims and that that is only exaggeration by the press. But that is not so...As time passed by, I approached more and more that Serb side, but not in the sense of entering into conflicts because of it.

Despite her clear elaboration on the existence of two positionings, Belgrade7ANA saw this difference as the much less significant reason for the conflicts. Similarly to Zagreb13N, Belgrade7ANA prioritised the struggles for power, funds, and travels abroad – particularly lucrative benefits in a country under sanctions. Besides this interpretation and that on the primacy of the war-related frictions, a third one existed, too. Belgrade6AN did not see the non-war-related tensions as being at the roots of the war-related ones but as existing in addition to them.

Some respondents illuminated the two fragmentations which had occurred during the intensified Kosovo war and the NATO bombing. The first fragmentation concerned the positioning on perpetrators and victims. These respondents recalled that there had been antinationalist feminists who started to predominantly address the Serb victimhood:

[The positioning] was most shaky regarding Kosovo, especially when the bombing started. It incited existential fear and different reactions... [Some] had a reflex not to understand that it was so horrible in Kosovo and that in Belgrade and Serbia it was incomparably easier. Some... who had a totally clear antinationalist positioning regarding Croatia and Bosnia, got a bit lost regarding Kosovo...[T]here are big ethnic distances regarding the Albanians and the Roma...based on racism... That had not been so much [the case] regarding Bosnia and Croatia.

(interview with Belgrade5AN)

The second fragmentation occurred among the antinationalist feminists who continued stressing the Serb responsibility for the Kosovar Albanian victimhood. They disagreed whether the bombing was the right method to end Milošević's politics. The supporters of the bombing saw no other option. They were saturated with anger and despair from witnessing year after year how Milošević started yet another war or ethnic cleansing, and managed to remain in power while bringing the country to the verge of economic collapse:

I argued that it should have happened even earlier; that it was a shame that they had not bombed Serbia earlier because of Sarajevo...Should we have waited till there was not a single Albanian left? It was obvious that Milošević needed it [the bombing]...He found his scapegoat in this way.

(interview with Belgrade1ANA)

Another, here anonymised, respondent took issue with those who endorsed the bombing. She could not do this, though, without simultaneously expressing her awareness of the Serb responsibility:

[The] bombing was disgusting and only a fool can say: 'Great that they have bombed us because we had deserved it'. Although, of course, that was crossing my mind as well and it was then in particular that I understood Sarajevo. At the same time, Kosovo's horror was present in me, but the one did not block the other.

(Interview, name withheld)

An even stronger struggle between the acknowledgements of Serbia's responsibility and victimhood was present in Belgrade6AN's narrative. She

initially contrasted the positioning of the Belgrade feminists who had considered the bombing the greatest crime against Serbs with the positioning of those like her who had supported the well-deserved intervention. However, later in the interview, when she did not compare her own positioning to that of the ‘nationalist’ feminists, Belgrade6AN professed not to have approved of the bombing:

[I]t served us right. Why haven’t they bombed us earlier so that we could chase away the maniac? I did not really feel particularly endangered by the bombing of Belgrade because they were bombing everywhere...I cannot say that I was *really* for the bombing...[E]ach day I feared for my life and that of my family like crazy...[B]ut I cannot say that I was surprised. I knew what was happening on Kosovo; that they are displacing and ethnically cleansing the people there. Just as I knew about Srebrenica...[But] I am not a masochist to say: ‘Kill me because somebody was killing in my name there’.

(emphasis in the original)

The antinationalist feminists who both criticised the bombing and felt victimised by it moved on a slippery ground. Given that the accentuation of Serb victimhood was the positioning of the Serbian authorities and the ‘nationalist’ feminists, these antinationalist feminists went to great lengths to address the suffering without endangering their own legitimacy as antinationalist opponents of Milošević. Like I proposed in Chapter 4, this is the key for reading the annoyed reaction of some Belgrade antinationalist feminists to the suggested analogy between the antinationalist vs. nationalist split in Zagreb (1991–1995) and the divisions among the Belgrade feminists (1998–1999).

Nobody addressed the process of naming and the term ‘nationalist’ was not often used for other Belgrade feminists. ‘Patriotic’ was employed even less frequently and only as synonymous to ‘nationalist’. Some used ‘nationalist’ only to say that certain feminists were not that. The use of descriptive, at times euphemistic, designations was practiced instead. Feminists were described as ‘coquetting with mainstream politics’, ‘going in the direction of nationalism’, ‘having a blind spot for nationalism’, ‘without a completely defined antinationalism’, ‘with a lack of political clarity and sharpness regarding the war’, and ‘getting lost’. Finally, the ‘nationalist’ feminists were sometimes contrasted to those who were ‘radical (antinationalists)’ or had a ‘radical (antinationalist)’ positioning. Although never openly articulated, the possibility that the ‘nationalist’ feminists could be depicted as ‘moderate antinationalists’ was hereby suggested.

Similarly to their Zagreb counterparts, no consensus existed about who was a nationalist and some refrained from pronouncing on a particular feminist because of not knowing her at all or well enough. One name emerged most often, but even in her case, there was no consensus.

Belgrade3AN, for example, negated that that feminist was nationalist and said that her accentuation of Serb victimhood resulted from her extensive assistance to Croatian Serb refugees. Occasionally, after a specific feminist was named 'nationalist', the claim was softened by praising other segments of her work or evoking her character traits. Nevertheless, quite unlike in Zagreb, some respondents were puzzled to hear that a particular feminist was perceived as a 'nationalist'. The surprised reaction of Belgrade1ANA was especially striking in light of her fervent articulation of Serb responsibility. Another significant moment illustrated the perseverance of the designation 'nationalist' even after the reason for it had been forgotten. After asking another activist about why one feminist was considered a 'nationalist', Belgrade4AN told me: 'She mentioned that there had been some meeting somewhere, she could not tell me precisely. It had been something concrete, though'.

Belgrade 'Nationalist' Feminists

Belgrade2N did not know of any 'nationalist' among the Belgrade feminists, but cryptically recalled that some women had dropped out 'maybe because of the ethnic, ethnonational'. At the same time, she considered the antinationalist engagement politically and socially irrelevant:

[W]hen they need to lead the protests against Serb nationalism, they immediately show up at the Republic Square. I am really not a nationalist, but that does not have any point at all in a political sense. They simply work for their personal gain and are paid by those who pay them [sic]...[T]he women's movement...very quickly acquired a certain antinationalist tone which even made sense during the war, but *after* the war? It is ridiculous to build the image of feminism on that issue in a totally impoverished country where people starve.

(interview with Belgrade2N, emphasis in the original)

The Republic Square was a reference to Women in Black's vigils. Belgrade2N covertly disapproved of these feminists' lack of opposition to the nationalism of other ethnic groups. She acknowledged the partial Serb responsibility for the wars, but considered the continuous accentuation of this responsibility a *mala fide* endeavour funded from suspect sources. Asked for more details, Belgrade2N professed not to want to be the whistleblower. Her wish to clearly distance herself from the antinationalist feminists can be further read from her criticism of the neglect of economic issues. She omitted the related engagement of one familiar 'nationalist' feminist and homogenised the Belgrade women's movement (which by no means gathered only supporters of Women in Black). Thereby, Belgrade2N hinted at the more profound differentiation: that concerning Serb responsibility and victimisation. As to the divisions in the late 1990s, she spoke of two clearly

defined blocks. Women in Black and the rest of the first block widely supported the Kosovar Albanians and approved of the bombing. The other block – with which Belgrade2N implied personal affiliation – had disliked that kind of support to the Kosovar Albanians and considered the idea of defeating Milošević by bombing insane. They neither wanted to assent to Milošević nor to the bombing, but could not find a fertile soil for their middle path positioning.

Belgrade15N said to be unfamiliar with the intra-feminist divisions during the bombing because of her temporary move to a town which she considered safer than Belgrade. While explicitly communicating her disapproval of the bombing, she said that some women had considered it a great thing. Throughout the whole interview Belgrade15N gave such hints, but never addressed the frictions overtly. At one moment, she pointed to the difference between her and the antinationalist feminists in the emphasis of Serb perpetrators and non-Serb victims. These feminists were rebuked for imposing guilt upon the inhabitants of Belgrade, while turning a blind eye to the nationalism of the Kosovar Albanians and other non-Serbs. Belgrade15N illustrated this with the joint television appearance in 1996 of an antinationalist feminist and Alija Izetbegović – the then president of Bosnia-Herzegovina. She perceived that act as taking the Bosniak side and giving consent to the warmongering politics of a war criminal.

In addition, Belgrade15N distanced herself from the Western audiences the antinationalist feminists interacted with. Her positioning was intertwined with her firm belief in Yugoslavia's interethnic and socialist project, and her criticism of (the support to) its dismembering. To my question what she thought of the fact that some feminists did not consider her an antinationalist – the only respondent from this cluster whom I managed to ask this – she said that it signalled the generation gap between her and the younger Belgrade feminists. Being from early on strongly influenced by Marxism enabled her to see the big picture of the political developments. In her view, the Western (US, in particular) support of the disintegration of Yugoslavia and of some positionings – including those of the Belgrade antinationalist feminists – was just a cover-up for the military expansion and the capitalist pursuit of new resources and markets. She evoked her choice to stop participating in Women in Black's Srebrenica vigils, which drew attention to the Bosniak victims of the (Bosnian) Serb forces. Belgrade15N had already parted ways with this NGO because of its sole accusation of the Serbs, but she endorsed these vigils up to 2005:

[T]he US Congress adopted a resolution on Srebrenica... [I]t was clear to me that that was not a humanitarian and pacifist issue anymore...I consider it a political manipulation with all those who stand, although it is possible that they do it honestly and fervently. That [positioning] is legitimate, but why would I participate in it when I see it differently? Just as I do not want to participate in [saying] that the Serbs are

pitiful, endangered...That is not my story at all and that is also one form of manipulation. I cannot say: 'That is a manipulation, that is disgusting and I do not want that' and [accept] some other manipulations because some voice of political correctness has said that that was good.

Further rejecting the perception of her as a nationalist, Belgrade15N insisted on her affiliation with Yugoslavia and socialism: 'I have learned in the League of Communists that nationalism is a phenomenon which must not exist in our communist, socialist, education and engagement'. Towards the end of the interview, she overtly denied the designation 'nationalist' as not corresponding to the factual positionings. Like Zagreb4N, Belgrade15N saw the ascription of 'nationalist' as indicating the antinationalist feminists' incapacity to include the dissenting voices: '[T]hose stories about nationalism should not be taken seriously at all... *We are so antinationalist that all who are unlike us are nationalists*' (emphasis in the original).

Belgrade16N, too, said not to be acquainted with the debates among the Belgrade feminists on the NATO bombing. She explained her unfamiliarity by her residence abroad, although she also stated to have spent in that period several hours a day exchanging emails in her 'internet war against the bombing'. It is possible that the Belgrade feminists had not discussed this issue per email at the time, but considering the publications which have appeared since and give insight in the various positionings,⁵ her answer is quite telling. I propose that it indicates not a lack of knowledge, but a wish not to elaborate more on this very loaded topic, including her positionings. Regarding the wars in the first half of the 1990s, she criticised the activists who had neither shown understanding for the fears and suffering experienced by Serbs nor for some people's vital affiliation with the Serb ethnic group. Hereby Belgrade16N precisely spotted the painful place which some antinationalist feminists revealed themselves:

[War] supposes that people gather out of fear and that even those who used to have a comparatively low level of ethnic identification, all of a sudden accept it because that is...a survival strategy...At that moment we have groups [NGOs] which insist upon the culpability of Serbs and thereby do not see that Serbs are victims, too. That 'more' or 'less' [victims] is particularly delicate...In general, to count the victims is problematic, but this might sound as if I take the Serb side. I consider the strategy which did not understand and recognise that there were victims, suffering, and pain on all sides problematic on principle...[I]t is simply absurd not to see that the trauma which Serbs had after World War II was visible and palpable...Those are people who had their family members killed; one cannot deny that, it is not a fictional fear.

5 See the last analysis in Chapter 4.

Although attractive to Western (funding) audiences, Belgrade16N considered the denial of Serb victimhood as extreme, exclusionary, and conflictive as the sole attention to that victimhood. She portrayed herself as being between a rock and a hard place, criticised and hushed up by the Serb nationalists and the ‘allegedly non-nationalist’ feminists alike. The latter had given her the name ‘nationalist’ as part of their pursuit of benefits and aim to hamper her access to Western (financial) rewards. Nonetheless, Belgrade16N found it necessary to reject her supposed nationalism. Similarly to Belgrade15N, she portrayed the other activists as naively not understanding the role of the international power relations and economic factors in the (post-)Yugoslav wars. She commended Yugoslavia for its protection of the rights of minority ethnic groups, and criticised the secessionist efforts. Finally, Belgrade16N explained her endeavour to limit her daughter’s exposure to Serb nationalism, which had made Belgrade quite unlike the ‘Yugoslav and cosmopolitan’ city she had grown up in and felt attached to:

[T]o protect my child from...Serb nationalism, from the limited view of one exclusionary and primitive version of patriotism, I made a strategy to spend more time abroad than inside [Serbia]. I was horrified by the idea that she might become ‘a little Serb’ – a person who would completely wrongly believe that the Serbs are superior or victims... [T]hat mental pollution was my greatest fear, actually. My child can think critically and that is what matters the most.

Belgrade16N was the only one among these respondents to use the term ‘patriotism’. She implied that besides the exclusive, narrow-minded, and primitive version, which was synonymous with Serb nationalism, there was a more appealing modern version of patriotism which was ethnically inclusive and encouraged critical thinking. Belgrade16N did not say how the latter patriotism related to the Serb war crimes. Considering her acknowledgement of the existence of ‘victims, suffering, and pain on all sides’, it probably entailed – like the explicitly articulated patriotism of Zagreb1N – a critical distance from the perpetrating deeds of members of one’s ethnic group.

In Belgrade12N’s view, the common denominator of the Belgrade feminists in the early 1990s had been their opposition to Milošević and the war violence. They differed, however, in the extent of their criticism and its public articulation. Belgrade12N was not among the outspoken critics:

I cannot remember anybody from the women’s movement who was for Milošević. There were at that moment only few who had declared themselves publicly for one politics or another. We had [our] choices and were active in our spheres...My impression is that it [the difference] was more a question of the awareness and the level of engagement in political debates...I did not...in the beginning of the 1990s participate

in the political debates which took place in the women's movement or in a broader setting. That was due to my personal circumstances.

Later she clearly distinguished her positioning from that of the other Belgrade feminists, particularly those in Women in Black. The fundamental divergence – which had led to her departure from this NGO – revolved around her reproof of all nationalism and acknowledgement of the existence of victims on all sides. The rest had eyes only for the non-Serb victims and Serb nationalism. Comparably to the other 'nationalist' respondents, Belgrade12N found herself between two fires:

[W]e cannot get out of the war with the same methods which have led to the war...The media and the politics here declared the Serbs as the exclusive victims and the others as attackers, aggressors, whereas those others [the activists] did the opposite...[It] is more complicated than the story that the Serbs attacked and the others defended themselves...The consequences are terrible on all sides. Serbia is full of victims.

At the time of interviewing, this division manifested in the existence of two separate coalitions for dealing with the past. Belgrade12N said to belong to that which applied an inclusive approach by providing space for all voices. The conflicting views on Serb perpetrators and victims notwithstanding, she considered the Belgrade NGOs not all that dissimilar in the provision of assistance and support. In other words, similarly to some Zagreb antinationalist feminists, Belgrade12N pointed to the difference between the public statements and the concrete daily work. She implied that even those whose focus had been on the non-Serb victims had helped Serb ones and vice versa. This possibly conveyed her covert negation of the charges of being a nationalist because of accentuating the Serb victims.

Silence

The Unique Deed of ZagrebFem⁶

The case of ZagrebFem, the prominent Zagreb antinationalist feminist who spent two months on the battlefield in Croatia, is unparalleled among the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists. Soon after the beginning of the war in Croatia ZagrebFem enlisted herself voluntarily in Croatia's defence forces. In her words, she volunteered to protect her flat, life, and family, and when she stopped feeling the threat, she resigned from the unit. Upon

6 In this section, the feminist in question is referred to by a different code name than that used elsewhere in the text. The purpose of the double code name is to allow her a similar level of anonymity as that of the other respondents.

her return ZagrebFem wanted to resume her work in the shelter of – the not yet split up – Women's Help Now, but some members opposed that. In their view, feminism equalled pacifism and her non-pacifist deed made her unsuitable for working in a feminist initiative. She was eventually allowed to stay: The feminists in support of her freedom of choice managed to persuade those favouring expulsion. ZagrebFem spoke of her deed as an act of self-defence: 'I am against the war, but I want...just like when I walk on the street at 2 o'clock in the morning and somebody tries to attack me, to have the legitimate right to defend myself'. She was unable to care less about state or ethnic group and scorned those – including some, further unspecified, activists of Women's Help Now – who approvingly perceived her choice as an act of defending the homeland. She considered her antiwar positionings to be equally manifested by taking up arms and by participating in an NGO which advocated non-violence – as was the case with the Antiwar Campaign Croatia.

Unfortunately, I could not explore this episode in great detail. I was worried that addressing this feminist's military past in all interviews might stigmatise her, which was not something I wanted to inflict upon any respondent. ZagrebFem has already discussed her remarkable deed on several other occasions (Došen, 2001; Fischer, 1993; Mikula, 2005; Nannavecchia & Pecorari, 2004), but none of those works were authored by post-Yugoslav feminists. Moreover, only seven respondents touched upon her soldiership. This testifies that the silence surrounding the war-related positionings is not only perpetuated by many Belgrade and Zagreb feminists, but also by researchers like me.

The seven, quite divergent, narratives of ZagrebFem's case had two common denominators. The first one was the absence of explicitly communicated doubts regarding her feminism. In addition to the laden character of the issue of military involvement of feminists, ZagrebFem's feminism was probably not questioned due to her long-term extensive efforts against male violence against women. The second overlap was the avoidance to overtly name her war-related positionings, including the act of going into combat. Zagreb4N insinuated that there had been something odd about ZagrebFem's choice, but did not want to disclose more details. Maybe along similar lines, Zagreb6N hinted that ZagrebFem had remained with the antinationalist feminists due to the availability of funds. Pragmatism instead of factual antinationalism was suspected by Zagreb9AN, too. She was unable to reconcile ZagrebFem's deed with her participation in the Antiwar Campaign Croatia. Zagreb23AN, however, seemed not to have any difficulty harmonising those two choices. She admitted to have completely forgotten about that episode and portrayed it as just another manifestation of the same ardent warrior spirit with which ZagrebFem led her life. Zagreb23AN suggested further that the war experience had strengthened ZagrebFem's peace orientation, and professed never to have heard her use nationalist or hate speech.

Also Belgrade6AN perceived ZagrebFem's move as unrelated to Croat nationalism. She recollected that everybody at the meeting, where she had listened to ZagrebFem's account of her war experience, had spoken from her heart instead of transmitting the views of her government. The ambiguity regarding ZagrebFem's war-related positionings was also visible from the narratives of other two Zagreb antinationalist feminists. Zagreb3AN clearly situated ZagrebFem's positionings within the antinationalist cluster, i.e. as dissenting from those of the 'nationalist' feminists. Quite to the contrary, Zagreb7AN stated that ZagrebFem still held a completely different view of the war.⁷ Nonetheless, by immediately afterwards interpreting ZagrebFem's deed as a panic reaction to a perceived danger, it seems that Zagreb7AN wanted to counteract her suggestion that that choice might have originated from nationalism or patriotism.

Zagreb23AN and Zagreb7AN held opposing views regarding the extent to which ZagrebFem's move had been discussed among the Zagreb feminists. Zagreb23AN recalled that ZagrebFem had not mystified anything and soon after her return from the front had freely discussed her experience with the rest of Women's Help Now. For Zagreb7AN this episode was not a non-issue, though. She saw it as a topic which had never been raised. ZagrebFem, too, did not think that the tensions regarding her soldiership had ever been resolved – at least not in Zagreb:

[T]hat is such a hard and deep silence, a complete break of communication and...quite a lot of fears on both sides...[War] brings people, regardless of age and gender, into a state of reacting in completely unusual ways...When those topics would be opened... In those times it was not at all possible to open them because we were all terrified... and in shock...[B]ecause a lot of wounds from those times have remained sedimented and never discussed...I think that we are all [nowadays] afraid of hurting one another once more.

In her view, the attitude of the Belgrade feminists had been altogether different. Some had overtly disapproved of her decision, whereas others had avoided the topic out of fear of halting further communication. Yet, at one point she had stopped sensing any tensions from their side. ZagrebFem did not know how this had been possible because her move had never been discussed, but she was pleased with the situation. Still, given that she has never asked the Belgrade feminists what had caused their change of heart, it seems that something remained brewing in the air, but that she

7 Zagreb7AN possibly referred to ZagrebFem's conceptualisation of the war in Croatia as a legitimate act of self-defence which had only been wrong because of the ethnic cleansing of the Croatian Serbs and the destruction of their villages. ZagrebFem had expressed this positioning in a documentary and said to feel shame about those acts, especially because she, too, had been a part of the Croat forces (Nannavecchia & Pecorari, 2004).

wanted – similar to her interactions with the Zagreb feminists – to let sleeping dogs lie and not open old wounds.

Zagreb Feminists

Speaking about the ‘non-nationalist bloc’, Zagreb23AN implied that after the sides had been chosen, one did not have much choice regarding her positionings: ‘Some talks stop: you are now that’. She immediately added, though, that the feminists in this cluster had been ‘very clean’ (read: politically impeccable), thereby correcting her intimation and suggesting that there would not have been much to discuss anyway. Unanimity and absence of debate were noted by Zagreb7AN, too, but her formulation contradicted the previous respondent: ‘There were no such conflicts, really. Actually, we did not discuss them’. The existence of silence is further to be inferred from Zagreb4N’s surprised reaction to my research: She thought that those issues had been long forgotten. When she and her good friend became aware of their discrepant views on the war in Croatia, they stopped talking to one another. Neither of them had initially the courage to deal with the differences, whereas later it was too late to do so. Despite this allusion to the impossibility of transforming the tensions, elsewhere in the interview Zagreb4N indicated that the lost friendship could and should be renewed: ‘These losses are something agonising, unresolved, something which should be worked out in this lifetime’.

Many more Zagreb respondents were pessimistic about the restoration of communication between the clusters. For Zagreb23AN, the time to do so and discuss the past was long gone and the connection between the feminists was lost, whereas Zagreb7AN did not believe that the ‘nationalist’ feminists could calmly debate these issues:

I wish that it would be possible to talk...in such a free way [as during the interview]. That I would be able to say: ‘That is my feeling’ without having somebody attack me...All that can be discussed...But when somebody starts shouting, the conversation stops.

Zagreb14N accused the antinationalist cluster of the same, i.e. spoke of being unable to handle its extreme aggressiveness. According to Zagreb6N, the impossibility to communicate across the clusters resulted from the divergent personal experiences which stemmed from class and status differences. She believed that the feminists would be open to trusting and hearing one another only if they had comparable lives. That the lapse of time has not made the dialogue any easier is also evident from Zagreb6N’s narrative. The preceding year she had talked for the first time – presumably since the early 1990s – to one Zagreb antinationalist feminist. Each had tried very hard not to mention the war-related dynamics. Some topics had been only indirectly touched

upon. Zagreb6N concluded: 'These things are not discussed and will never be'.

Zagreb1N explicitly blamed both clusters for the creation and maintenance of silence. She disapproved of her fellow Zagreb feminists for parting ways instead of rationally analysing the differences, as well as for still being firmly positioned and not talking to each other. This respondent, who was seen by many antinationalist feminists as a reconciler, was content to have openly presented her views despite the associated emotional load. Her deed had not prevented the separation but removed the tensions which formed a latent conflict between her and the other cluster. Zagreb1N also addressed the burden of this silence for the younger Zagreb feminists. They knew that something had happened, but did not have much information about it.⁸ Neither was the relation between feminism and nationalism debated. An attempt to organise a round table failed due to some feminists' unwillingness to participate in such an encounter. For Zagreb5ANA, it was exactly this absence of discussion that indicated that there was something unresolved. She was not optimistic about the chance of rapprochement. Not only some women objected it, but throughout the years many had already selected the associates they felt comfortable with and were unwilling to create space for others.

A disbelief in the repair of the broken bonds was expressed by Zagreb21ANA, too. After the splits (even within the same cluster) the concerned feminists very often would not even want to attend the same events, whereas those who would agree to do so would not be interested in any collaboration. Zagreb21ANA was genuinely worried about this discontinuity. It meant a loss of the qualities and efforts which the feminists in question had contributed up until then. Although the diminution of the already not abundant feminist resources had never been discussed, Zagreb12AN felt that many feminists were both angry and sad about it. The past disagreements needed to be evaluated to get a better idea on the possibility of cooperating at least on minor activities. However, her account of some feminists' intolerance towards being in the same space with particular other feminists did not leave much hope. It turned out to be impossible to organise larger celebrations even of the important dates for Yugoslav feminism. The war-related split was, according to Zagreb12AN, 'to some women still a real trauma, not only a cut injury'.

Zagreb7AN regretted that the Medulin meeting had never been repeated although 'terribly many things' had remained unarticulated between the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists. She recalled having admonished the Belgrade antinationalist feminists for 'switching too quickly to Bosnia', i.e. not paying more attention to the dynamics between

8 In informal conversations with Belgrade and Zagreb feminists born in the 1970s and 1980s I often heard anecdotal reports on this intergenerational transfer.

them and the Zagreb feminists regarding the war in Croatia. The (unexpressed) war-related tensions between and within the antinationalist clusters were also present in Zagreb12AN's implicit and ambiguous elaboration:

[T]he Croatian feminists would say – but...I say this *relata refero* – that we have nonetheless named that anger and that we think that we have at least discussed those issues among ourselves or that we have at least split in two blocs, whereas in Belgrade the women might have never discussed their own nationalism...[B]ecause we have wonderful friends there, if they can say to us 'You should have talked matters over with these [the 'nationalist' feminists], so we also say sometimes 'Have the women in Belgrade ever discussed their nationalism?' because it had happened to them. We all know the story of the Croatian split, but nobody talks about the Serbian one: whether there has been one or not. And whether the nationalists have stayed together with... those who are non-nationalists, whether some fusion has taken place...so that it [the split] is not talked about anymore. Whereas here a split has remained, a tectonic rift, but it has been named.

Several important issues catch the eye here. To begin with, Zagreb12AN claimed not to have witnessed the conflicts in Zagreb. Although she became indeed a feminist activist only after the split, I doubt her unfamiliarity: She quickly became very engaged in the core activities of her NGO, spoke at conferences abroad, communicated with the Belgrade antinationalist feminists, and wrote on war and nationalism, including the situation in Zagreb. Therefore, her distancing should be rather seen as showing her uneasiness with openly articulating those conflicts in the interview. In addition, this respondent made contradictory claims on the tensions in each city. She both wondered whether and affirmed that there had been nationalism-related divisions in Belgrade, and stated that the Zagreb feminists had both discussed and not discussed the fissure between them. Zagreb12AN left it further open whether the Zagreb antinationalist feminists had actually confronted the corresponding Belgrade cluster with its secrecy on the nationalism among the Belgrade feminists. She implied, though, that the Belgrade antinationalist feminists had criticised their counterparts for not resolving the conflicts with the other Zagreb cluster. Finally, she softened these hints about the tensions between the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists by pointing to the great friendships between them.

Belgrade Feminists

Belgrade1ANA was bothered by the recurring silent way in which even some otherwise very articulate feminists left the NGO where they had been active. She additionally rebuked the hushing up of the real reasons by evoking a text in which her departure from Women in Black had been

attributed to fatigue. Belgrade1ANA considered that explanation ridiculous, not only because of her excellent health, but also because she had made a point of disclosing her motive for the departure: a positioning on the NATO bombing which she had been unable to compromise with. The lack of transparency on the conflicts was reproved by Belgrade7ANA, too. Asked about the existence of written sources on the tensions regarding the bombing and the Kosovar Albanians, Belgrade7ANA said not to believe that there would be any such document – neither regarding the other contentious issues:

They have never wanted those things to be made public, just like with the money theft. The feminist movement wants to maintain the aura of ideological impeccability and was hiding the dirty linen...Now, whether those things are published somewhere. They are not because those publications are theirs and [therefore] always ideologically and politically correct, whereas others did not know.

Sarajevo1EXT recalled the episode in which two Belgrade antinationalist feminists had abstained from reacting to the published criticism of another Belgrade antinationalist feminist. According to Sarajevo1EXT, their wish ‘not to rock the boat’ was damaging because the readers ‘would not know the other side of the story’ and the great things which those two activists had done. The same feminist whose criticism Sarajevo1EXT disapproved of was herself unhappy with the lack of reactions to her writings. During the NATO bombing Belgrade3AN felt wronged by a Zagreb antinationalist feminist, who had negated her experiences under the bombs. This was, in Belgrade3AN’s view, the same approach which men applied to women’s lives. She mentioned the episode in one of her published texts, but the issue had remained unresolved. The Zagreb feminist had refrained from any response. Belgrade3AN also shared her disappointment in several Zagreb ‘nationalist’ feminists regarding their avoidance to meet and discuss the conflicts from the early 1990s.

Sometimes the choice to perpetuate the silence was not inspired by impression management or the wish to prevent upheaval, but by the preference for protecting oneself. Belgrade2N did not want to share her criticism of Women in Black because she sought to stay away from any troubles she might get into as a whistleblower. As Belgrade13AN explained, the Belgrade feminists had never dared to name somebody or her positionings as ‘nationalist’ in a direct conversation with the feminist in question. Wondering why nobody had ever called her so to her face, Belgrade15N seemed to be more disturbed by this practice of talking behind her back than by the designation itself: ‘Nobody has ever said anything to me, although they could have done so, just as you are saying to me. Did I get angry? Why would I get angry?...I always wonder why...I only hear it in this way’. She did not say anything,

though, about whether she had tried to raise this issue in a face-to-face communication.

Belgrade6AN explicitly articulated her own responsibility for the maintenance of silence. At gatherings with feminists from the post-Yugoslav region, she had had the impression that some of them sided extensively with the official state-building politics. Unlike her, for whom feminism had priority, they supported politics which were as patriarchal as those of the Serbian state. Nonetheless, Belgrade6AN had chosen not to state her objections. As somebody from Serbia who acknowledged its greater responsibility for the wars and rebuked its treatment of ethnic Others, she did not feel comfortable criticising those same ethnic Others. She hinted that she could not express her positionings also because of the presence of Belgrade antinationalist feminists – radical opponents of Serb nationalism. Her narrative revealed, thus, the existence of silence and latent tensions not only between Belgrade antinationalist feminists and feminists from other Yugoslav successor states, but also within the Belgrade antinationalist cluster.

Conclusion

The comparison of the perceptions of the war-related divisions, the process of naming, and the (un)authenticity of one's (anti)nationalism revealed great differences between Belgrade and Zagreb. Whereas all but one Zagreb respondent confirmed the existence of a split in Zagreb, the Belgrade respondents were more inclined to speak of dissimilar positionings without mentioning a split. Some even doubted that there were nationalists among the Belgrade feminists. The disagreements which the Zagreb feminists referred to only concerned the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. Nobody noted additional tensions related to the NATO bombing and the Kosovo war, as some Belgrade respondents did. Finally, the Zagreb respondents were more comfortable with explicitly speaking about concrete feminists. The Belgrade respondents preferred not to state personal names and used phrases like 'some feminists'.

The more laden but less pronounced war-related frictions among the Belgrade feminists were also visible in their divergent assessments of the extent of those tensions, and the avoidance of addressing the positionings on the war in Serbia. Some antinationalist respondents resolutely negated the existence of a split in Belgrade, others talked about a kind of split, and yet others indicated a clear-cut split. Those who acknowledged at least some differentiation usually spoke of two distinctive moments: the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, and the intensified Kosovo war and the NATO bombing of Serbia. Unlike them, the 'nationalist' feminists typically addressed only the dynamics in the early 1990s, probably because their positionings on the Kosovar Albanians and the bombing resembled those of the Serbian authorities. Another instance of such distancing was these

feminists' portrayal of oneself as a lone voice in the wilderness whose positionings opposed those of the other Belgrade cluster and the Serb nationalists alike.

The narratives of the Zagreb antinationalist respondents showed that they have left the split further behind than the other Zagreb feminists. Whereas the former more often critically reassessed their own positionings and designations, the latter usually repeated them without any self-reflection. No such difference existed among the Belgrade feminists. The positionings from the 1990s were vividly present in their narratives. One significant exception existed, though. Some Belgrade antinationalist feminists communicated that they wanted to attend more to the Serb victims, i.e. depart somewhat from the orthodox antinationalist positioning, but were concerned about being seen as nationalists. Lastly, the Zagreb respondents were more open about the silence regarding the war-related divisions, whereas it was more common for the Belgrade feminists only to (remotely) allude to it. Next to the awareness about the heavy legacy of the unresolved and unaddressed conflicts, there was a general lack of optimism among the Belgrade and Zagreb respondents regarding the chances of bridging the gap and re-establishing communication and cooperation.

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6 A Critical Novel Look at the Old Dynamics and Knowledge

The 1990s were a decade of profound societal changes in the (post-)Yugoslav region, marked by the large scale violence during the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia (i.e. the NATO bombing of Serbia and the intensified Kosovo war). With the exception of the short combat experience of one antinationalist feminist, the Belgrade and Zagreb activists this book focuses upon were only indirectly – albeit very importantly – engaged with the war violence. Antinationalist and ‘nationalist’ feminists alike provided psychosocial and other support to (raped) refugee women in times when state assistance was missing, insufficient or largely inadequate. They advocated the end of the wars (the war rapes in particular) and the bringing to justice of perpetrators, supported draft evaders, and informed diverse Western audiences about the war realities. On top of all that, they continued with their pre-war activities against the gender-based power inequalities, such as male violence against women.

This book addressed the war-related segment of the activities of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists between 1990 and 1999. Two sorts of positionings, i.e. discourses and activities, were compared: those regarding the (post-)Yugoslav wars, and those towards the feminists from the same and the other city. In order to better understand and explain the differences and similarities between the development and contents of those positionings, as well as the emotions which accompanied them, the contexts of those positionings were extensively analysed. Using a Bourdieusian lens, significant attention was paid to the struggle for legitimacy between and among the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists: their strategies for establishing themselves as the only legitimate feminist agents who held the correct definitions of the war situation and acted correspondingly. The feminists’ reflections at the time of interviewing (2009 or 2010) on the war-related clustering in the 1990s were explored, too.

Understanding the Subtleties of Feminism at War

Biases, silent places, and bare reproductions of the same few earlier analyses characterise the scholarship on the war-related feminist activism in

Belgrade and Zagreb in the 1990s. These problematic issues have remained virtually unattended to by scholars, including Belgrade and Zagreb ones, some of whom belonged to or cooperated with the antinationalist or 'nationalist' feminists. Due to this lack of attention, the scholarship appears as not privileging any feminist activists or positionings but providing neutral information on the situation on the ground. However, this knowledge was a part of the varied efforts to inform the (Western) audiences about the wars, war rapes, and the feminists who assisted the survivors. The contributions did not only aim at cessation of the violence and penalisation of the perpetrators, but also at securing resources for the Belgrade and/or Zagreb feminists whose war-related positionings were approved of by the author in question. Being thus intertwined with the struggle for legitimacy, the scholars used different strategies to indicate which feminists were worthy of support: use of laudatory formulations for them and derogatory ones for the others, complete omission to mention the latter, or a choice to ignore their self-designation 'feminists' and refer to them as 'women's activists', while reserving the term 'feminists' for the like-minded activists.

Another point of concern is the terminology which classifies the feminists and their positionings. The Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists explicitly used 'antinationalist' and 'non-nationalist' as self-designations, whereas they ascribed – often implicitly – 'nationalist' and 'patriotic' to the feminists from the other cluster in the respective city. Scholars have commonly and uncritically operated with these four terms without attending to their meaning and the fact that they were employed only by some feminists. Overt self-definition was not practiced by the 'nationalist' feminists. The self-designations of these Zagreb feminists – 'anticommunist' ('non-communist'), 'concrete', 'genocide acknowledgers', 'partisan', and 'anti-Yugoslav' – are only to be inferred from the names which they openly attributed to the other Zagreb cluster: 'communist', 'abstract', 'genocide revisionists', 'neutral', and 'pro-Yugoslav', respectively. Likewise, it cannot be directly learned that the Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists referred to themselves as 'moderate antinationalists' and 'sensitive to the suffering of Serbs'. That can only be derived from these feminists' explicitly stated depictions of the other Belgrade cluster as practicing 'antinational radicalism' or 'extreme antinationalism', as well as being 'insensitive to the suffering of Serbs'.

Being intrinsically connected to the struggle for legitimacy and the efforts to stop the violence, all these terms were impregnated with normative claims. For example, when the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists called the other Zagreb cluster 'abstract', they criticised the antinationalist feminists for not speaking of concrete, i.e. ethnically marked, perpetrators and victims. According to the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists, stating explicitly that the Serbs were the perpetrators and the Croats (and, later, Bosniaks) the victims was the only way to mobilise the international community to apply the right policies for ending the war in Croatia (and Bosnia-Herzegovina). The

Zagreb antinationalist feminists had the same goal, but instead of repeating the Croatian state's simplified portrayal of perpetrators and victims, they did not exempt any warring party from responsibility: Hence their self-designations 'antinationalist' and 'non-nationalist'. These strategies of self-designation and ascription were used in Belgrade, too. It was the antinationalist feminist cluster there which (eventually) accentuated the ethnicity of the perpetrators and victims, whereas the 'nationalist' cluster spoke of an equal responsibility and victimisation of all sides. To distribute the responsibility in which Serbia had a principal share was, according to the Belgrade antinationalist feminists, to turn a blind eye to the politics of one's state and, therefore, a nationalist or patriotic positioning. At the same time, this insisting on the primacy of Serbia's responsibility was seen by the Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists as an act of wearing sackcloth and ashes, whereby the extreme attention for the Serb perpetrating deeds prevented the other Belgrade cluster from seeing all facets of the wars. Being themselves critical of Serbia's politics and its depiction of Serbs purely as victims, the Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists considered their positioning as 'moderate antinationalism' and that of the other Belgrade cluster as 'radical' or 'extreme'.

The use of designations was one of the three ways in which the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists struggled for legitimacy and wanted to somewhat clarify the new and confusing war-induced meanings and allegiances. In addition, by misrecognising one's own interests and rebuking those of the other side, the (feminist) agency of those with divergent war-related positionings was negated. The latter feminists were portrayed as not being genuinely interested in the well-being of (raped) women but pursuing agendas – those of funders or states, or personal ones, such as career gains – which were sometimes even detrimental to women. Finally, the feminists created an affirmative story about themselves. The Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists portrayed themselves as sisters who cooperated despite and across state and ethnic boundaries. The Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists considered their own analyses of and positionings on the (sexual) war violence as the only comprehensive, non-partisan, and objective ones, whereas the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists described themselves as the sole genuine advocates and supporters of the Bosniak and Croat women who had been raped by Serbs.

These stories can be considered myths because they only partially corresponded to the reality. The Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists did not only cross the imposed dividing lines, but created new ones, too, between each other, and between themselves and the other cluster in the respective city. The positionings of the Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists, which also addressed the Serb victims and the responsibility of non-Serb (state) actors, were indeed less black-and-white than those of the other Belgrade cluster. Still, the non-accentuation of Serbia's foremost responsibility made these positionings as politically coloured as those of

the Belgrade antinationalist feminists. Lastly, the efforts of the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists were not only directed at assisting rape survivors and advocating the criminalisation of Serbia's war politics. They were also oriented towards increasing these feminists' legitimacy and decreasing that of the antinationalist ones.

Even the scholarship which has been produced after 2000 – and sometimes pretends to analyse the whole decade of the 1990s – mainly does not go beyond the end of the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia in late 1995. Not much information exists, therefore, on the additional tensions among the Belgrade feminists during the NATO bombing of Serbia and the intensified Kosovo war in the spring of 1999. Furthermore, the voices and activities of the Belgrade and Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists are largely absent – a lacuna which is not only due to the predominance of scholars who endorsed the positionings of the antinationalist feminists. The latter often authored relevant contributions, unlike the Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists who published on other topics and their Zagreb counterparts who did not write much in general. These reasons have contributed, too, to the preponderance of the designations of the antinationalist feminists.

Although the veracity of the scholarly claims has remained thus far unquestioned, that has not prevented their multiple reproductions. Consequently, the analyses typically give the impression that the beginning of the war violence in 1991 affected the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists in the same way: In each city, the feminists divided into antinationalists and nationalists and the two clusters ceased all cooperation with one another. It is also suggested that the positionings of the antinationalist clusters did not differ, just like those of the 'nationalist' ones. The remainder of this section demonstrates why such views are deeply problematic.

The Zagreb antinationalist feminists refrained from reproducing the state's portrayal of Croatia as an innocent victim of the aggression by the Yugoslav People's Army and the Croatian Serbs. Instead, they took the risk of speaking in more balanced terms about the responsibility of all warring sides, advocated a non-violent restoration of peace, and maintained the cooperation with the Belgrade feminists. The Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists supported Croatia's right to armed self-defence, adopted the dichotomy of Croat victims and Serb perpetrators, and extended the latter category to the Belgrade feminists. When the mass war rapes in Bosnia-Herzegovina were disclosed in the summer of 1992 the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists spoke of Serb men raping Bosniak and Croat women as part of the Serb politics of ethnic cleansing (or genocide – a term some of these feminists insisted upon). The antinationalist feminists initially used a strict gender-based positioning, which they slightly altered in late 1992 to early 1993, due to the appearance of more reliable data on the rapes. While still criticising the use of unverified and exaggerated accounts and figures, they started pointing out that most rapes were committed by the Serb forces and that the majority of victims were non-Serb women. This was, however,

not always very explicitly said or brought into connection to the Serb war strategy.

The early acknowledgment of Croatia's partial responsibility for the war violence and the possibility that the Croat forces might be committing war crimes, too, enabled the Zagreb antinationalist feminists to openly condemn the war crimes of the (Bosnian) Croat militaries during the Bosniak-Croat war in Bosnia-Herzegovina (spring of 1993 to winter of 1994). The other Zagreb feminists, who aimed for legitimacy using the dichotomy of Serb perpetrators and non-Serb victims, remained silent: Speaking about Croat perpetrators meant risking a decrease or loss of legitimacy. That they disagreed with these Croat politics and refused to see the Bosniaks as the enemy was to be inferred only from the continuity of their work with and assistance to (raped) Bosniak refugee women. All those efforts of the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists notwithstanding, they never succeeded in firmly establishing themselves as the more or the only legitimate Zagreb feminists – neither in Zagreb nor abroad.

After 1993 the struggle for legitimacy between the Zagreb clusters began to lose momentum and importance. The war rapes, which were the key topic in this strife, were progressively disappearing from the international and local political and media agenda. Moreover, each cluster created its own networks of (financial) support, and the feminists with different positionings did not participate in the same events. The latter was also due to the fact that the split became common knowledge among the Western feminists and nobody tried to bring the two clusters together anymore. By the time of the NATO bombing and the Kosovo war the struggle for legitimacy became as good as obsolete. Each cluster communicated its positionings, but the split was not revived. The antinationalist feminists demanded an end to the bombing and the Serb ethnic cleansing of the Kosovar Albanians. By pointing to the presence of (feminist) antiwar opposition in Serbia throughout the 1990s, they criticised the international community for its homogenising approach towards the Serbs. The 'nationalist' feminists endorsed the bombing as the right response to the continuous Serb genocidal politics against non-Serbs. This time the Belgrade feminists were not overtly depicted as complicit with Serbia's agenda; their existence was fully ignored.

When the war violence broke out in 1991 the Belgrade feminists distanced themselves from the Serbian state's clear-cut positioning that the Serbs were the innocent victims of other ethnic groups. They spoke of equal responsibility and victimhood of all warring parties, and their gender-based positioning on the war rapes was free of ethnic markers. No Belgrade feminist shunned Serbia's responsibility for the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. From early 1993 onward some feminists started altering their ethnicity-free positioning and accentuating the Serb-induced (sexual) victimisation of Bosniaks and Croats. The change was not only due to the appearance of more trustworthy figures which showed the large extent of

the Serb war rapes, but also to these feminists' interactions with Zagreb feminists at conferences abroad.

Zagreb feminists from both clusters disagreed with the Belgrade feminists' positioning of equal responsibility and victimhood, and asked them to be more explicit about Serbia's greater responsibility. The latter feminists were offended by this non-recognition of their positioning's dissenting and risky character in the Serbian context. Moreover, they were displeased with the Zagreb feminists' insufficient to nonexistent attention for Croatia's responsibility and Croat nationalism, and angry because of the guilt which they felt was imposed upon them by these feminists – especially the 'nationalist' ones. One issue added fuel to the fire. The emotional affiliation with the Croatian part of the Adriatic Sea and the already defunct Yugoslavia, which many Belgrade feminists continued to voice, had become outdated and problematic for the Zagreb feminists. Still, despite this irritation and feeling of being misunderstood and treated unfairly, a number of Belgrade feminists began to realise Serbia's graver war legacy and emphasise Serb responsibility and non-Serb victimhood. These were the Belgrade antinationalist feminists. Their positioning on (sexual) perpetrators and victims ended up resembling that of the Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists.

So, unlike in Zagreb, where the heretical challengers in the feminist field were the 'nationalist' feminists, in Belgrade it was the antinationalist feminists who abandoned the orthodox gender-based and ethnicity-free positioning on the (sexual) war violence. Their position in the Belgrade feminist field did not remain heretical for a long time, however. Compared to the other Belgrade feminists, the antinationalist ones were numerically stronger and had more extensive interactions with Western (funding) audiences. Thanks to this, their initially heretical positioning soon became the orthodox one in the Belgrade feminist field, and abroad they became the legitimate Belgrade feminists with regard to war-related topics. The 'nationalist' feminists, who ended up as heretical challengers, kept speaking about equal responsibility and victimhood, but began to focus on the Serb victims of non-Serbs. They did not publicly position themselves against the cooperation with the Zagreb feminists but did not put much effort into incarnating such cooperation either. Quite different was the approach of the Belgrade antinationalist feminists, who struggled to maintain the contact with their Zagreb counterparts – an endeavour which communicated a clear political statement. The Belgrade clusters were not, however, engaged in such a severe struggle for legitimacy as the Zagreb ones. This allowed for feminists with divergent positionings to work together in the Belgrade Women's Studies Center – a type of cooperation which was impossible in Zagreb.

The Belgrade 'nationalist' cluster was not a cluster in the same way as its Zagreb counterpart. These Belgrade feminists have never produced a joint (war-related) positioning. The closest some of them came to that was by positively reviewing or writing the introductory chapter to each other's

works. During the interviews none of them showed awareness of the existence of other Belgrade feminists with similar war-related positionings, although all of them knew each other well. Another dissimilarity was that the Zagreb split was not exacerbated or altered by the war in Serbia, whereas the Belgrade feminist field underwent one more reorganisation at that point. Some antinationalist feminists abandoned the accentuation of Serb responsibility and focused on the NATO violence against Serbs. They hardly, if at all, mentioned the Serb ethnic cleansing of the Kosovar Albanians. Their positioning overlapped with that of the 'nationalist' feminists. The remaining antinationalist ones rebuked the ethnic cleansing but disagreed on whether the bombing was the right method of stopping it. Some supported the intervention as the only way of ending Serbia's long-standing war politics. Others insisted on a neither/nor option whereby these detrimental politics were to be halted without harming civilians. Still, even this more pronounced differentiation did not lead to such a profound and publicly expressed schism as that in Zagreb.

How can all these differences between Belgrade and Zagreb be explained? One has to look, first, at the Croatian and Serbian contexts and the power of violence to constitute new meanings. Serbia's at least partial responsibility for the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia was far too obvious for the Belgrade feminists to allow denial. Furthermore, different from Croatia, Serbia did not experience a war on its territory in the first half of the 1990s. When such direct danger became a reality, during the NATO bombing in 1999, the positionings of the Belgrade feminists diversified and the tensions became more prominently articulated. The dynamics were supported by the fact that no minimal consensus regarding Serbia's politics on Kosovo existed among these feminists. Due to the greater social distance, the support for Bosniak and Croat women exceeded that for the Kosovar Albanian women.

The other part of the explanation concerns the pre-war variations in capital among the feminists in each city and the accompanying struggle for legitimacy. The majority of women who became the first Zagreb feminists during socialism were established or rising star professionals with well ranked parents. Some of the younger women who came (shortly) afterwards were students from less privileged backgrounds whose families had experienced grievances by the partisan and/or communist authorities. Thus, already the first Zagreb feminist initiatives gathered women with varied cultural, economic, and social capital. The future antinationalist feminists were typically those with more capital, whereas the future 'nationalist' ones usually had less capital. The latter feminists' efforts to establish themselves as legitimate Zagreb feminists manifested in disagreements regarding the right type of feminist engagement: more academic (theoretical) or more activist (grassroots and hands-on). These pre-war tensions were echoed in the war-time strife – in Zagreb and abroad – about the correct definitions of the war violence and its perpetrators and

victims. The ‘nationalist’ feminists, as heretical challengers, tried to obtain legitimacy for their positionings also by delegitimising the (re)producers of the orthodox positionings, the antinationalist feminists, as privileged insiders in the socialist society.

Such a pre-war struggle for symbolic feminist capital did not exist in Belgrade. The first Belgrade feminist initiative was not a formal academic body, as the Zagreb one, but an informal and loose entity aimed at a broader audience. In addition, there were neither significant differences in cultural, economic, and social capital among the Belgrade feminists, nor such divergent familial histories of interaction with the partisan and communist authorities. The initial Belgrade heretical challengers – the antinationalist feminists – already had legitimacy as feminists in Belgrade and abroad. Therefore, when they started to position themselves differently, they did not need that much to challenge the legitimacy of the other cluster. For a different reason that held true also for the ‘nationalist’ feminists when they ended up as the heretical challengers: They had already received recognition in their professions, as well as in the feminist field concerning other topics. Nonetheless, as the following section shows, it was not that these feminists were completely uninterested in obtaining legitimacy with regard to war-related matters.

Back to the 1990s: Different Coordinates, Different Outlook

The interviews in 2009 and 2010 showed that the Zagreb antinationalist feminists were able, like no other, to critically look at their positionings from the 1990s and see them also in connection to the competition for resources and legitimacy. While maintaining their self-ascribed designations and definitions of perpetrators and victims, these feminists were less certain about the appropriateness of the names which they had given to the other Zagreb cluster. The only other instance of such questioning of one’s positionings from the 1990s was the declaration of some Belgrade antinationalist feminists to no longer approve of their earlier insistence on Serb responsibility. They admitted it quite reluctantly and said that they did not openly speak about it. In their view, to do otherwise meant risking being considered nationalists by the other antinationalist feminists. The Belgrade feminists were in general reserved about the war-related differentiation among them. ‘Nationalist’ and antinationalist feminists alike used (highly) implicit language and refrained from mentioning other Belgrade feminists by name. This phenomenon was absent from the interviews with Zagreb feminists. Consistent with the significantly larger public records of their split, they were usually explicit about which feminists they rebuked. Also, no consensus existed among the Belgrade antinationalist feminists, as it did among their Zagreb counterparts, on which feminists had expressed ‘nationalist’ positionings in the 1990s.

With the exception of the Zagreb antinationalist feminists, there was a widely present misrecognition of self-interest. That was especially true for the majority of Zagreb 'nationalist' feminists. The latter fervently accused the former of never pursuing an authentic (antinationalist) feminist agenda and, instead of working on improving the position of women, of only being concerned with obtaining personal gains. Quite similar, albeit less harsh, was the criticism which the Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists addressed at the other Belgrade cluster. Thus, whereas the Belgrade and Zagreb antinationalist feminists rebuked only the war-related positionings of the respective 'nationalist' feminists, the 'nationalist' clusters usually conveyed a double delegitimisation. They disapproved not only of the war-related politics of the respective antinationalist feminists, but also of their work strategies which were seen as securing individual instead of collective benefits.

To explain those findings one should look at the political contexts of Croatia and Serbia at the time of interviewing, as well as the then position of each activist in the feminist field in her city. Croatia was at that moment much more a post-war society than Serbia: the war violence in Croatia ended in late 1995, as opposed to the spring of 1999 in the case of Serbia. Moreover, Croatia was not involved anymore in such a significant territorial dispute regarding an area over which it had waged war (as Serbia still is regarding Kosovo), and the Croatian president and prime minister have started to publicly and overtly acknowledge, condemn, and apologise for the Croat war crimes. To a smaller extent, the Serbian president has also embarked on a reconciliation mission. His recognition of the Serb war crimes was, however, articulated implicitly, through statements on the existence of victims and perpetrators on all sides. In addition, Serbia was burdened by the political murder of its prime minister in 2003 – a politician who was seen by many feminists as Serbia's only hope for breaking away from the 1990s.

So, even the Belgrade antinationalist feminists whose symbolic feminist capital was firmly established could not openly talk about the Serb victimisation by the (post-)Yugoslav wars. Serbia's war legacy remained silencing the expression of dissidence within that cluster and imposed the use of covert formulations among all Belgrade feminists. For the Zagreb antinationalist feminists it was safe to attend to the power struggles from the 1990s, also because their positionings had implicitly received some legitimacy from the Croatian state. Besides this, their NGOs had remained much longer supported by Western donors than the NGOs of the 'nationalist' feminists. The recognition which the latter feminists had received from the Croatian state and mainstream media during the war years has become in the meantime largely irrelevant. Consequently, they and their NGOs have, unlike those from the other cluster, largely disappeared from the Zagreb feminist field. Being brought back to it and the 1990s by virtue of my (Western) research, they attempted to restore their previous symbolic

capital by reverting to the same vocabulary and positionings which had given them that legitimacy earlier.

The Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists – whose war-related positionings had obtained less legitimacy in the feminist fields in Belgrade and abroad – used, too, the interview setting to correct that power disparity. They were much more inclined than the Belgrade antinationalist feminists to compare the two clusters for the purpose of delegitimising the latter's (war-related) feminism. At the same time, given that the Belgrade 'nationalist' feminists have received legitimacy in their professions, as well as in the Belgrade feminist field but on non-war-related issues, they rebuked the other cluster much less than their Zagreb counterparts. The lesser intensity of their criticism was also due to the fact that, contrary to the situation in Croatia, their war-related positionings resembled those of the Serbian state, i.e. were indirectly given some legitimacy by it.

Had the interviews been held in 2016, at least some narratives would have been much different. This is a particularly plausible assumption regarding the Zagreb feminists, given that in the period between the data collection and the preparation of this book, Croatia has made a retrograde turn. The present-day positionings of its authorities entail accentuation of the Croat victims, kudos to the Croat military and political leaders from the 1990s (including those who had committed war crimes), and a minimisation of Croatia's responsibility and the perpetrating deeds of the Croat forces. Even highly ranked figures in the state administration utter harsh criticism and threats towards everybody who refuses to be silent about Croatia's warmongering politics and war crimes. The situation in Serbia has not regressed that much but has not improved either. The mentioning of the existence of victims and war crimes on all sides in the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia remains the official and allegedly reconciliatory positioning, although it is always followed by extended attention for the Serb victimisation by non-Serbs. There is a continuity in the praise of the (convicted) Serb leaders from the 1990s, as well as in the utterances of rebuke and menace directed at those who insist that Serbia fully assumes its responsibility and acknowledges all victims of its politics. Finally, the authorities still contest Kosovo's existence as a separate state and deny Serbia's share in the NATO bombing and the Kosovo war. In brief, whereas in Serbia the 1990s have remained pretty much as close a reality as they had been in 2009 and 2010, in Croatia they have returned in a big way.

A Call for Attentive and Responsible, even if Slower, Research

In closing, what is the relevance of the presented insights beyond the post-Yugoslav region and the scholarship about it? How can scholars of feminism in conflict and feminism and nationalism benefit from this study? To begin with, this research calls for open-mindedness when encountering

the terms 'nationalism' and 'feminism', given that their precise interpretation is context-dependent. Moreover, even within the same (city) context, these terms can be given divergent meanings. An unprejudiced look at the life trajectories, motivations, and positionings of those who call themselves, or are seen as, nationalist feminists is needed, too. They might not have become first active in a national liberation movement and started to advance a feminist agenda only after having realised the sexism within that movement (e.g., the women in the Palestinian movement; see Berger Gluck, 1997). Impartiality is also essential regarding the relation between feminism and nationalism. Feminists do not necessarily need to express (a strong) criticism of the nationalism of their ethnic and/or state leaders in order to undertake activities which benefit some, if not many, women (cf. Kim, 2009 on the South Korean women's movement).

It is further important to keep in mind that the analyses – even the academic ones – which are engaged with laden topics, such as nationalism and (war) conflict, could contain biases and, therefore, should be always examined critically. The contributions can consist of imprecise, incorrect, and partial information, silent places, and lack of attention for the power disparities between the studied actors. The critical examination becomes particularly urgent regarding the works written at the time when the conflict in question was ongoing: The analyses might be based on limited and biased information, and are certainly written without the time distance which is needed to present a more comprehensive and objective portrayal of the situation. Such biases can also manifest as (implicit) support to some actors and their positionings. Instead of simply favouring one side or another, scholars should attend to the potential pitfalls of all analysed positionings. More precisely, when there is unequal responsibility and power, the equidistant positionings can conceal those differences between the warring sides and, thereby, support the more powerful and responsible party. At the same time, the positionings which underline the greater responsibility and power of one party might mask the fact that the other parties are not devoid of power and responsibility, and have probably committed (sexual) war crimes, too. There is a pressing challenge to neither gloss over anybody's responsibility nor anybody's victimhood.

Finally, those who explore people's interactions with nationalism and (war) conflicts – especially if the data collection is done by means of interviews and observations – are very likely to extensively witness and maybe even unintentionally provoke their research subjects' anger, fear, grief, and other heavy emotions. One can be also exposed to the long-term consequences of the violent societal changes, as manifested e.g., in the difficulties to re-establish communication and mend the broken bonds. Responsible research conduct is demanded, not in the least because, as Giddens (1995) notes, the studied people are increasingly likely to come across the findings. Scholars need to carefully perform the data collection and analysis, double-check the information, build ethical relationships

with the research subjects, and try to provide an as comprehensive and objective account as possible. I advocate, therefore, Slow Science – a novel, albeit still marginal, trend in academia (Alleva, 2006; Stengers, 2011). The proponents of Slow Science challenge the growing demand to accelerate the research process and creation of output by, inter alia, accentuating the importance of having sufficient resources for such analyses and interactions. The research upon which this book is based was conducted in that spirit.

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