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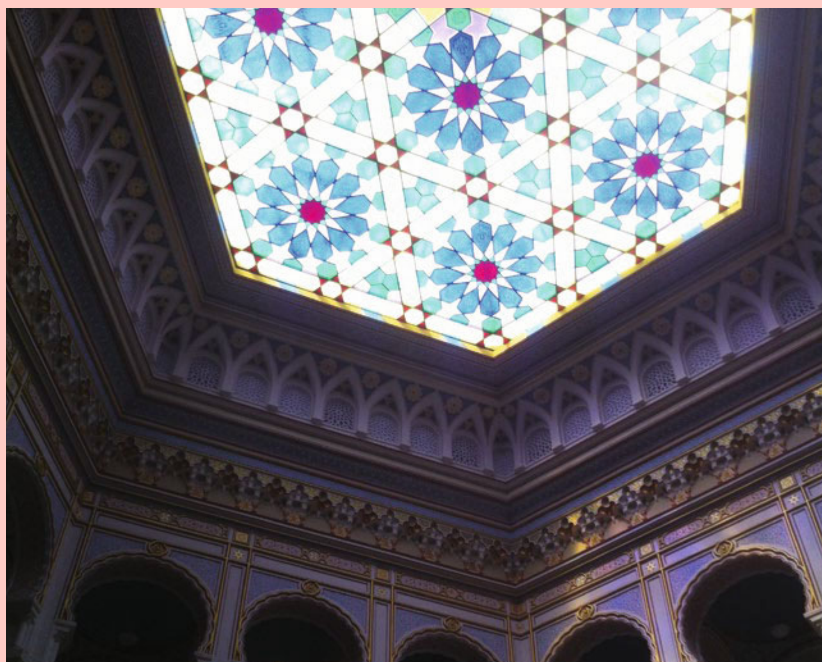
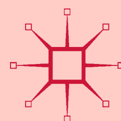
Gender and Citizenship

Promises of Peace in Post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina



Maria-Adriana Deiana



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Gender and Citizenship

Promises of Peace in Post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina

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CHAPTER 1

Revisiting Dayton: Unfinished (Feminist) International Relations

In February 2014, citizens' protests were being held in the streets of Sarajevo and other cities in Bosnia, such as Tuzla, Mostar, and Zenica. Together with other episodes of popular upheaval in 2012 and 2013, the protests had seen unprecedented popular mobilization since the end of the war. The mobilization involved the organization of citizens' assemblies, plenums, as instruments of radical democracy. Another event coincided with the protests in Sarajevo. Under the auspices of the Woman's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), women activists from Syria travelled to Sarajevo as prospects about a second round of UN-led peace talks with the Assad government emerged. WILPF was keen to lobby the UN for the inclusion of women's groups in the negotiation process and to bring activists together to strategize (Rees 2015; Enloe 2017). In Sarajevo, the Syrian women met fellow Bosnian and international activists who shared their experiences of outliving conflict and tirelessly demanding to be acknowledged as co-architects in their respective peace processes and peace negotiations. Reporting from these series of encounters, Cynthia Cockburn points out how similar concerns animated the Bosnian women activists and protesters in their common dissatisfaction with two decades of so-called *peace* (Cockburn 2014). They shared anger and frustration at how the peace process had worked to entrench the power of ethno-nationalist elites through a highly complex system of multi-level governance and group rights provisions that marked ethnicity as the all-encompassing dimensions of post-conflict

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and post-agreement politics, at the expense of addressing living conditions and social justice. A sign held by young protesters stating “Glasni smo na tri jesika” “We are hungry in three languages” perfectly encompasses the distrust and discontent of Bosnian citizens. While successful in ending the war, the internationally brokered consociational agreement has impoverished local citizens, both politically and materially, creating a highly complex bureaucratic system removed from everyday needs in the name of protecting ethnic groups rights.

Contrary to mainstream narratives that view the Dayton model as a success story of conflict resolution which could be replicated in other conflict scenarios, this book shares the concerns expressed by local Bosnians and long-time observers on the darker implications of Dayton’s promises of peace. Critical interventions have long spotlighted the pitfalls of international intervention in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Paris 2004; Chandler 2006a; Hozic 2014) foregrounding ambivalent implications for post-war/post-agreement politics (Chandler 2006a; Hozic 2014) in relation to a wide range of aspects, such as democracy, inclusion and local participation (Chandler 2000; Mujkić 2007; Belloni 2008; Kappler 2013; Donais 2017), gender and women’s empowerment (Lithander 2000; Chinkin and Paradine 2001; Pupavac 2005, 2010; True 2016; O’Reilly 2016), transitional justice (Baker and Obradovic-Wochnik 2016; Lai 2016; O’Reilly 2016), reconciliation (Helms 2010; Kostovicova 2013), everyday life and citizenship (Mansfield 2003; Guzina 2007; Sarajlić 2010; Hromadžić 2015; Jansen 2015). Emerged in the midst of post-Cold War euphoria as dominant narrative for the resolution of conflict through the global promotion of liberal democracy, international statebuilding and peacebuilding has evolved to encompass complex and multi-layered top-down interventions targeting institutions, electoral systems and governance, market liberalization and internationally assisted post-conflict reconstruction, as well as encouraging participation through bottom-up approaches (Paris 2004; Jeong 2005; Chandler 2006b; Richmond and Mac Ginty 2015). Following this framework, over two decades of international intervention in post-conflict Bosnia have involved extensive scale of resources, energies and expertise in the deployment of such measures, sparking reflections over the efficacy of the liberal peace project in making a difference (Donais 2017). Andrew Gilbert and Jasmin Mujanović caution against well-trodden narratives of international self-congratulation that posit Dayton as a success story. While the agreement is undeniably associated with the

end of the war and achievement of a form of negative peace, for most people in BiH it has also "ushered in a political-economic order of inequality and dispossession, not only of the means of dignified livelihood, but of a future and the agentive capacities to shape that future" (Gilbert and Mujanović 2016). A deeper critical intervention on Dayton's afterlives calls into question not only international responsibility in creating and exacerbating the very problems post-conflict solutions had sought to address, but also the reverberations of these failures into citizens' lived experiences.

In this book, I develop a critical engagement with Dayton's aftereffects through feminist lenses by foregrounding women's experiences in navigating the pernicious interaction between the unintended consequences of Dayton's consociational regime and the gendered exclusions reproduced in various stages of the peace process. Since the signing of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000 (UNSCR1325), the articulation of gender concerns in the context of international peacebuilding and peacemaking has been framed in relation to the development of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS). Comprised of UNSCR1325 and its sister resolutions, the agenda marks international commitment to mainstreaming gender in all aspects of security, conflict management and peacebuilding.[1] The agenda acknowledges the necessity to employ gender-sensitive approaches and expresses a commitment to the inclusion of women as key agents in the context of peace-making and peacebuilding. Welcomed as a landmark moment for women's and peace activism, the institutionalization of the agenda into the architecture of international peace-making has become the focus of intense critical scrutiny (for an overview, see: Cohn et al. 2004; Shepherd 2008; Otto 2009; Puechguirbal 2010; Pratt and Richter-Devroe 2011; Cook 2016; Kirby and Shepherd 2016a). Since its emergence, extensive research has highlighted a number of policy failures and tensions, ranging from implementation and national ownership, to international peacekeeping, security and conflict management practices, which continue to undercut WPS' more ambitious and transformative claims in the present (Coomaraswamy 2015; Kirby and Shepherd 2016b). Crucially, despite the diffusion of this international framework, a reluctance to see women as co-architects of peace is still at play.[2] Furthermore, and as the context of Bosnia indicates, gendered exclusions, stereotypes and insecurities in *post-conflict* scenarios have proved to be resilient, as these are reproduced or emerge anew at different stages of a peace process in spite of

institutional commitment to implement WPS (Deiana 2015; George and Shepherd 2016). A number of scholars suggest critically examining WPS applicability to widely different conflict and post-conflict scenarios and in relation to its relevance to women's activism and everyday life in these contexts (Swaine 2004; Farr 2011; McLeod 2011; Hoewer 2013; Basini and Ryan 2016).

This book foregrounds Bosnia-Herzegovina as a specific site of tension between the commitment for transformation and inclusions set out in WPS and the post-conflict consociational settlement. It argues that by entrenching ethnonationalism as the dominant political discourse, consociational formulas work to sideline gender dynamics of conflict and conflict transformation. A central argument of this book is that Bosnia's dysfunctional and ambivalent peace matters not only in its ethnicized consequences, but also because of its attendant gendered exclusions, implicitly enabled by the Agreement's consociational provisions and its afterlives. At the same time, I suggest that focusing on the consociational formula alone is not sufficient to capture the historical, political, societal and personal dynamics shaping women's experiences "post-Dayton". The book thus wishes to make a contribution to existing debates on the uneasy relationship between the principles of WPS and consociationalism by following a less explored trajectory that allows to capture a broader set of processes beyond the power-sharing provisions. Drawing on feminist theoretical reformulations of citizenship, this study develops a critical framework to examine the interaction between the unintended consequences and failed promises of the peace agreement and women's lived experiences in the context of so-called peace. The notion of citizenship employed in this book places an emphasis on multiple and overlapping senses of belonging, on questions of attachment (Roseneil 2013) and on women's political action in a variety of locales. Hence, it attends to the "bottom-up", agentic nature of women's citizenship (Lister 2007; Roseneil et al. 2012) and grapples with possibilities for collective action and transversal politics (Yuval-Davis). In doing so, this book deploys a multidimensional approach that spotlights women as key protagonists as they negotiate their positioning vis-à-vis (post)conflict legacies and make sense of Dayton's incomplete peace.

Foregrounding women's experiences, I wish to build on and develop existing critical literature on the replication of ethnicized and gendered exclusions in power-sharing institutions (Byrne and McCulloch 2012; Bell 2015; Kennedy et al. 2016). This intervention is also an effort to continue relate our thinking on the WPS agenda to *the messiness* of

women's experiences, stories and visions in post-conflict scenarios. I contend research on WPS implementation, and its flaws are vital to hold international institutions accountable (e.g. Tryggestad 2009; Coomaraswamy 2015; Tomić 2015; George and Shepherd 2016). However, studying bottom-up from women's experiences of conflict and international intervention remains crucial to explore nuances, ambivalences and stories that might be overlooked when we focus on institutions, action plans and indicators (Swaine 2009; Guerrina and Wright 2016).

In this introductory chapter, I begin by highlighting the complex gendered dynamics refracted through Bosnia-Herzegovina's post-conflict context. In so doing, I draw upon feminist work that reveals the *post-conflict* moment as an ambivalent site of analysis shaped by contradictory dynamics maneuvering for political transformation, as well as for the re-constitutions of gendered hierarchies, insecurities and male networks of power (Cockburn and Žarkov 2002; Enloe 2002; Handrahan 2004). I then situate this project in relation to the emerging feminist scholarship on the interaction between gender and consociationalism. I outline feminist theoretical discussions on the notion of citizenship as a productive entryway to examine intertwined processes shaping women's experiences in the post-conflict and post-Dayton moment. In the final section, I discuss the methodology underpinning this project. This entails a commitment to take women's experiences of conflict and post-conflict transformation seriously (Enloe 2013, 2014; Wibben 2016). I employ narrative methods to foreground the experiences, sensations and perspectives of the women who contributed to this project.

Gendered Continuities and Ruptures in the Post-conflict Moment

Feminist scholarship complicates any linear and straightforward assumptions of post-conflict as the moment where combatants have stopped the fighting and the violence is allegedly over (Cockburn and Žarkov 2002; Cockburn 2010; McLeod 2015a). Rather, as feminist analyses illustrate, I employ the post-conflict moniker to encompass an ambivalent moment shaped by the continuation of violence, militarization, forms of insecurity and exclusions that persist or emerge anew even when peace settlements have been achieved and implemented (Cockburn and Žarkov 2002; Enloe 2002; Handrahan 2004). These include gendered insecurities, increase in domestic violence, human trafficking, poverty and

prostitution. Post-conflict processes often construe women as passive subjects, as either victims, refugees or accord women conditional agency subordinated to the collective. Yet, as moments of social and political upheaval, I also view (post)conflict situations as opportunities that offer spaces for women's agency through activism, peace initiatives, work with international institutions and NGOs, etc.

Such complex gendered dynamics are salient in the context of post-conflict/post-agreement Bosnia-Herzegovina. Feminist scholars and activists alike have drawn attention to the centrality of gender in the interlinked phenomena of nationalism and militarism that led to the outbreak of conflict and to women's complex positioning in the war and its aftermath (Cockburn and Žarkov 2002; Helms 2003a). The gendered impact of the war featured heavily in media reports and humanitarian campaigns internationally particularly as the stories of sexualized wartime violence began to emerge prompting calls for international intervention with contested and problematic Orientalist undertones (Hansen 2013). Women as key targets and victims of the Bosnian War are the dominant images and stories that come to mind in relation to the media reports of the time (Helms 2013, 25), as well as in some of the literature (Faber and Stiglmayer 1994). The gendered politics of representation in the Bosnian War reflected and propelled important debates in the field of feminist IR particularly in relation to the importance of capturing women's manifold positioning and roles in the politics of war. These ranged from political organizing in support and against the nationalist movements to various forms of activism in response to wartime emergency and large-scale destruction, as well as in peacebuilding efforts. One thread of feminist research focuses on transitional justice processes and continues to unearth the unresolved implications of wartime sexualized and gendered violence (Skjelsbaek 2006; Simic 2011; O'Reilly 2016). Researchers, however, also caution over an exclusive focus on conflict-related sexual violence, producing more nuanced and complex approaches to gendered agency and violence in the continuum of war/peace (Cockburn 2013; Helms 2013; Mlinarević et al. 2015; O'Reilly 2016). The debate on the gendered experiences in the Bosnian War also brought to light crucial tensions among Yugoslav feminists (Helms 2003a, 74–79) and the complicity of certain Western feminist approach in silencing and obscuring women's and feminist experiences from the region (Kesić 1994; Korac 1998; Žarkov 2007). After being the subject of much political, media and academic interest in the late 1990s, Bosnia-Herzegovina has

gradually become a less visible site of international politics. International attention to Bosnia resurfaces on the occasion of notable anniversaries or when Dayton is proposed as a success story that could be replicated in other contexts, such as Ukraine and Syria. Events with international resonance such as the 2014 Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict[3] and to a lesser extent the series of meetings involving Syrian women activists (Cockburn 2014; Rees 2015; Enloe 2017) temporarily bring post-Dayton Bosnia back to political attention as a reminder of the complexities and persisting challenges in addressing gender dynamics in the context of armed conflict, peace and security.

This book insists that, two decades after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA), Bosnia's unfulfilled peace matters for feminist engagements with peace and security, as well as international relations at large. Despite the complex gender dynamics highlighted in the emergence of violent nationalism and the successive years of conflict, the peace negotiations failed to include gender as key dimension for addressing the legacy of the Bosnian War and building sustainable peace (Lithander 2000). This is far from surprising given that, from the onset of negotiations, the Dayton peace process was a politico-military process with a key aim of putting an end to the war by focusing only on the leaders of the nationalist parties involved. As mentioned, the agreement was successful insofar as it stopped the violence and offered a settlement for the warring parties. From a gender perspective, however, even though the agreement included an impressive annex of human rights mechanisms, the DPA failed to specifically include references to women's human rights and address the varied impact of conflict on men and women. It did not envision specific measures to tackle the gender dynamics embedded in the transition from war to peace (Lithander 2000). Finally, there were no specific measures provided in the agreement itself to ensure women's participation in the peace process (Chinkin and Paradine 2001). The implementation stages saw a shift towards the involvement of civil society, and women's groups became among the key targets of international donors and bottom-up programmes of peacebuilding. Such interventions had mixed outcomes for addressing gendered exclusions reproduced during the peace process, as the analytical chapters will also illustrate (Walsh 2000; Helms 2003b; Fagan 2005; Pupavac 2005).

Since the signing of the Agreement, a number of institutional developments have contributed to strengthen women's human rights and gender concerns in the institutional sphere. These include the creation

of a multi-level institutional gender mechanism, the adoption of the Law on Gender Equality by the BiH parliament (2003) and the development of a national Gender Action Plan (2006). In 2010, Bosnia-Herzegovina was one of the first post-conflict countries to develop a National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSCR1325 and its sister resolutions (Tomić 2015). The plan comprised of an ambitious set of key objectives, including increasing women's participation in decision-making, reforming the security sector and peacekeeping operations through gender-sensitive measures, protecting the human rights of women and girls, interestingly grouped under demining, human trafficking and addressing the needs of women and girls civilian victims of war, and training of civil servants for the full implementation of UNSCR1325.[4]

The adoption of a National Action Plan for 1325 and the initial phase of implementation have been effective insofar as providing an opportunity for cooperation among state officials and civil society groups, as well as raising awareness around UNSCR1325 as a strategic tool. The second BIH Action Plan for UNSCR1325 (2014–2017) has seen an improved implementation and monitoring mechanism.[5] However, despite such an impressive mechanism for gender equality and two consecutive WPS Action Plans, commitment has been rhetorical at best and success in the implementation minimal, particularly in relation to the most controversial gendered legacies of conflict, such as addressing the legacy of wartime rape, and around the inclusions of women as co-architects of the peace processes which remains male dominated and entirely focused on ethno-national contentions. While difficulties in the implementation of WPS have been experienced globally, I suggest that these challenges are wound up with the unintended consequences of Dayton's consociational formula. A concern in this book is thus foregrounding post-Dayton BiH as a site of tension between the principles of inclusion and transformation set out in UNSCR1325 and the deployment of consociationalism as one of the most popular international approaches to conflict resolution.

A Feminist Critique of Consociationalism and Beyond: Complicating Dayton

The DPA established a post-conflict political settlement and new institutions for the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The underlying principle of the agreement relies on consociationalism, the empirical model of government associated with the work of Arendt Lijphart and other scholars,

which identifies techniques to deal with ethnic conflict and severely divided societies by giving primacy to collectivities rather than individual citizens (Lijphart 1977). Based on a consociational settlement with power-sharing provisions for the three main ethnic groups, the DPA is similar to ongoing or attempted settlements in deeply divided societies such as Northern Ireland, Cyprus and Lebanon (Bieber 2006). The Bosnian settlement establishes a single multiethnic state with a second tier of local government, represented by the creation of two entities, the Bosniak Croat Federation (FBiH) and the Bosnian Serb Republika Srpska (RS) and the Brkčo district. The accord includes a highly elaborate structure of eleven annexes aiming to deal with the wide array of post-conflict reconstruction tasks, including human rights protection, the rights of refugees and displaced persons, and civilian implementation. Within this structure, a Constitution, drafted as Annex 4 of the DPA, defines the Serbs, the Croats and the Bosniaks as the constituent peoples of the multiethnic state of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Designed as a provisional document, Annex 4 has de facto functioned as the official Constitution, and while, arguably, the document and its attendant political settlement have been instrumental in avoiding a return to large scale violence, its aftereffects can be only described as perverse (Gordy 2015). Critical analyses of the consociational nature of Dayton have highlighted tensions intrinsic to a constitutional set up which on the one hand promotes the logic of human rights, while on the other hand adopts a framework which elevates the collective rights of ethnic groups above individual rights (Mansfield 2003; Guzina 2007). In Asim Mujkić's view, the constitution institutionalizes a new type of "ethnic democracy" (Mujkić 2007, 130) that has cemented the rights of ethnic oligarchies rather than constituting a democracy of citizens (113). In the long run, the settlement has reinforced the power of the nationalist elites and preserved ethno-national discourses within the broader political context of BiH. As Eric Gordy writes on the occasion of Dayton's twentieth anniversary:

> No deep analysis is required to see that the Annex 4 Constitution envisions a country within which: 1) political representation is conceived as the representation of three ethnonational groups, with the ascription of membership of all citizens in one of them functioning as foundational background assumption of the entire political structure, 2) there exists no paths to political representation outside of the framework of these three

> ethnonational groups, 3) political representatives themselves are constructed in advance as representing ethnonational interests and no other interests, 4) citizens who are not Bosniac, Croat or Serb, or whose identities encompass more than of these categories, are effectively excluded from political life. (Gordy 2015, 614)

In 2009, the EU Courts of Human Rights ruled in favour of Dervo Sejdić and Jacop Finci, two citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina who were prevented from being candidates for the Presidency and the House of Peoples of the Parliamentary Assembly on grounds of their ethnic origins (respectively of Roma and Jewish origin). The court deemed the constitutional law was in breach of the European Human Rights Convention and recommended changes in the constitutional provisions. Since then, the issue of constitutional reform has been included with the list of requirements to be met for the EU accession process. Yet, in its application to the post-Dayton contradictory political and institutional context, the reform and conditionality approach has led to a kafkaesque scenario whereby the parties that should negotiate and drive reforms are indeed the very political elites benefiting from the Dayton status quo. After continued impasse, the issue of constitutional reform has regressed in the background and remained unresolved at the time of writing.

The perversity of Dayton's aftereffects, however, does not stop at the institutional level. Rather, Dayton's exclusionary enactments spill over to the broader political, social, and cultural context (Sarajlić 2010). As mentioned, citizens' identity and participation remain largely circumscribed by ethnic allegiances, a result of wartime population shifts reflected in BiH's two entities, the Bosniak and Croat Federation and RS. Ethnicity is continuously mobilized in many aspects of political and social life such as housing segregation and voting, as well as culture, written and spoken language and education. Further to this, the post-Dayton *straightjacket* has worked to preserve ethno-national discourses within the politics of BiH. It reinforces a highly divisive political life. Dominant nationalist parties continue to mobilize the legacy of conflict and the negative constructions of "the Ethnic Other" to ensure support for nationalist politics. Essentially Dayton's consociational formula has enabled a perverse equilibrium whereby the nationalist parties/entrepreneurs capitalize on the their access to power and state resources through systems of patronage and corruption, while constantly engaging in low intensity conflict that mobilizes long-standing disputes to allegedly threaten the stability of peace (Mujkić 2015).

A central argument of this book is that the exclusionary enactments enabled by the Dayton citizenship regime and its aftereffects must be further problematized by taking gender as an analytical category. Important feminist interventions have foregrounded concerns over consociationalism's darker outcomes for women (Nakaya 2003; Kittilson and Schwindt-Bayer 2010; Byrne and McCulloch 2012; Hayes and McAllister 2013; Brown and Aoláin 2014; Bell 2015). These indicate that with the legitimization of conservative ethnonationalist discourses, consociational peace settlements often also implicitly reproduce elements of patriarchal values. By institutionalizing the very ethnic foundations that international peace agreements seek to overcome, consociational settlements essentially work to restrict the political space for introducing other identities, interests and agendas, gender being one. Given the extensive deployment and persistence of these institutional arrangements in many post-conflict contexts, developing a more systematic analysis of these outcomes is a matter of political urgency (Bell 2015).

In a similar vein to these studies, I argue that by entrenching ethnonationalism as dominant political discourse, consociational agreements inevitably work to sideline gender dynamics of conflict and conflict transformation, hence producing peace settlements that are not only explicitly ethnicised but also implicitly gendered. The interaction between gender and consociationalism thus stands in tension with the aspiration for transformation of gendered exclusions and the acknowledgment of women as key protagonist in the post-conflict structures. By foregrounding women's experiences at the intersection of conflict, nationalism and consociationalism as emerged in post-Dayton Bosnia, this book makes a contribution to the evolving feminist critique of consociationalism as popular approach to conflict resolution, and to ongoing critical reflections on WPS' applicability to diverse post-conflict scenarios and its interaction with complex processes enabled by international conflict resolution.

While existing feminist analyses of consociationalism often revolve around the issue of women's political representation focusing on the institutional level, I suggest that the gendered ramifications are further reaching as they infiltrate the social and discursive fabric of the post-war/post-Dayton order, as well as restricting the parameters of belonging. In order to capture the complexity of these dynamics, I move away from offering an analysis of UNSCR1325 implementation or focusing on the political structures. Rather, I argue that feminist reformulations of

citizenship can provide an alternative entryway to explore how women and feminists navigate the entrenchment of ethnic citizenship and its attendant patriarchal gender order. I deploy the notion of citizenship in its broadest sense, encompassing not only rights and obligations, but also questions of belonging, identity, activism and culture, to capture the complex ramifications of the agreement's aftereffects into everyday practices. Through this perspective, the book considers citizenship's vertical dimension, that is, how the protagonists position themselves in relation to institutionalized practices shaping citizenship post-Dayton, as well as its horizontal dimension, how they relate to other citizens within and across borders. In doing so, it offers a thick sociological description that links the personal to the collective, exploring the making and unmaking of collective bonds and exclusions.

At the same time, this book relies on a contextual and historically situated framework to capture the complexity of processes underpinning citizenship post-Dayton. In doing so, it takes into account multiple legacies and intersecting forces determining dominant citizenship practices, as well as opportunities for contestation and aspirations for citizenship otherwise. As this book will demonstrate, the intersection between conflict, nationalism and consociationalism is but one process at play post-Dayton. The broader effects and failed promises of (post)socialism and liberal peacebuilding are also crucial dynamics and contentions at stake. post-Dayton, thus, is best understood as a designation of the unresolved legacy of conflict, the aftereffects of international statebuilding and peacebuilding strategies, as well as long-lasting post-socialist contestations, of, on one hand, efforts to make political ideologies like socialism absolute relics of history, and on the other, attempts to hold onto the legacy of socialism as alternative site of belonging (Choi and Deiana 2017).

Bringing to the fore these complexities, not simply as *post-conflict*, but also *post-socialist* and *post-international intervention*, this book thus builds on and develop feminist and other critical scholarship that complicates the paradigm of ethnicity and nationalism, as exclusive framework of analysis for ongoing transformations, adaptations and contestations in the post-Yugoslav region (e.g. Horvat and Stiks 2012; Helms 2013; Baker 2015; Bonfiglioli et al. 2015; Baker 2016). Drawing on feminist theoretical reformulations, the next section looks at the ways in which utilizing citizenship, both as analytical and aspirational tool, can illuminate the complexities shaping women's identities, status and agency in post-Dayton Bosnia.

Provoking Citizenship Through Feminist Interventions

Citizenship is a contested concept at the centre of much political debate. Competing forces questioning the ideal of universal citizenship and its confinement to the nation state include the growing relevance of diversity and difference and the strengthening of (new?) nationalisms and racism; the intensification of migration, mobility and displacement mirrored by the increasing securitization of borders; capital and finance deregulation, growing inequalities and transnational social movements (Roseneil 2013; Siim and Squires 2014). From a feminist perspective, citizenship has always been fraught with tensions between its alluring inclusive promises and its exclusionary enactments. Yet, precisely because of its ambivalent and seductive paradoxes, citizenship remains an important site of contestation and reflection for feminist critical engagements and politics. As Sasha Roseneil writes, operating both as an analytical and aspirational tool, citizenship has been mobilized by feminist scholars "to articulate and theorize demands for social, political and economic and cultural change, and to critique the practices and experiences of marginalization, misrecognition and oppression that continue to condition lives, even as feminist citizenship claims are being partly realized" (Roseneil 2013, 1). Drawing on this feminist ethos, I engage with a critical notion of citizenship, constantly shaped and kept alive by a tension between what it promises to be, the attachments, rights and sense of belonging it might sustain, and what it occludes, marginalizes and excludes. Understanding citizenship as lived experience and a practice, I am interested in exploring the meaning citizenship assumes for the Bosnian women who contributed to this project. If the so-called peace has reduced citizenship to an essentialist focus on ethnic belonging, and implicitly reproduced elements of the gendered order embedded in the nationalism that led to the war, how do the women featured in this book negotiate their positioning *vis-a-vis* dominant understandings? How (can?) they negotiate, enact and re-imagine citizenship beyond institutionalized practices and discourses?

In a way, the book's turn to explore citizenship *post-Dayton* is a provocation because being a citizen in Bosnia is contested, restrictive and elusive for those who do not benefit from the myth of Dayton's clear-cut tripartite ethnic matrix (and to what extent anyone does apart from the elites whose career and privilege rest precisely on Dayton's

dysfunctional regime is questionable). Yet, as we know, citizenship has also very tangible *everyday* implications. In Bosnia these are complicated by the pitfalls of consociational politics, as it intersects with the political and economic legacy of conflict and with Bosnia's ideological and material consignment to Europe's and the international's semi-periphery. For example, until 2010 for BiH passport holders it meant needing a VISA to enter the EU. For children born in 2013, when a dispute over cantonal borders and ethnic bickering prevented the issuing of I.D. numbers, it meant a lack of medical cards and passports with tragic consequences for three-month-old Berina Hamidović, unable to receive life-saving treatment (Dedovic 2013). For women, besides the institutional gendered shortcomings outlined earlier, citizenship means lingering gendered stereotypes that relegate women to role of victims and mothers of the respective ethno-nationalist groups. For survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, it has meant a long, unfinished battle for justice, reparation and social rights, with a mere pension of 550 BAM/approximately 300 euro in the Federation and 205 BAM/approximately 100 euro in the RS. While the list of pitfalls could go on, a key aim of this book is also to foreground the bottom-up and agentic nature in women's, feminist and other forms of grassroots activism that, against all odds, strive to re-make citizenship through fragile, yet hopeful, interventions. Provoking citizenship in post-Dayton Bosnia is thus not simply an intellectual exercise but a matter of political significance that can trouble, even momentarily, compromised conditions of existence brought about by the false promises of peace.

Conceptually, this book draws on the rich tradition of feminist theorists who have sought to rethink, expand and reshape the idea of citizenship in order to challenge its exclusionary impasse, reignite its relevance for the transformations feminism envisions and for the challenges posed by the global moment of fractures, conflict and failed promises of the good life (Pateman 1988; Grewal 1999; Yuval-Davis 1999; Young 2000; Lister 2003; Mohanty 2003; Brown 2004; Mouffe 2005; Einhorn 2006; Roseneil et al. 2012). In what follows, I engage with the feminist literature that unravels the centrality of gendered hierarchies animating citizenship in ethonationalist discourses and practices. I then draw on feminist theoretical reformulations of citizenship that places an emphasis on multiple and overlapping senses of belonging (Mouffe 2005; Roseneil et al. 2012) and on women's agency in a variety of locales. The book attends to the "bottom-up" and agentic nature of

women's citizenship (Lister 2007; Roseneil et al. 2012). It also grapples with its horizontal nature, that is, with possibilities for collective action, transversal politics and/or solidarity in difference (Yuval-Davis 1999; Lister 2007).

On Gender, Ethnicity and Nationalism: Women's Conditional Citizenship in the Nation

Feminist interventions share critical appraisals of modern citizenship as contradictory and utopian, because while expressing universalistic aspirations, it exercises exclusionary forces in defining members and outsiders of the national and transnational polity (Kymlicka 1995; Parekh 2001; Bhabha and Comaroff 2002; Brown 2004; Rancière 2004).[6] Questioning and exposing the gendered nature of citizenship can be seen as the starting point of feminist interventions. That is, pointing out that the modern ideal has relied on the exclusion of women from the political sphere and that, despite its universal aspirations, citizenship is flawed because of an implicit male bias. Carole Pateman's now classic liberal critique of universal citizenship, which linked women's exclusion from the political to the gendered division between public and private, represents a remarkable benchmark for feminist rethinking(s) of citizenship (Pateman 1988). This intervention propelled a subversive agenda as legions of scholars and activists began to unearth the gendered underpinnings of national belonging and re-make citizenship by foregrounding women's multiple axes of identity and roles as political (hooks 2000; Mohanty 2003; Yuval-Davis 2006).

Deploying these insights to analyse the phenomenon of nationalism as key determinant of modern citizenship, feminist scholars highlight the centrality of gender to understand how national(ist) citizenship and belonging operate (Yuval-Davis 1997; Kandiyoti 2007; Enloe 2014; Jayawardena 2016). Within ethno-nationalist narratives, such as those that underpinned the Bosnian War and continue to dominate post-conflict and post-agreement politics today, citizenship becomes associated with notions of national essence and powerful constructions of ethnic and national identities. These rely on specific ideas of femininity and masculinity, as well as distinct roles and expectations for women and men that are shaped by patriarchal values.[7] Gender is crucial to the national imagery itself with national symbols constructed through powerful masculine and feminine connotations

that reproduce a hierarchy of roles and agency in the nation. For instance, heroes and patriots tend to be represented by male figures, while the nation itself is often represented as a woman, or as mother, evoking women's significance for the symbolic and embodied reproduction of the nation (Yuval-Davis 1997; Puri 2004). Despite relying on rhetoric and ideas about popular unity and inclusive membership, nations have historically been defined by institutionalized gender inequality. As Anne McClintock points out "no nation in the world grants women and men the same access to the rights and resources of the nation state" (McClintock 1993, 61). Feminist scholars thus identify a major paradox wherein, despite women's symbolic centrality, nationalist discourses rely on the institutionalization of gendered exclusions according to women's conditional agency insofar as they fulfil the symbolic and embodied reproduction of the nation. Cynthia Enloe poignantly suggests "nationalisms have typically sprung from masculinised memory, masculinised humiliation and masculinised hope" (Enloe 2014, 44). Needs and narratives of the nation have been traditionally equated with the aspirations, desires and actions of men, reinforcing a gender hierarchy that obscures women's situated perspectives, roles and experiences.

The conditional nature of women's citizenship is intertwined with their ambivalent stake in nationalist imaginary. Women's centrality to the concept of national identity has resulted in limits to women's rights and resources, control of women's behaviour, demands for participation and/or relegation to the private sphere (Gal and Kligman 2012, 26). Despite encountering resistance and suspicion, women have made demands for an acknowledgement of their rights and roles as full-fledged citizens, often working transversally across differences (Enloe 2014, 88). In their pioneering study on women and the nation state, Anthias and Yuval-Davis identify five major dimensions shaping women's positioning within nationalist discourse (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1989; Yuval-Davis 1997). These are: as biological reproducers of the nation, as central participants in the ideological reproduction of the nation, as signifiers of the boundaries of the nation/ethnic group, as focus and symbols of the construction of national and ethnic identity, and as participants in national, military and political struggles (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1989, 1–15). Each of these dimensions illustrates tensions between gender, ethnicity and nationalism that complicate women's positioning in the nation as genuine and full-fledged citizens.

Cynthia Enloe reminds us that the nation is a powerful idea constructed around the myth of a common past and future and animated by policies that will ensure its cohesiveness and survival along gendered and ethnicized lines (Enloe 2014, 83–124). Women's reproductive power thus assumes political significance for its centrality in the consolidation of the nation and in the construction of collective identities. Policies and discourses on reproduction rarely deal exclusively with the biological process as they are often intertwined with issues such as the sovereignty and legitimacy of the nation, and the morality and purity of its citizens (Gal and Kligman 2012). These are often intermeshed with fears for "the death of the nation", issues of economic and political power, and preoccupations about sexual relations between members of different ethnic or national groups which become more prominent in moments of conflict, economic crisis and political upheaval (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1989; Yuval-Davis 1997, 2–38; Gal and Kligman 2012, 15–36). As this book will illustrate, the emergence of nationalist projects in the former Yugoslavia offers a stark example of these dynamics.

Understanding reproduction as politics reveals ethno-nationalist discourses' contradictory implications for women's citizenship. If on the one hand (some) women might assume a reverential status as mothers of the nations, this logic also implies that women, their bodies and their sexual behaviour must be closely monitored in the service of the nation-building process and its preservation (Puri 2004). In their physical and ideological reproductive power, women also tend to be associated with the role of bearers of the collective identity (Yuval-Davis 1997; Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1989). As mentioned, this connection can be seen in the frequent use of feminine imagery to symbolically represent the nation. As signifiers of the collective identity, women come to represent the essence of the nation, as well as its honour, in ways that affect women's lived experiences of citizenship. On a personal level, women often face pressure to behave in an authentic way that might undermine women's agency and choice (Yuval-Davis 1997, 45).[8] Such symbolism also imbues gender relations. The context of war or ethno-national conflict offers a poignant example when men are called to fight for the sake of the "womenandchildren" (Enloe 1990) and to act as defenders of the nation and women's honour (Enloe 1990; Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1989; Yuval-Davis 1997; Puri 2004).

The relation between the nation and the "proper" male citizen is thus mediated through women, as male citizens are called upon preserving

women's respectability and defining what respectable womanhood means to the national identity (Puri 2004, 129). Men are also expected to behave in a proper and authentic way as defined by nationalist rhetoric and the hierarchies it upholds between men based on class, race and sex. For instance, in many Western countries national identity is defined through the perspective of white heterosexual male citizens. Very often men are seen as representing the nation's vigour and vitality which explains, for example, how international sport events become also a competition between national identities (Puri 2004). In the case of conflict, men are expected to take up the arms and fight for the honour of the nation, and those who do not respect this role are often conceptualized as not manly or femininized.

Given that nationalism is an exclusionary discourse which relies on the "us" versus "them" logic, the construction of women as symbols of the collective identity and honour might serve to emphasize differences between women from other ethnic or national groups. In the gendered and ethnicized language of nationhood, women signify the boundaries of the nation/ethnic group implying that "our" women are different from "their" women (Puri 2004, 117). This connotation works to justify ethnicized and gendered norms regulating women's behaviour. It also explains why, in the case of ethno-national conflict or liberation struggle, women can become targets of violence, which acquires the meaning of an assault to the nation (Puri 2004). As Alison (2007) argues, sexual violence in armed conflict finds its rationale within the logic of "us versus them" and, thus, this practice is not only gendered but also ethnicized.[9] In this context, as Cynthia Enloe writes, rape becomes militarized, as it is imbued with tropes of "enemy", "victory" and "defeat", and draws its rationale from the context of conflict, security and national defence (Enloe 2000, 110–111). Sexualized violence perpetrated in the *exceptional* context of war assumes a very public nature. Survivors thus have to re-negotiate their relationships with family, broader society and commonly accepted norm of respectability, as well as weight their experience to issues of collective memory and national destiny (Enloe 2000, 111). As the analytical chapters will illustrate, these dynamics ring true in the context of post-Dayton Bosnia wherein the construction of women as gatekeepers of collective identities and markers of ethnic and national boundaries escalated into the systematic use of sexualized violence during the war. Post-conflict, survivors thus must negotiate this representation and the public

significance it conveys onto the personal traumatic experience of rape, which is intertwined with collective narratives of victimhood and politicized to sustain ethno-national rhetoric.

The final dimension of women's positioning in nationalism and nation states is in their role as soldiers or participants in national liberation movements. Even though Anthias and Yuval-Davis state that this is the category that requires less explanation (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1989), other scholars contend that women's involvement in political and military ethno-national struggles further complicates the relationship between gender and nationalism (West 1997; Kandiyoti 2007; Alison 2009; Jayawardena 2016). Deniz Kandiyoti reminds us that women's stake in nationalism is more complex than being objects and images at the service of a political discourse constructed by men and for men (Kandiyoti 1996, 312). Evidence from Europe, the Middle East, Central and East Asia and Latin America illustrates that nationalist movements often rely on women's active participation in nation-building processes and liberation struggles in supportive roles, as well as activists and fighters (Moghadam 1994; Radcliffe and Westwood 1996; West 1997; Alison 2009; Jayawardena 1986). Lois West argues that in some contexts women's organizing around nationalist issues opened up spaces for activism around women's rights, creating a social movement which West defines in terms of "feminist nationalism" (West 1997). This has been the case in anti-colonialist struggles and other contexts, such as Ireland, South Africa and Sri Lanka, analysed in Lois's anthology and in other studies which foreground the "thorny" relationship between feminism and nationalism (Moghadam 1994; Jayawardena 1986; Alison 2009).

Producing a complex picture of women's involvement in nationalism, this scholarship challenges essentialist ideas of women as passive subjects and victims and counteracts notion of women as inherently peaceful. Rather than assuming feminism and nationalism as incompatible projects, it illustrates that "the specific relationship between feminism(s) and nationalism(s) is highly variable according to political, social and cultural context and historical period" (Alison 2009, 218). Yet a tension between feminism and nationalism remains, and this becomes particularly visible when demands that challenge the conditional and exclusionary nature of nationalist citizenship are articulated. As Cynthia Enloe writes "women who have called for a more genuine equality between the sexes – in the movement, in the home - have been told that now is not the time, the nation is too fragile, the enemy is too near. Women must be patient, they

must wait until the nationalist goal is achieved, then relations between men and women can be addressed" (Enloe 2014, 129). Not only is the transformation of power relations between men and women often seen as secondary to the construction of the nation, but women might suffer a reversal of rights and spaces of agency they have gained during moments of political upheaval once the new political and national project is established (Moghadam 1994; Kandiyoti 1996).

The concept of feminist nationalism raises critical questions in the case of more radical forms of nationalism which rely on patriarchal norms that compromise women's rights and relegate their position to the private sphere in the name of traditional values. As this study illustrates, in the context of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the former Yugoslavia, feminist groups have historically existed in tension with nationalist discourses, even though the escalation of violence has also compromised women's and feminist collective organizing. The uneasy relationship between women in nationalism is well captured by Deniz Kandiyoti when she states: "Whenever women continue to serve as boundary markers between different national, ethnic and religious collectivities, their emergence as full-fledged citizens will be jeopardised and whatever rights they may have achieved during one stage of the nation-building may be sacrificed on the altar of identity politics during another" (Kandiyoti 1996, 315). The paradox identified by feminist scholars therefore is that, on the one hand, nationalism may open political spaces for women and provide them with the confidence to participate (Enloe 2014). On the other hand, nationalist movements also exert pressure on women in defining feminine appropriate conduct, often relegating gender issues and demands for transformation to the margins of the political.

This tension lies at the heart of nationalist citizenship wherein women are often constructed as passive beings and not viewed as mature political subjects (Einhorn 1993, 253), even though they might participate in the construction of national and ethnic collective identities as mothers, educators, activists and soldiers. This means that despite the fact that nationalist rhetoric negatively affects women's status as equal in terms of citizenship, women are often involved as much as men in divulging and supporting nationalist discourses. At the same time, women are also likely to develop a feminist perspective in response to their unequal position and take a critical stance on nationalist discourses. Feminist research on gender, women and nationalism unearths the complex interconnections between gender and ethnicity in the construction of nationalist

collective identities. It foregrounds power relations and the implications these have for women's (and men's) lived experiences of citizenship. For sure the exclusionary construction of ethnic and national identities is inherently problematic from a gender perspective, feminist scholarship however maintains that women's positioning in nationalism should not be merely understood in terms of passive acceptance. Rather, we should pay attention to women's active roles in nationalist discourses, as well as to opportunities for women's critical perspectives and agency in terms of resisting nationalist exclusions, and thus remaking citizenship for women.

Re-imagining Citizenship as Agentic, Multi-layered and Multidimensional

A foundational intervention in feminist scholarship is to maintain that the public/private divide underpinning citizenship is essentially contested and regulated by gender and other power relations. As argued by Nancy Fraser, we need to take a more critical look at the terms private and public as "these terms after all, are not simply straightforward designations of societal spheres; they are cultural classifications and rhetorical labels. In political discourses, they are powerful terms that are frequently employed to delegitimize some interests, views and topics and to valorize others" (Fraser 1990, 73). Following this argument, Chantal Mouffe proposes "a new way of understanding the nature of the private and the public, as well as a different mode of articulation between them" (Mouffe, quoted in Lister 2000, 44). As this book illustrates, from the emergence of nationalist projects—propelled by the 1989 upheaval—to the entrenchment of ethnonationalist power sanctioned through the Dayton Peace Accord, a progressive repatriarchalization (Zaharijević 2015) of Bosnian society has ensued sustaining and reconstituting the public/private gendered order in the interrelated phenomena of nationalism, militarization, conflict, as well as in the post-conflict moment. At the same time, women's individual and collective agency in the face of such post-socialist and post-war shifts reveals instances of resistance to the reification of the public/private divide, continuously remaking and complicating the meaning and reality of *post-Dayton* citizenship.

The initial challenge on the private/public dichotomy prepared the ground for the development of wider feminist reworkings of citizenship centred precisely around the notion of individual and collective agency. In this vein, Ruth Lister proposes a critical synthesis between the liberal

ideal of citizenship conceived in terms of rights, and the civic-republican notion of citizenship conceived as political participation for the good of the wider society (Lister 2003, 13–42). A dynamic concept of citizenship which signifies both a status and a practice emerges. As Lister writes:

> to act as a citizen requires first a sense of agency, the belief that one can act; acting as a citizen, especially collectively, in turn, fosters that sense of agency. Thus, agency is not simply about the capacity to choose and act but it is also about a conscious capacity, which is important to the individual's self-identity. (Lister 2003, 38)

While citizenship rights enable people to become agents, citizenship as participation represents a claiming of that agency and of the subject position of citizen. As feminist security studies scholars point out, a focus on agency is crucial to foreground women's manifold experiences in war and responses to political violence, acknowledging them as key political agents and co-architects in the construction of peace (Cockburn and Žarkov 2002; Hudson 2009; Cohn 2013). The context of post-Dayton Bosnia is illustrative of the complex gendered effects of citizenship discourses that continue to downplay women's agency, identifying women predominantly as victims of the war and mothers of the nation. As the analytical chapters illustrate, paying attention to women's diverse engagement in the politics of war and in the post-conflict and post-Dayton moment complicates institutionalized gendered practices and discourses, opening opportunities for remaking citizenship for women.

Defining citizenship as practice is vital for feminist theoretical re-formulations as it allows us to recast women, in their complex diversity, as political agents. Agency even in small-scale political action entails a transformative process which is vital to the development of women's citizenship claims and, in doing so, expands citizenship beyond issues of rights and obligations (Lister 2003). Human agency also locates citizenship in a dialectic relation with society, embedded in social and cultural relations (Lister 2003). In this expanded feminist understanding, civil society emerges as a dynamic space wherein citizenship is lived, negotiated and contested from women's multiple positions. This is also the space wherein the horizontal dimension of citizenship as collective action among citizens is forged through social movements, different forms of grassroots activism and participation in civil society organizations (Predelli et al. 2012, 189). In the context of Bosnia's post-socialist

and post-conflict politics, the space of civil society has historically and currently emerged a crucial site in the *post-conflict* moment wherein women's and feminist groups might negotiate alternative visions of citizenship. At the same time, *post-Dayton* this site of collective action is ambivalently shaped by the divisive legacy of war and the personal and collective reckoning with the fractures it has produced, but also by the political economy of *post-conflict* reconstruction and the priorities of internationally led civil society building. Attending to this complexity is crucial to capture openings and hurdles in the development of collective citizenship claims which are inflected through women's diverse and multiple subject positions.

By developing Marshall's theory of citizenship as full membership in a community (Marshall 1950), feminist thinking opens opportunities to connect citizenship to subjective experiences of belonging (Roseneil 2013, 3). Through feminist lenses, thus, citizenship "offers a way of conceiving and creating attachments to the collective" (Roseneil 2013, 5). A broadened feminist model of citizenship as both participation and belonging thus acknowledges that embodied citizens have plural allegiances "encapsulating specific, historically inflected, cultural and social assumptions about similarity and difference" (Yuval-Davis and Werbner 1999, 3) and that "the negotiation of these may generate at different times and places quite different sets of practices, institutional arrangements, modes of social interaction and future orientations" (ibid.). In this sense, citizenship is dialogical and multi-layered as embodied citizens inhabit multiple positionings in, and attachments to, diverse (e.g. local, national, ethnic and transnational) and shifting communities of belonging. In the context of this study, understanding citizenship as an affective process offers a productive entryway to capture the protagonists' personal and collective reckoning with what we might define "histories that hurt" (Berlant 2011), as Lauren Berlant writes in a different context. As this book will illustrate, focusing on belonging and attachment alerts us to the strategies of adjustments the women who contribute to this book deploy in the face of loss, violence and dramatic post-socialist and post-conflict shifts. It reveals how the protagonists of this book inhabit and hold on to shifting, multiple and complex imagined communities, thus forging new modes and relations of belonging, actively or potentially. Re-thinking citizenship as belonging also allows us to account for the enduring legacy of socialism as a system of sociability

and of multi-ethnic *Yugoslavness* as "a cultural and linguistic space of commonality and interdependence" (Bonfiglioli et al. 2015, 44), but also to capture connections between local and transnational feminist communities.

A powerful element in Yuval-Davis's theory of multilayered citizenship is the notion of *transversal politics*. Originally developed by Italian feminists, it envisions the possibility of transcending difference in order to build alliances between women's multiple positionings and in solidarity with other marginalized groups (Yuval-Davis 1999).[10] In a similar vein, Chantal Mouffe proposes a model of radical citizenship which stresses the subject as always contingent and constructed in the interaction of a multiplicity of positionings resulting from the articulation of hegemonic practices (Mouffe 2005, 60–73). Challenging essentialist idea of a universal citizen, Mouffe posits radical democracy as imbued with heterogeneity and multiplicity which are excluded from the concept of the abstract citizen. Citizenship, then, should not define one identity common to all. Rather, it is the "articulating principle" (Mouffe 2005, 84) among the multiplicity of subject positions. In this vein, citizenship is the process that allows for a plurality of allegiances and attachments that are constantly reconfigured and negotiated. In other words, it is through this dialogical process that the potential for the political emerges. The significance of Mouffe's feminist reformulation lies in a definition of citizenship devoid of essentialist categories such as woman (or group), providing a framework for agency which insists upon the plurality and heterogeneity of social relations. Mouffe's radical formulation is politically significant to re-imagine citizenship as it emphasizes "the transformative aspect of politics based on the interaction between social groups that aims to create new identities and a wider sense of solidarity" (Siim 2000, 37). The dialogical reformulation of radical citizenship as encompassing instances of transversal politics offers a productive framework. It envisions possibilities for crafting new solidarities among *women* and other social groups diversely positioned in/across nation states, grassroots movements and transnational networks. It also allows us to examine ways in which such practices are, or might be, incorporated in a variety of political agendas, heterogeneous communities and practices. However, while transversal politics might be a seductive concept for feminist analysis and politics, this process is much more fraught in practice as the following chapters will illustrate.

Taking Women's Narratives Seriously: Research Methodology and Methods

Methodologically and politically the book is situated within feminist security studies, an expanding field of inquiry producing research on interrelated issues of war, peace, security at the intersection of feminist international relations, security studies and feminist approaches to peace and conflict studies (e.g. Enloe 2004; Wibben 2010, 2011; Stern and Wibben 2014; McLeod 2015b). I start from an understanding of feminist methodology as encapsulating distinctive assumptions about the research process, objectives and aims which challenge established beliefs and procedures (Harding 1987; Fonow and Cook 1991; Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002). Feminist research entails deploying a critical stance on established constructs of gender, in intersection with other markers of identity, and the unequal power relations these sustain. The knowledge that I aspire to achieve with this research is shaped by the feminist commitment to a political transformative project. This revolves around foregrounding the centrality of gender and women's lived experiences in the international politics of war and peace. In doing so, I wish to challenge existing gendered paradigms that depoliticize women's perspectives and situated knowledge as irrelevant, or at best marginal, in this global political endeavour. Knowledge here is understood as always situated and political (Haraway 1988).

This project is driven by a feminist curiosity (Enloe 2004) about the transformations in citizenship, peace and security emerging in the post-Dayton juncture that takes women's experiences seriously (Enloe 2013). Enloe reminds us that taking women's seriously means acknowledging that their personal experiences matter as political and in revealing complexity. Similarly, Annick Wibben writes that, albeit this might seem an old-fashioned trajectory that ignores more complex understandings of gender and recent developments in feminist scholarship, focusing on women's experiences is partly a political move that challenges existing mainstream narratives on war and its aftereffects that, whether explicitly or not, continue to focus on man and the state (Wibben 2016, 3). The methodological choices underpinning this book thus respond to political and intellectual concerns about the continued invisibility of women as key agents and protagonists in narratives and practices of war, peace and security. It also reflects ongoing developments in the scholarship on war, driven by feminist *curious* scholars that reveal war (and its aftereffects)

as embodied, affective and located in the everyday (e.g. Žarkov 2007; Parashar 2013; Åhäll and Gregory 2015). In the context of this project, paying attention to women's narratives sheds light on the reverberations of the institutional formulas of conflict resolution and international peacebuilding processes into their lived experiences of citizenship, highlighting complex dynamics at play in shaping belonging, opportunities for agency and collective action. My aim in this book, thus, is to populate accounts of post-Dayton with women's experiences, sensations and perspectives as way to counter the (masculinist) abstractions underpinning dominant narratives of the conflict and its solutions which continue to focus on ethnic animosity.

Following a long-established feminist trajectory of starting from the perspective of women's everyday life (Enloe 2000), I interrogate practices of citizenship post-Dayton, illuminating its gendered exclusions as well as its contestation. I acknowledge the danger of mobilizing "women" as an all-encompassing essentialist category; rather, I understand it as an umbrella term which reflects the structures and the social positioning associated with womanhood constituting women as a group, while also paying attention to (self-identifying) women as complicatedly positioned individuals (Wibben 2016, 3–7). In doing so, I attend to the multiple social, cultural, economic and political forces shaping their relations to the war and post-conflict politics (Cohn 2013, 2) and explore the multi-layered dimensions of their identity (Yuval-Davis 2006). As I show in the following chapters, I pay particular attention to the complex ways in which the legacy of ethno-national conflict and identity politics might exacerbate these differentials.

Research Choices, Encounters and Challenges

Some of the material presented here was collected during ethnographic fieldwork I conducted in Sarajevo in 2010 as part of my doctoral project. This book thus draws extensively on my PhD thesis on the same topic (Deiana 2012), while developing new themes based on multiple research trips and insights I gained through deeper reading of narrative interviews and material I have collected between 2006 and 2016 in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The primary source for this study is in-depth interviews I conducted with women in Bosnia, feminists and LGBTIQ activists, civil society activists, academics, individuals working in cultural production and the media, as well some members of political parties and officials in (local and international) gender machinery institutions. Their

stories, reflections and visions are at the core of this book. Given my interest in the opportunities for crafting alternative spaces of citizenship through feminist and women's activism, other methods included participant observation at cultural events, meetings and conferences organized by activists in Sarajevo, Mostar and Banja Luka. The book also draws on additional interviews, numerous informal conversations, field notes and impressions I have collated since 2006 which complement the narrative analysis. In 2016, I conducted further research and interviews with a view of assessing developments and challenges for the implementation of the WPS agenda.[11] This offered some further insights on various local/international efforts to navigate Dayton's afterlives through gender activism.

The initial thinking behind identifying interviewees was guided by this project's theoretical understanding of citizenship in terms of pluralist and civic-minded action and as a multi-layered process. This notion captures the bottom-up and agentic nature of citizenship practices as shifting across a broad spectrum of spaces. Citizenship thus is multi-layered in two senses. Firstly, it captures the different axes of identity and the multiple senses of belonging which shape individuals' positioning within communities through the making and unmaking of collective bonds, as well as exclusions. Secondly, it encompasses a multiplicity of contexts, discourses and practices within which citizenship claims are articulated. This understanding pointed me towards multiple spaces of women's citizenship as a lived practice enacted in the arena of institutional politics and informal political networks, civil society and grassroots activism, media and sites of cultural production. All the participants who contributed to this project had expressed a broad interest in the relation between gender, women and citizenship either through their professional role (e.g. involvement in gender equality programmes, reporting on gender issues in media outlets and organizing awareness campaigns), through involvement in different forms activism or because of actively contributing in debates/discussions about gender and citizenship in a variety of formal and informal networks. As the following chapters illustrate, however, interviews are imbued with the complexity and diversity of the protagonists' personal vicissitudes and political inclinations. While some research participants openly identify as feminist, I decided against using this identification as a criteria for inviting contributions as this could have unduly narrowed the focus of the project, leaving out interesting contributions. Since I problematize ethno-national narratives as the all-encompassing dimension of citizenship, I decided against utilizing ethno-national affiliation as a criteria in seeking contributions. Doing

so would have reproduced the very logic of prioritizing ethnicity which this study is seeking to critique, as well as run against the multi-layered and dialogical understanding of identity underlying this research. As the following chapters will illustrate, I am not suggesting that ethno-national and other differences can be overcome once and for all. Rather, the multiplicity of women's situated experiences and desires takes centre stage complicating the boundaries of citizenship as ethno-national belonging. I attend to the ways in which these experiences animate claims, demands, discursive and cultural practices enacted by feminists and women activists that figure in this project.

The process of securing interviews has often been difficult, and in the end, it was not possible to involve all the individuals and organizations which I had hoped, particularly women involved in nationalist-oriented parties and organizations. On many occasions, research encounters happened unexpectedly through connections and friendships developed as I navigated my everyday, temporary, life during my longest fieldwork stay in BiH. These dynamics highlight fieldwork and the research encounters as deeply relational and shaped by affinities and differences that are constantly negotiated determining the kind of information I was able to gather. Some contributors, as well as other personal friends, provided invaluable support either by referring me to other possible participants or in facilitating the organization of further interviews. These shared contacts and networks certainly also facilitated the interview process in establishing some degree of trust between myself and interviewees.

My positioning as an international researcher and a foreigner meant that I was associated with, and imbricated in, the contested presence of *the international community*, as well as with huge and often annoying incursions of researchers who, like myself, regularly arrive to Bosnia with diverse agendas. This association resulted in a variety of reactions, ranging from distrust or suspicion of my motives, to exasperation and contempt at yet another interview request, from curiosity to being humourously called a spy, a recurrent nickname for researchers, or mistaken for a journalist. At the same time, my interest in feminism and civic activism located me in proximity to networks of people who are generally critical of the Dayton political landscape and the role of ruling elites. On numerous occasions, I had the impression I was perceived as a peer sharing similar political views, concerns and agendas as my interlocutors spoke openly about controversial or sensitive issues.

Yet, I do not imply that research encounters were egalitarian, nor I wish to eschew the inescapable contradictions underpinning feminist

fieldwork "as an intervention into a system of relationships that the researcher is far freer than the researched to leave" (Stacey 1988). Despite personal affinities and connections that might have developed, encounters were shaped by my own research agenda. While I have discussed elsewhere the affective and ethical implications of navigating fieldwork, reflecting on how these power dynamics emerge in this project is also necessary. Drawing on a variety of feminist approaches to narrative methods, this study places great emphasis on storytelling in two interrelated senses. Firstly, the book revolves around the stories, experiences and sensations shared by the women who contributed to this project. These take centre stage as invaluable situated knowledges of the contributors' lived experiences of citizenship and its alternative visions. Secondly, this book is itself a storytelling exercise shaped by my theoretical, epistemological and political concerns, as well as my interpretation. While I have striven to apply methodological and ethical rigor throughout the project I do not claim to offer a true representation of the contributors' narratives and experiences. While long extracts from these stories are included to underline the different voices that make this book, I ultimately made choices about how to frame the narratives into this book which inevitably offers an incomplete account.

This study relies on the premise that "experience is meaningful to us largely by virtue of the way it is articulated in a narrative, that is, a pattern of identifiable actors and action-units that are qualified through metaphor and other poetic devices and that are related together by within a coherent structure of beginnings and endings" (Stone-Mediatore 2003). A narrative is essentially a story, a "special pattern" (Cortazzi 1993, 1) that we impose on events in order to make sense of the world and our position in it. Annick Wibben writes that "narratives are essential because they are a primary way in which we make sense of the world, produces meanings, articulate intentions and legitimize actions" (Wibben 2010, 2). In this sense, narratives are crucial sites of power that order the world, as well as enact alternative imaginaries and modes of being. In other words, narratives are inherently political.

Drawing upon a sociological perspective, this study deploys narratives as a particularly valuable methodology to make sense of women's lived experiences of citizenship and explore the construction of identity. As Carly West writes "we make sense of ourselves, our relationships and our place in the world through story-telling. Our identities are configured as we interpret and reinterpret experience through this narrative process"

(Guest 2016, 33). As a relational process, personal narratives are thus particularly insightful to explore linkages and ruptures between the personal and the collective, as well as between the intimate and the intersubjective. At the same time, by constructing the teller as actor who has a place in the plot/story, narratives offer rich insight into protagonists' actions, strategies and significant events. From a feminist perspective, focusing on women's narratives offers a window into the multiplicities of settings they inhabit, illuminating how they might recast their subject positions, actions and experiences as political (Stone-Mediatore 2003; Wibben 2010). As the analytical chapters show, narratives discussed in this study reveal how the protagonists navigate institutionalized practices and discourse underpinning citizenship. They interweave experiences, memories and values. They foreground multiple affective connections that underpin their sense of identity and belonging. Contributors reflect on their involvement in different sites of agency, as well as articulating alternative meanings of citizenship.

The stories discussed in these study were collected through semi-structured interviews, a classic tool within feminist research which allows situating narratives of women's experiences at the core of the inquiry (DeVault and Gross 2007). Interviews were loosely structured around key themes giving the contributors opportunities to talk freely and highlight different aspects.[12] In the beginning, I asked contributors to talk about how they become interested in citizenship and/or gender. Then, questions focused on their perspective on the institutional notion of citizenship, as defined by Annex 4 of the Agreement, also referred to as the Constitution, and their views on opportunities and challenges for developing collective women's claims.

After having transcribed the interviews, the first phase of the analysis entailed disaggregating the data into segments which correspond to specific narrative paradigms. Since a narrative is characterized by a chronological order and by a system of signification through which actions, themes and events assume a specific meaning (Ricoeur, cited in White 1987, 51), the first step of the analysis involved identifying a chronological structure. The majority of the stories shared by the interviewees are organized around the following order:

- Contributors identify the experience of conflict as a defining moment in the contributor's life for becoming involved in activism or for a renewed commitment to political engagement.

- Narratives then focus on the current situation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, expressing views, often critical, on the post-conflict settlement.
- Interviewees discuss the future of Bosnia-Herzegovina through their aspirations, projects and concerns.

This is a common narrative structure that allows "respondents to narrativize particular experiences in their life, often where there has been a breach between ideal and real, self and society" (Riessman 1993, 3). This structure is particularly significant in the context of war/peace as it illustrates attempts to situates the personal stories in relation to the impact of the conflict and its aftermath. At the same time, as the analytical chapters illustrate, contributors' accounts also complicate this linear and consequential framework by revealing ruptures, as well as continuities, inflected through complex personal vicissitudes. As discussed earlier, this study employs a notion of citizenship which revolves around the three-dimensional understandings of identity, attachments and sense of belonging, articulation of agency and political action, and possibilities of transversal politics and collective action. These three dimensions formed the main thread of my analysis, which I further developed through a deeper reading of the interview material that captures commonalities and points of friction, and other salient themes the interviews are inflected through.

Structure of the Book

Chapter 2 offers a historical overview of the legacies shaping women's citizenship practices in post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina. It starts from the premise that trajectories of women's citizenship emerged from profound shifts set in motion before the emergence of nationalism and the outbreak of the Bosnian conflict. The analysis of the forces at play in the making and un-making of citizenship and belonging in contemporary Bosnia requires a wider time frame that takes into consideration the reverberations of state socialism and post-1989 political transformation, as mediated through the specific regional context of the former Yugoslavia. This wider framework complicates the exclusive focus on nationalism and ethnicity as key determinant of identity, belonging and collective action. It brings to light continuities and ruptures that have shaped gender underpinnings of official citizenship practices in socialist times, through the emergence, in parallel with post-socialist transformation,

of nationalist discourse and the consequent break out of conflict. While it is necessary to pay attention to the contextual specificities that led to the outbreak of violence in the former Yugoslavia, gendered dislocations and ruptures were not unique to Socialist Federal Republic Yugoslavia (SFRY) but reflected broader regional and global processes.

Chapter 3 begins this critical interrogation by zooming into the lived experiences, sensations, views and memories shared by the group of women I interviewed. In examining how women make sense of institutionalized practices and discourses of citizenship and articulate their subjectivities, the chapter focuses on questions of belonging and attachment. If the so-called peace has reduced citizenship to an all-encompassing focus on ethnic belonging, how do the women featured in this book negotiate their positioning vis-a-vis dominant understandings? Which kind of imagined communities do they inhabit? Most narratives discussed in this chapter convey a logic of distancing from exclusionary ethnicised discourses of citizenship. Yet, questions of gender are often missing from these narratives. It is only in the explicitly feminist narratives that critical questions about women's ambivalent positioning as symbols, victims for the nation and vessels for its reproduction emerge. On the other end of the spectrum, personal experiences that reveal a more ambivalent proximity to ethno-nationalism are illustrative of the tensions between gender and nationalism. The chapter concludes that paying attention to the experiential, the affective and the "mundane", as well as to the incongruent in women's narratives and experiences, should remain at the centre of feminist engagements with the complexity of war/peace.

The remaining three chapters reflect on the agentic nature of citizenship, by exploring the negotiation of spaces for women's and feminist activism in the continuum between nationalism/war and post-Dayton agreement politics. Drawing on the feminist literature on the nexus war/peace, Chapter 4 revisits the ambivalent impact of the Bosnian conflict in affecting women's lives and sense of security, as well opening up opportunities and spaces for women's political action. Interweaving feminist literature with interview material, this chapter charts complex narratives of women's experiences of/during the Bosnian War and unearths the different opportunities for negotiating spaces of citizenship in the transition to the so-called "peace".

Chapter 5 continues the focus on spaces and modalities of women's participation and activism. More specifically, it draws on the notion of transversal politics, a key concept within the feminist literature on citizenship, to examine opportunities for women's collective action as an

important dimension of citizenship practices in the transition to peace. This chapter explores opportunities to building alliances across women's multiple positions, as well as shared interests with other marginalized groups. It argues that while the notion of transversal politics might be a seductive theoretical concept, paying attention to the participants' perspectives and lived experiences highlights how painstakingly difficult is creating and sustaining solidarities in difference across women's and other citizens' multiple positions in the complex scenario of post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina. In order to navigate this terrain, activists deploy multiple, sometimes uncomfortable, strategies which involve ongoing negotiations, compromises, tensions and setbacks.

Chapter 6 continues to explore opportunities for negotiating alternative spaces and visions of citizenship. Brought into the analytical frame are heterogeneous and shifting experiences of feminist activism enacted through a logic of collective mobilization for/in women's citizenship spaces, and/or situated in wider sense of collective action. An underlying dimension of this re-imagining effort lies in instances of cultural activism that seek to challenge and subvert conventional gender roles. I view these as productive, yet fragile, interventions that undermine the totalitarian ethnicization of space, politics and belonging, through the articulation of marginalized narratives of the war, as well as the peace to come. Drawing on the book's key findings, Chapter 7 provides a critical reflection on the opportunities, challenges, impasses and new openings embedded in the processes of re-imagining citizenship in a complex terrain of post-conflict politics.

Notes

1. The Women Peace and Security Agenda comprises of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and its sister resolutions, 1820, 1888, 1960, 1889, 2106, 2122 and 2242, the eight resolution in the series. It sets out aspirations and recommendations for mainstreaming gender in all aspects of conflict management, prevention and peacebuilding, including reform of peacekeeping and other security forces, inclusion of women in all level of decision-making, responses to the diverse impact of conflict on women and men, strategies to address conflict related sexual violence, to name but a few.
2. Latest Research from the Council of Foreign Relations indicates that women's roles in major peace processes from 1990 until 2017 have been minimal to say the least, as women made up 2% of mediators, 5% of

witnesses and signatories and 8% of negotiators, see https://www.cfr.org/interactive/womens-participation-in-peace-processes.

3. 2014 Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/2014-global-summit-to-end-sexual-violence-in-conflict.
4. National Action Plan for the Implementation of 1325, available at http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/bosniaherzegovina_national-actionplan_2010.pdf (last accessed March 27, 2014).
5. See "Action plan for implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2014–2017", https://www.inclusivesecurity.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/BiH-NAP-ENG.pdf, accessed November 16, 2016.
6. The necessity to question and rethink the dominant approaches to citizenship in modern political theory has inspired contemporary critiques including feminist scholarship. Liberal, republican and social-democratic discourses, focusing, respectively, on freedom and individual rights; community and citizens' participation, and social rights as a precondition for democracy, emphasize different aspects of citizenship. At the same time, the three key political traditions share the same notion of universal citizenship. The universal cloak of citizenship has been the focus of contemporary critical reformulations. These are, however, located within very different theoretical perspectives. Kymlicka, Taylor and Parekh are broadly associated with the debate on multiculturalism. Balibar, Ranciere and Brown provide a critical perspective on the human rights logics which underpins neoliberal understandings of citizenship in terms of cosmopolitanism. Homi Bhabba provides a critique of nationalism and liberalism which is grounded in the concept of postcoloniality as a critical perspective.
7. Theorists provide a broad spectrum of interpretations on the nature of nationalism. Some scholars see the emergence of nationalism as a phenomenon created by the intersection of determining factors, among which modernization (Gellner 2008; Hobsbawm 2012), and define nationalism as "a political principle which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent" (Gellner 1983, 1). Others associate the concept of nation and nationalist ideology within the notion of primordial ethnic ties (Smith 1986). Building on these definitions, some scholars point out that nations and nationalism are cultural artefacts which indeed rely on the construction of shared identity, political space and ethnic ties (Billig 1995; Anderson 2004). According to this critical interpretation, nations are therefore best defined, as Benedict Anderson argues, in terms of imagined communities (Anderson 1991). In identifying the salience of ethnic affiliations in processes of nation-building, this scholarship not only provides a sound framework to understand the

nature of nationalism, but it also explains instances in which the association between desire for political power and ethnic sentiments becomes one of the causes leading to the "worldwide phenomenon" (Horowitz 1985, 1) of ethnic conflict. More importantly, by contextualizing nations within modernization and cultural systems, this scholarship asserts that nationalism is historically located, constructed and based on a "fiction" of shared identity, history and territory. I understand nationalism as socially constructed, dynamic and ever-shifting through the configuration of its attendant gendered power relations.

8. Yuval-Davis mentions the example of women murdered by male relatives in their family because their conduct was seen as unacceptable for the community's honour.
9. It is important to acknowledge that, even though less visible, sexual violence during armed conflict is also employed against men of an "opposed" group who, in this way, also are femininised.
10. Transversal politics is seen as grammar of "rooting" and "shifting" that is "acknowledgement of one's own positioning(s) while emphathizing with the ways others' positionings construct their gaze at the world" (Yuval-Davis 1999, 131).
11. This piece is also informed by observation and data I gathered in 2016 as part of the research project "Add Women and Hope? Assessing the Gender Impact of EU CSDP Missions". Led by Dr. Kenneth McDonagh the project was funded by the Irish Research Council New Horizons Starter Grant Scheme #loveirishresearch.
12. The interviews lasted approximately between 45 and 90 minutes; some were recorded upon consent of the interviewees and notes were taken. Before the beginning of the interviews, each participant was given a handout summarising the nature of the research project and a consent form.

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CHAPTER 2

Trajectories of Women's Citizenship from Socialism to the Bosnian War

This chapter offers an overview of the legacies shaping women's citizenship practices in post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina. It starts from the premise that trajectories of women's citizenship emerged from profound shifts set in motion before the emergence of nationalism and the outbreak of the Bosnian conflict. The analysis of the forces at play in the making and unmaking of citizenship and belonging in contemporary Bosnia requires a wider time frame that takes into consideration the reverberations of state socialism and post-1989 political transformation as mediated through the specific regional context of the former Yugoslavia. This wider framework complicates the exclusive focus on nationalism and ethnicity as key determinant of identity, belonging and collective action. It brings to light continuities and ruptures that have shaped gender underpinnings of official citizenship practices spanning from socialist times, through the emergence, in parallel with post-socialist transformation, of nationalist discourse and the consequent break-up of conflict. While it is necessary to pay attention to the contextual specificities that lead to the outbreak of violence in the former Yugoslavia, gendered dislocations and ruptures were not unique to SFRY but reflect broader regional and global processes.

Building on and developing insights from other studies on the transformation of women's citizenship in the former Yugoslavia (e.g. Ramet 2010; Bonfiglioli et al. 2015; Bonfiglioli 2015; Helms 2015; Zaharijević 2015) and, more broadly, in post-socialist Central

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and Eastern Europe (e.g. Einhorn 1993; Lukić et al. 2006; Gal and Kligman 2012; Baker 2016), this chapter charts the interplay between two processes. On the one hand, it traces the gendered impact of political, economic and cultural shifts. On the other hand, it places women's agency at the centre of analysis to explore the negotiation of alternative citizenship practices and counter-discourses in response to changing material and ideological conditions (Lukić et al. 2006). In the following sections, I address interlinked processes shaping opportunities and challenges for women's citizenship: the legacy of state socialism and the post-1989 upheaval, the rise of ethno-national discourses and the outbreak of violence, and the dynamics shaping women's status and agency in the immediate aftermath of the war.

Women's Citizenship in the Former Yugoslavia: The Legacy of State Socialism

Given the geopolitical position of Bosnia-Herzegovina in Southern Eastern Europe and its historical location in the former Yugoslavia, the legacy of state socialism plays an important role in shaping practices and discourses of women's citizenship. When examining the complex legacy of socialism and post-socialism, Barbara Einhorn cautions against assuming Central and South East Europe as "monolithic and uniform, homogenised by its strategic incorporation into the Soviet sphere of influence, or by its political organisation within the system of state socialism" (Einhorn 1993, 12). Despite the shared socialist system, individual countries in Eastern and Central Europe had indeed distinct cultural, historical and economic differences shaped by contextual and uneven articulations of socialism. As a non-aligned country, the former Yugoslavia occupied a relatively open position compared to other European socialist countries. Economy and welfare were inflected through Yugoslavia's specific form of market socialism which produced uneven effects across the federation (Woodward 1995). At the same time, some inherent gendered elements of the socialist model of citizenship were also replicated in the Yugoslav regime. Essentially, while this model of citizenship entailed emancipatory traits and entitlements, it also retained inequalities based on gender which extended to the familial sphere, often made invisible in the official rhetoric of equality (Einhorn 1993; Funk and Mueller 1993; Galligan et al. 2007).

Despite being constructed as an issue of strategic importance, *the woman question* was understood mainly in relation to women's position as workers. The emancipation of women was therefore envisaged within the broader framework of empowering the working class and linked to participation in the workforce. Within this logic, "state socialism 'emancipated' women not as equal citizens, but as worker-mothers" (Einhorn 1993, 40). Furthermore, while women's emancipation was envisioned through equal access to education and employment, the socialist model of citizenship retained wage differences and a gendered division of labour (Galligan et al. 2007, 22). This tension was replicated in the former Yugoslavia. Having been granted full citizenship in 1946, women were equally recognized as workers as well as mothers, through specific welfare arrangements (Zaharijević 2015, 95). Working women had access to free health care and abortions, as well as free education. In the workplace, they were entitled to paid maternity leave and had canteens and childcare facilities (Bonfiglioli 2015, 59). At the same time, as argued by Sabina Ramet, structural inequalities persisted, despite changes in the social position achieved through employment and education and in the images of women presented by official media campaigns focusing on gender equality (Ramet 1999). Firstly, women tended to be concentrated in certain areas of low-pay employment such as the textile sector and generally underrepresented in, or excluded from, other professions, such as court judges, journalists and professors. Secondly, they were underrepresented in decision-making positions, including party structures and self-management councils (Ramet 1999, 97).

Despite the existence of crucial social entitlements, such as maternity leave, and childcare facilities, the gendered nature of the socialist model of citizenship extended to the private arena of the family. As argued by Barbara Einhorn:

> the nuclear family was reborn as the 'socialist' family, in which worker-mothers were committed to bearing and rearing future socialist citizens in addition to their labour force participation. Vision of freeing women from their burdens of domestic labour and childcare were subsumed under a reliance on the family as the 'basic cell' of society guaranteeing some degree of social stability. Fundamental questions about the links between the family and women's oppression were brushed under the carpet. (Einhorn 1993, 31)

Instead of the promised emancipation, women's access to employment translated into the creation of a double burden of full-time work and full responsibility for the family care. Reading the rhetoric of official discourses against women's lived experiences under state socialism thus reveals a crucial gendered gap. Barbara Einhorn argues that the dissemination of the ideal imagery of femininity in the media was crucial to prop up official rhetoric. Poignant is how official discourses created the *Superwoman*, eponym of the successful worker and perfect mother. This image was later replaced by another ideal of woman which combined the "Superwoman as mother and wife, diligent worker and politically committed activist" (Einhorn 2006, 129). This trope exemplified a shift from the double burden—citizen, worker and mother—to a triple burden that included a demand for political commitment (Einhorn 2006, 129). These dynamics can be traced also in the context of the former Yugoslavia, through the relegation of women in low-waged forms of employment, the unequal division of care and domestic work and the persistence of traditional stereotypes on gender roles, despite the rhetoric of equality.

The definition of acceptable roles for women was also echoed in policy legislation across the post-socialist space. In the 1960s, the pro-natal policies developed by socialist parties in response to social problems, low birth rate and declining economic potential, signalled a sustained focus on women's positioning within the family, inflected through idealization of the role of women as mothers (Einhorn 2006, 129–131; Galligan et al. 2007, 24). A process that later became more prominent with the emergence of nationalist parties across the post-socialist region and in the former Yugoslavia. The socialist model of citizenship therefore granted citizenship rights and entitlements linked to individual citizens' status as workers. This model of citizenship privileged women's identity through their roles as workers and mothers, with a shift on emphasizing the latter that emerged in response to economic decline.

In the context of the former Yugoslavia, these ambivalent gendered patterns were also shaped by its specific form of market socialism. If, on the one hand, deregulation in the area of travel, economy and workers' self-management opened up spaces for alternative forms of social and civic engagement, the move towards a market economy pre-1989 negatively affected women's presence in the workforce (Morokvavić, quoted in Einhorn and Sever 2003, 179). Firstly, due to the uneven economic development across SFRY, women had unequal access to welfare

provisions (Bonfiglioli 2015, 59). Secondly, unemployment was particularly high among women and youth, with women's unemployment reaching levels similar to the rest of Europe in the 1970s (Woodward, cited in Bonfiglioli 2015, 59). These patterns indicate moves towards a re-inscription of women within the private sphere through limited access to employment which were later intensified through the emergence of nationalist projects.

In the former Yugoslavia, instances of women's activism trace back to the Anti-Fascist Front of Women (AFŽ) and remained visible throughout socialism (Jancar-Webster 1999). Early feminist groups in the late 1960s comprised of professional women working in the social sciences, arts and journalism (Dević 1997). At the end of the 1970s, such groups were at the core of the neofeminist movement (Neofeminizam) (Dević 1997; Helms 2003a). Ana Dević argues that the independent character of this movement, made of non-Party-affiliated professional and intellectual women, needs to be inscribed within the permissive authoritarianism of the Yugoslav party (Dević 1997, 51). Adriana Zaharijević, on the other hand, suggests that the movement occupied a more ambivalent position with regard to the state: while these Yugoslav feminists were wary of state rhetoric on women's emancipation, they were not explicitly critical of socialism, rather suggesting that its transformative potential would not be realized in full without addressing the women's question (Zaharijević 2015, 95).

Yugoslav second-wave feminists focused on addressing the gendered dynamics associated with the private sphere. One of the key initiatives of the movement, which grew out of feminist groups active in Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana but also included women from Sarajevo,[1] was the organization of the first international conference which was held at Belgrade's Student Cultural Centre, in October 1978. The conference emerged from the collaboration between the feminist sociologists, Žaran Papić and Nada Ler-Sofronić, and the art historian (and later director of Sarajevo Centre for Contemporary Art) Dunja Blažević. The event, titled "Druc-ca Žena. Žena pitanje, novi pristup?" ("Woman Comrade (ss). The Woman's Question, A New Approach?"), brought together feminists from the region and countries in Europe, such as Helen Cixous and Dacia Maraini (Pejić 2009). A slogan associated to the conference, "Proletarians of all world who is washing your socks?", perfectly encompasses the overarching scope of the meeting: the establishment of a dialogue between Western feminists and Yugoslav feminists, and

the development of a critique on the gender inequalities of socialist Yugoslavia.[2]

The conference is now considered a historic event for the development of feminist discourses and practices alternative to the official model of citizenship. As expressed in the slogan, it embodied the ethos of Yugoslav feminism at the time with its focus on the gendered nature of the private sphere rendered invisible within the socialist rhetoric of equality. A number of scholars point out that the feminist groups remained active in the fringes and did not reach out to a broader audience (e.g. Korac 2006; Helms 2003a; Cockburn 1998). Nevertheless, neofeminist interventions illustrate significant efforts to negotiate a space for articulating a feminist critique of the gendered divisions of labour that disrupted the dominant citizenship discourse. The violent dissolution of the former Yugoslavia that ensued in the fall of socialism, abruptly altered these spaces for collective action. This moment of upheaval also propelled feminist activism into new radical trajectories in response to the emergence of nationalist projects and their militaristic and patriarchal rhetoric. Elements of this process were not exclusive to the Yugoslav context but were engendered by the ambivalent ripples of the Cold War's end.

Women's Citizenship After the Fall: Tracing Continuities and Ruptures

The political changes ushered in by the fall of the Berlin Wall had profound gendered ramifications for citizenship in post-socialist Europe. As Susan Gal and Gail Kligman argue, paying attention to these gendered dynamics complicates simplistic understanding of post-1989 processes under the notion of transition that imply a linear evolutionary process from one historical phase to another (Gal and Kligman 2012, 10).[3] The idea of transition as a single, linear, positive process reflects western framings of post-1989 political changes in terms of a *progression* from socialism to liberal democracy (Einhorn and Sever 2003). To the contrary, studies of post-socialism and evidence from the region highlight complex and contradictory political and socio-economic processes shaped by ruptures with the past, important continuities, as well as highly differentiated effects across newly formed post-socialist states (Einhorn 1993; Gal and Kligman 2012; Baker 2016).[4] At the same time, the region presented some commonalities that come to the fore when analysing the

paradoxical and contradictory nature of post-socialist shifts through the prism of gender and citizenship.

The political and economic upheaval of 1989 brought about promises of active citizenship and liberation from authoritarian states. Despite the initial euphoria, the move towards a market economy and liberal democracy produced contradictory effects especially for women's lived experiences of citizenship. To start with, the transition to a neoliberal economy had generally negative effects on women's employment. Not only did the new economy lead to the removal of subsidies and childcare facilities, but also in public discourse the assertion of women's supposed advantageous position within the communist state worked to the detriment of their chances of employment in a market economy (Gal and Kligman, 2012). Barbara Einhorn suggests that the very rights that women enjoyed under state socialism were operating against their interests as employees, with women often dismissed as unreliable workers as a result of the generous sick and maternity leave granted by the socialist system (Einhorn 1993, 130). Not surprisingly, women were the majority among the rising rates of unemployment, which resulted into gendered insecurities, such as "feminization of poverty" (Einhorn, 137–138) and to an increase in prostitution. Growing obstacles for women's employment ushered in full-time motherhood as a norm, which began to be posited within official discourse as "women's destiny and sacred duty" (Einhorn 1993, 139).

The implication of economic restructuring impacted on women's identities, roles and positioning in society. As discussed earlier, elements of these processes had already emerged during the last decade of socialism in response to economic decline (Galligan et al. 2007). In the specific case of former Yugoslavia, market deregulation began shifting women's roles towards the family and the private sphere, as well as eroding social rights (Dević 1997). We can thus trace some continuities between certain gendered dynamics of late socialism and the political and economic transformation post-1989. The move to market economy, the erosion of women's rights and the progressive loss of welfare provisions came into play, manoeuvring for women's material and cultural re-inscription within the private familial sphere. The process assumed darker outcomes for women's lived experiences with the emergence of nationalist projects in the former Yugoslavia, as well as in other post-socialist contexts. Despite a tendency within a number of media, political and academic discourses to inscribe the break-up of Yugoslavia within a logic

of resurgence of "ancient ethnic hatreds", now largely refuted,[5] the rise of nationalist politics was not a process exclusively relevant to the exceptional context of former Yugoslavia. Rather, nationalist movements and nation-building processes that ensued post-1989 are deeply intertwined with post-socialist economic, cultural and political shifts. As Susan Woodward writes, "neither the disintegration of Yugoslavia nor the character of its wars can be understood apart from the political-economic and social system created by the Yugoslav League of Communists or the effect of rising unemployment on that system" (Woodward 1995).

Einhorn points out that the promises of transformation propelled search for new ideals and values *untainted* by socialism, paving the way for the construction of new national and political identities and the consolidation of the new institutions' moral authority (Einhorn 1993).

It is in this context that different variants of nation-building processes emerged in the individual countries of South East and Central Europe with contradictory implications for women's rights and status across the region. Without wanting to push generalizations across the region too far, some common patterns affecting women's citizenship within nation-building projects both reproduced and exacerbated dynamics initiated in the previous political contexts, as well as engendered new ruptures. The issue of reproductive rights offers a case in point given its centrality to define national interests and consolidate the boundaries of the new states.[6] As widely documented by feminist scholars, "state policies about the linked issues of reproduction, contraception, and normative sexuality are never only about biological reproduction" (Gal and Kligman 2012, 34). Rather, these "are used in broader political field as coded arguments that constitute new state-subject relations, moralize positions on diverse other issues, authorise new political mechanisms, and legitimate individual politicians" (Gal and Kligman 2012, 34). Post-1989, the instrumentalization of reproductive rights played a social and economic role. Firstly, it worked to prop the morality and sovereignty of the new states across post-socialist Europe, constructed in opposition to the socialist past. Secondly, it served as a strategy employed by the state to keep women out of the labour market in times of rising unemployment (Gal and Kligman 2012, 29–35). Undertaken in the name of strengthening the newly born nations and breaking with the socialist past, attacks on reproductive freedom contributed to the re-traditionalization of women's roles centred around full-time motherhood. As we have seen, however, this process was not entirely *new*, as its roots traced

back to shifts initiated in economic restructuring that occurred pre-1989 and in the gendered division of labour and care work that was reproduced throughout state socialism.

Moves towards the entrenchment of traditional gender roles post-1989 thus highlight striking elements of continuity with the socialist past refracted through a reconfiguration of the public/private divide that consolidated specific gender inequalities.[7] Coupling economic restructuring with the reallocation of political interests and the emergence of new elites manoeuvring for a re-traditionalization of society, the dissolution of socialism contributed to a delegitimization of women as political actors and their retreat from formal politics (Einhorn 1993; Gal and Kligman 2012; Galligan et al. 2007). At the same time, despite this backlash, the new political system also opened up new arenas for women's agency and collective action (Funk and Mueller 1993; Einhorn 1993, 2006; Gal and Kligman 2012; Galligan et al. 2007). Civil society and grass-roots activism emerged as a locus for negotiating women's citizenship identities and practices. Through this form of engagement, new spaces for citizenship were negotiated as Eastern European women branched out in transnational networks, engaged in a complex East–West cooperation and also reactivated links established during socialist and pre-socialist years (Galligan et al. 2007; Einhorn 1993, 2006; Gal and Kligman 2012). Post-socialist transformation thus also opened opportunities for collective mobilization as women reacted against the re-patriarcalization of society and the gendered implication of economic and political restructuring (Lukić et al. 2006). In the context of the former Yugoslavia, these opportunities were profoundly shaped by, in the rise of, ethno-nationalism and the consequent outbreak of violence and war.

Negotiating Citizenship vis-à-vis the Nation

Julie Mostov provides a good definition the politics of national identity in the context of former Yugoslavia through the notion of ethnocracy, that is, "a particular type of rule in which power is concentrated in the hands of leaders successful in promoting themselves as uniquely qualified to define and defend the (ethno)national interests, and in which the ruled are collective bodies defined by common culture, history religion, myths and presumed descent" (Mostov 2000, 89). Since the very beginning, nationalist discourse monopolized the space of communication unconcernedly drawing images and powerful concepts from religion,

philosophy, populism, poetry and politics (Slapšak 1997). Svetlana Slapšak contends that, with its "collagelike" structure, the genre of nationalism discourses in post-Yugoslavia displays a great deal of inventiveness in order to address indifferently the large audiences (the masses) and the elites (1997, 73). In a poignant account, she points out "the former Yugoslavia's nationalist discourses of the pre-war and war periods drew on a vast panorama of forms that the genre has taken on while reviving old and inventing new genre clusters: nationalist memoirs, new mystifications of oral poetry, belligerent homily, fascist essay and manifesto, propagandist drama, etc." (73). In this context, the emergence of nationalism displayed some recurring pattern identified by feminist scholars in the manipulative characterizations of ethnic and national symbols through powerful gendered tropes, with complex implications for women's citizenship.

As Dubravka Žarkov argues, notions of femininity and masculinity were crucial elements in production of ethnic identity through the means of media representational campaigns, as well as through war and ethnic conflict (Žarkov 2007). Gendered tropes were instrumental for constructing a sense of belonging to the ethno-national collectivity, essentially reducing the political space and concentrating the power in the hands of a few selected ethnocrats (Mostov 2000). Sharing resonances with gendered patterns identified by feminist studies of nationalism, women and women's bodies became abstract symbols for the Nation, vessels for its reproduction and markers of national honour and identity (Papić 1999; Pavlović 1999; Mostov 2000). At the same time, men were defined through heroic metaphors, such as guardians, warriors and saviours of the nation, with manliness and virility as the canon for the "proper" male citizen (Mostov 2000).

Svetlana Slapšak writes that ethnocrats did not hesitate to engage with the fields of religion, populism, folklore and pop tradition in order to corroborate their truths (Slapšak 1997). For instance, discursive strategies that elevated motherhood to national duty mobilized conservative interpretations of Catholic, Orthodox and Islamic religions and the rhetoric of a returning to traditional values (Mostov 2000; Milić 1993). Nostalgia for a stricter and more traditional moral code became yet another ingredient of nationalism's rising. Gendered discursive strategies were matched with concrete policies that undermined women's involvement in formal politics and promoted women's reproductive roles (Milić 1993; Drakulić 1993).

At the same time, issues such as childcare, reproductive rights, sexual morality and violence became predominant in the media within discourses which emphasized the values and common destiny of a particular ethnic group and those that exposed alleged injustices and threats against it (Žarkov 2007).

Julie Mostov points out that the construction of proper gender roles as markers of national and ethnic boundaries relied on the regulation of men's and women's sexuality (Mostov 2000). The nation and the feminine body were associated with purity and chastity that implies sexual passivity. Women's sexuality, thus, was viewed with suspicion which justified the need to monitor it for the sake of the nation (Mostov 2000, 92–93). Even though nationalist rhetoric conceptualized men through active and romanticized roles, such as heroic warriors and defenders of the nation, nationalist rhetoric also entailed that men remained chaste, channelling their sexual power and virility in the battlefield (93). Manipulation of sexuality became part of broader discursive strategies which aimed at the submission of personal needs to the collective interest. Since regulation of sexuality means constraints on personal agency, this process was integral to the erosion of political space undertaken by ethnocrats (100).

The targeting of women through the use of rape as a warfare strategy is deeply intertwined with the process of "sexing the nation" (Mostov 2000). In the lead up to the dissolution of Yugoslavia, feminist scholars chart the mobilization of alleged episodes of sexual assaults against women as instruments of ethno-nationalist rhetoric. The use of this rhetoric traces back to the early 1980s when the Serbian media circulated allegations about the rape of Serbian women at the hands of Albanian men in Kosovo (Slapšak 1997; Rener and Ule 1998; Žarkov 2007). From its inception, nationalist imagery was imbued with elements of what Tanja Rener and Mirjana Ule define as "sexual phantasmagoria" (Rener and Ule 1998). Alleged stories of women raped by an "ethnic other" became a central element of the *nationalist hysteria* which led to the war (Slapšak 1997). The escalation of conflict in Croatia and later in Bosnia signalled a profound shift from allegations of "rape by the ethnic other", used in order to foment ethno-national hatred, to the concrete use of rape as a war strategy employed to annihilate "the other ethnie/nation". In a similar vein to Enloe's analysis of militarized rape (Enloe 2000), Julie Mostov points out that in this context sexual assaults

assumed public significance as “they are not about sexual pleasure […] they are about the invasion of the Other’s boundaries (the occupation of his symbolic space, property and territory) and the violence of his manhood” (Mostov 2000). Sexualized violence in ethno-nationalist conflicts becomes politically charged as it threatens national ethnic and gendered boundaries of the nation (Mostov 2000; Albanese 2001). The use of sexual violence in the war therefore exemplifies the manipulation of women’s bodies within nationalist discourses.

Before the outbreak of conflict, feminist groups in the former Yugoslavia had remained active throughout the 1980s initiating campaigns on domestic violence, rape and women’s rights on employment (Batinić 2001). While these groups sustained regional connections, the emergence and entrenchment of nationalist discourses challenged the, already marginal, space occupied by feminist groups. Nationalist rhetoric undermined women’s efforts to negotiate a space for feminist critique and fragmented feminists, with women and activists embracing patriotism and nationalism.[8] At the same time, the abrupt changes brought about by the emergence of nationalist militarization and patriarchy propelled some feminists in the space of the anti-war movement in the wake of Yugoslavia’s violent break-up. As documented by a number of studies, between 1991 and 1992 these women were the fulcrum of the anti-war demonstrations in Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Slovenia (Dević 1997; Slapšak 1997; Einhorn and Sever 2003). The initiatives included not only the first generation of Yugoslav feminists but also the younger women and especially students, mothers of soldiers and later refugees. Participating in these initiatives was not an easy choice given that in the xenophobic ethno-nationalist propaganda of the time, anti-war sentiments were publicly exposed as a *crime* of treason against the nation. Women were often publicly discredited, ostracized and attacked as disloyal to the nation. A notorious case in the region involved an attack at the hands of the Croatian nationalist elites which aimed to discredit publicly and personally a group of feminists who openly challenged the Croatian inflammatory rhetoric as evidence of sexualized violence began to surface (Pavlović 1999). In December 1992, the Zagreb newspaper *Globus* accused five feminists (Dubravka Ugrešić, Vesna Kesić, Jelena Lovrić, Rada Iveković and Slavenka Drakulić) of being national traitors, divulgating personal details in the article. The piece depicted as

them as witches, frustrated feminists dissatisfied with their personal life and Yugonostalgic communists (Kesić 1999; Drakulić 1993). Obrad Kesić points out that the trope of the "witch" in the nationalist discourse became associated throughout the territory of the former Yugoslavia with the image of trouble-making, outspoken and very often anti-war women (Kesić 1999). As the following chapters will illustrate, the meaning of this tropes remains significant today.

Women's anti-nationalist political mobilization stood in stark contrast with nationalist constructions of womanhood centred around the role of mothers and vessels for the nation. Activists undermined the boundaries of nationalist discourses from within through their subject position as women, as well as by gesturing to *the ethnic other* through solidarities across region. Feminists, anti-nationalist and peace activists in the Post-Yugoslav region thus were viewed as a national threat. A poignant example is *Women in Black*, the association based in Belgrade which staged anti-nationalist and anti-war protests in the "public" space of the city and continues to rally today demanding justice for war crimes committed at Srebrenica during the Bosnian War (Cockburn 2007). *Women in Black* activists were, and still are, viewed as suspect women and citizens not only because they dared to occupy the public space openly expressing dissent in the heart of Belgrade's city centre, but also because they cross national(ist) divides in their attempts to organize across the region undermining the totalitarian occupation of identity. Reflecting on the significance of those experiences in challenging the logic of war and nationalism, founding member of Women in Black, Staša Zajović, later wrote, "Disobedience to 'your own' governments and states is a form of women's solidarity" (Zajović 1997, 33). In the midst of Yugoslavia's nationalistic dissolution, some feminists began negotiating new spaces and vision of citizenship which entailed "disregard for the frontiers, disloyalty to the nation and the state, and rejecting the new, ultimately ethnic foundation of citizenship" (Zaharijević 2015, 97). The legacy of collective feminist aspirations as disloyal citizens did not disappear completely in region but re-erupted anew with the cessation of conflicts and in the transitional processes that ensued. The wars, however, dramatically compromised regional connections. In the context of Bosnia, large-scale violence paved the way for women's involvement in a politics of necessity.

Women's Agency and/in the Bosnian War: The Politics of Necessity and International Aid

Feminist scholarship on war draws our attention to the manifold ways in which women are concretely affected by and react to experiences of violent ethno-nationalism and war (Elshtain 1987; Cockburn 2007; Cohn 2013; Wibben 2016). In the violent dissolution of former Yugoslavia, women's stake in conflict and political upheaval took different forms. Women were deeply affected by large-scale destruction and violence, including the use of sexualized violence as war strategy. On the other hand, women actively participated in response to the conflict through a number of interventions. Feminists and peace activists started to organize against the rising nationalist propaganda (Slapšak 1997, 2001; Korac 2003). They provided humanitarian aid, and they also participated in the wars as soldiers and fighters (Mostov 2000; Žarkov 2007). Networking among anti-nationalist feminists active in the region became crucial, yet difficult, for the development of women's and feminist organizing in the aftermath of the war. Particularly important was the email network *Zamir* (For Peace) which allowed communication between activists in Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia during the conflict and in the immediate aftermath (Cockburn 1998; Helms 2003a; Korac 2006). These interventions created personal and ideological connections between women's instances of activism in post-war Bosnia, women's anti-war and anti-nationalist movements of 1991–1992 and the legacy of feminist groups which were formed in the former Yugoslavia. The wars, however, also deeply compromised contacts between activists in the violent making and unmaking of borders. This was not only due to the impact of the large scale of violence and material disruption, but also due to the heightened climate of tension and suspicion.

At the same time, the conflict opened new sites for women's individual and collective agency in response to violence and humanitarian emergency that continued after the cessation of hostilities. Women's organizing in the immediate aftermath of the Bosnian War occurred mainly within the creation of informal groups initially set up to deal with the humanitarian emergency arising from the conflict (Walsh 2000). In line with a shift within the international approach to civil society building and its focus on creating a NGO sector, women's groups became among the main beneficiaries of international funds and training (Fagan 2005; Helms 2013). This led to the bourgeoning of recognized women's

NGOs active in different areas of intervention, from micro-credit initiatives to peacebuilding and reconciliation.

Developing and sustaining collective women's activism in the aftermath of conflict and in the ensuing economic and political transformation has been a complex endeavour shaped by the divisive legacy of conflict and inflected through the negotiation of local interests and priorities set out by international aid. Cynthia Cockburn's study on women's organizations in Bosnia illustrates the importance of groups coming together "as women, for women, and on women's issues" (Cockburn 1998, 71) and in creating a political space wherein to address crucial legacies of the conflict, such as the impact of sexual violence, domestic violence, but also reconciliation. In some instances, such as in the case of the renowned association Medica Zenica, women's collective action would translate in the development of explicit feminist interventions. Some activists, however, were wary of publicly using the label "feminist" due to social pressures and/or were hesitant to initiate a critique of gender inequalities that would target the family and everyday relationships as they began to reckon with the aftermath of violence (Cockburn 2002, 71–78). The crafting of feminist spaces and critiques thus presented personal and political predicaments for activists in a moment when they, and society at large, were still mourning and grieving their personal and collective losses.

Possibilities to translate women's activism into broader demands for social and political change were thus deeply shaped by women's diverse positioning not only in the contested legacy of conflict, but also in the political economy of post-war reconstruction (Cockburn 2007). As it had happened across the Yugoslav region with the escalation of violent ethno-nationalism, the divisive legacy of the conflict and the extreme politicization of ethno-national affiliations compromised the cohesion of women's groups in Bosnia, as activists were coming to term with and navigating the entrenchment of nationalist differences marked through the means of war, human rights abuse and ethnic cleansing. In this context, foreign and international donor policies often worked to configure women's organizations as service providers/single issue groups (Walsh 2000). The imposition of internationally driven priorities on local activists and the short-term and competitive nature of project-led funding regimes also complicated the activities of women's groups and their sustainability (Cockburn and Žarkov 2002; Pupavac 2005; Helms 2013). Opportunities for NGOs to translate activities into collective political

action have been also ambivalently shaped by the political economy of post-conflict reconstruction.

Assessments on the political significance of women's organizing in post-war Bosnia vary. Some analyses draw out the technocratic and service-provider nature as a key limitation in post-war women's activism (e.g. Walsh 2000). Other studies spotlight women's activism as a complex and plurivocal process of negotiation between local interests and the priorities of international actors (e.g. Helms 2003b; Pupavac 2005). Martha Walsh 's assessment on the landscape of women NGOs' in the immediate aftermath of the war points out that the women's organizations she studied showed an ability to have impact at a micro/local level, without branching out and making larger political connections at the macro-level of social/political change (Walsh 2000). She concludes somewhat hastily that women's groups generally missed the opportunity "to make a link between aid and empowerment" (Walsh 2000, 180). Elissa Helms, on the other hand, discusses a wider spectrum of interventions grouped under the moniker "women's NGOs" that have emerged throughout the decades of international aid and post-conflict transformation ranging from feminist organizations to associations of women survivors to women's groups promoting a return to traditional values and everything in between (Helms 2013, 90–91). Other scholars point to the emergence of heterogeneous formations situated at the intersection of grass-roots activism and cultural interventions that strive for spaces of agency without necessarily deploying the label of women's NGOs (Husanović 2000). The post-war hard political realities and economic restructuring inevitably propelled women's and feminist activism along diverse, yet often interlinked, trajectories in response to the dramatic changes brought up by the conflict and the needs to act collectively for Bosnia's political, economic and cultural reconstruction.

A complex picture of women's and feminist activism in post-war Bosnia thus emerges. These practices illustrate adaptations between local/international interests, diverse degrees of political engagement with feminist concerns and/or women's issues as well as a different proximity to the post-conflict ethno-nationalist disputes and politics. These interventions offer interesting insight into the creation of spaces for women's activism under condition of post-conflict transformation. The processes of negotiating spaces of agency, citizenship and belonging is deeply shaped by the material conditions set out by post-war politics, as well as by the political and personal dynamics animating women's and other grass-roots groups. While

some groups organized through a logic of women, working for women on women's issues, Jasmina Husanović points to possibilities for emancipatory practices within more fluid and heterogeneous non-institutionalized women's grass-roots activism and cultural intervention (Husanović, 2009). As the analytical chapters illustrate, these multiplicity and complexity in women's and feminist activism still ring true over two decades of so-called peace.

Conclusion

By tracing trajectories shaping women's citizenship from socialism to the aftermath of the Bosnian War, this chapter has sought to complicate dominant narratives that place an exclusive focus on nationalism to explore transformation of gender roles and women's lived citizenship in the former Yugoslavia. Paying attention to this wider political context reveals that forces manoeuvring for a retraditionalization of women's roles and erosions of citizenship rights can be traced in earlier readjustments to economic decline in socialist times and in the ripples of post-1989 political and economic upheaval. The rise of nationalist parties and militarist ideology that lead to the Yugoslav war dramatically compromised citizens' lived experiences and political belonging with profoundly gendered implications. Wartime violence deepened gendered processes and structural disadvantages, many of which persisted after the cessation of hostilities. While acknowledging these contextual specificities is crucial to understand the gendered impact of militarization, nationalism and violence in the former Yugoslavia, gendered dislocations and ruptures were not exceptional to SFRY. Rather, they reflected broader regional and global processes ushered in by post-socialist economic contingencies and political upheaval.

A historical analysis highlights both elements of continuity and ruptures in the political and economic transformation from state socialism to the rise of ethno-national discourses with complex gendered implications. While many of the rights women had in socialist time were reversed, one striking element of continuity is the resilience and malleability of gender hierarchies in defining the boundaries of women's rights and status which were reproduced and emerged anew across shifting ideological and material contexts. Even though the socialist model of citizenship granted full access to welfare provisions and social rights, it retained gendered hierarchies in employment, domestic labour and the private sphere. In the context of the former Yugoslavia, the opening to

market economy meant a higher rate of women's unemployment, as well unequal access to social rights given uneven economic development.

The emergence of nationalism in parallel with economic decline and restructuring contributed to intensify a progressive retraditionalization of gender roles and the re-inscription of women in the private sphere. If women's full equality was subsumed to the issue of class emancipation during socialist times, nationalist projects framed women as symbols of the respective ethnically homogeneous nations and vessels for their reproduction. The breakout of conflict created conditions for both disrupting the gender order reconstituted through a rigid public/private dichotomy, but also rendered women (and their bodies) susceptible to further objectification and marginalization for political purposes. Yet, feminist scholars warn that, albeit war might open up new spaces for women's agency, the cessation of hostilities often engenders new insecurities and hierarchies with forces manoeuvring for women's retreat from public life (Karam 2000; Kumar 2001; Cockburn and Žarkov 2002; Žarkov 2007).

As I show in further chapters, these intersecting dynamics affect the conditions of women's lived experiences and practices of citizenship in the post-conflict context of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Another important element of continuity across the multiple transformations in citizenship regimes discussed here lies in the history of women's and feminist counter-practices that challenge shifting circumstances of inequality, violence and oppression. Women had negotiated spaces of activism from the formation of Yugoslavia to the emergence of a Yugoslav second-wave feminism in the 1970s. While nationalism and conflict compromised and challenged regional contacts, women and feminist activists actively responded to dramatic shifts, continuing to mobilize in the midst of violence and, in some instances, sustaining collective solidarities across the post-Yugoslav space (Dević 1997; Cockburn 1998, 2007; Einhorn and Sever 2003; Helms 2003a). As the following chapters will illustrate, this remains an important and lasting legacy in shaping women's and feminist activism in the context of post-Dayton Bosnia, as well as representing a significant system of reference in defining (some) women's identities and ideological commitments today. At the same time, the post-conflict moment highlights a complex web of circumstances that both facilitate, complicate and compromise instances of women's and feminist collective action (Cockburn and Žarkov 2002; Helms 2003a). This complexity and multiplicity will be explored and unpacked in the rest of the book.

Notes

1. Sarajevo, less cosmopolitan compared to the other republican capitals, was bypassed by the neofeminist movement (Cockburn 1998). However, it is important to note that individual women from Sarajevo participated in the conferences and published articles in the feminist press, while many women and girls in Bosnia had the opportunity to read the writings of feminists from Belgrade and Zagreb in the local press (Helms 2003, Cockburn 1998).
2. Some scholars maintain that the extent to which these groups amounted to a feminist or women's movement should not be overstated (Korac 2006; Helms 2003a; Cockburn 1998). The groups did not have a pervasive impact in society and did not succeed in reaching out to a broader female audience. Maja Korac maintains that the reason behind this marginal political space results from the feminists' choice to conceptualize their activism as "anti-political", in the sense of being independent from the politics of the socialist state (2006, 516). At the same time, while lack of funds constrained exchanges across the different Republics, the feminist groups remained active in Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana and continued to cooperate. They mainly focused on addressing women's underrepresentation in leadership bodies and high-end jobs (Dević 1997).
3. As Susan Gal and Gail Kligman point out, the notion of transition is somewhat suspect as it invites parallels and comparisons with other transitional processes to democracy (i.e. in Latin America) too often regarded as the result of a single process (2012, 11). Further criticism on the metaphor of transition relies on its assumption that all aspects of society changed homogenously and simultaneously in the different contexts of post-socialist Europe (2012, 11–12).
4. For these reasons, Barbara Einhorn has argued in favour of the term transformation (Einhorn and Sever 2003).
5. For a thorough, critical analysis of international discourses on the Bosnian War revolving around the frame of "ethnic hatred", see (Campbell 1998; Hansen, 2013).
6. The attacks on reproductive rights took different forms in the various individual countries of Eastern Central Europe: from the abortion debate in Poland to the case of East German women who went through sterilization in order to increase their chances of employment (Einhorn 1993; Gal and Kligman 2012).
7. Gal and Kligman point out that the definition and distinction of public/private are not so straightforward, as activities and interactions can be split into public and private parts, which can be then divided again by the same dichotomy, i.e. the private/public distinction is nested (Gal and Kligman 2012, 41). Even under state socialism, the public and the private were

not completely independent and isolated. Post-1989, the labour market was "bifurcating in multiple ways: into public and private, to be sure, but within these into regular and secure jobs, coded as male, and into unstable part-time work and multiple jobs occupied mostly by women" (61). Despite that, public discourse continued to be structured around the choice between market (private) and state (public) employment (62). Accordingly, public debate contributed to hide important links between activities, institutions and practices which could help analyse patterns of gendered employment and women's strategies in neoliberal economies. Gal and Kligman's analysis therefore points out that "the public and private distinction is an aspect of ideology, closely related to the circumstance that it is trying to explain" (40). This also confirms the feminist insights that public and private, as well as other oppositions, always define each other (40).

8. For instance, some organizations, mainly from Zagreb, took the nationalist side on the issue of rape which they identified as a Serb campaign against Muslim and Croat women (Helms 2003a, 58).

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CHAPTER 3

The Politics of Not/Belonging: Making Sense of Post-Dayton Exclusions

In 1994, pioneering feminist, sociologist and anthropologist, Žarana Papić wrote:

> We become what is written in our birth certificate, as the inescapable part of our identities, by the simple fact that we are born somewhere (territory), and to someone (national identity). This is (a) totalitarian (very total, indeed) nationalist occupation of the total space of our identities. We cannot escape it. By this cunning operation we are forever what we can never choose- our predetermined origin, blood and nation. (Papić 1994a, 14)

Among the intellectuals and activists to openly challenge nationalist rhetoric and ethno-national conflict, Papić worked tirelessly to critique and resist the ties between nationalism, patriarchy and war. For this political stance, her and other feminist pioneers were tagged as disloyal citizens and national traitors. Written at the height of the nationalist deconstruction of Yugoslavia and in the midst the Bosnian War, this statement offers a stark example of the personal and collective reckoning with the totalitarian inscription of ethnic belonging initiated first through the mobilization of nationalist rhetoric and then through the means of war and ethnic cleansing that swiped the region and Bosnia-Herzegovina in particular.

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In 1995, the long-awaited Dayton Peace Agreement put an end to the conflict but with it came the institutionalization of ethnic belonging. The inclusion of Annex 4, also known as the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina defines “Bosniacs, Croats, and Serbs, as constituent peoples (along with Others), and citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina”. The consolidation of a so-called peace, thus, signalled the continuation of “the totalitarian nationalist occupation of identities” (Papić 1994b) through the means of international conflict resolution and the entrenchment of power in the hands of various nationalist elites. The Dayton architecture has since mutated into a dysfunctional apparatus that caters for the elite’s needs while unable to guarantee basic rights and removed from everyday life. Writing in the aftermath of the 2014 civic mobilization in protest to the pernicious Dayton machinery, Selma Tobudić illustrates how the implications of Dayton’s citizenship order reach far beyond institutions, infusing everyday life with dominant tropes about identity, memory and belonging. Echoing Žarana Papić’s words, she writes:

> In every aspect of life, what one is and can be, including how one is to remember, is encompassed and encapsulated within an ethnic identity. In this country “being” has come to be thought of only within the parameters of belonging to either/or one of three “nationalities”. These “nationalities” are then (un)represented by the major avatar-like political parties. The imposed and imposing regimes of remembering have proved to be crucial, particularly since they serve as a tool to overwrite any other remembering out of the general code of belonging. This enactment of “belonging” confines it to a clearly delineated and patriarchal collective. It is this patriarchal collective which has repetitively ensured, for the past twenty years, the (re) production and (re) mobilization of the electorate, enabling the continuity of the positioning of political elites in power more or less unchanged. (Tobudić 2015, 155–156)

Drawing on this powerful illustration of post-Dayton’s regime of being and remembering, in this chapter I want to follow around what gets overwritten in the institutionalized parameters of citizenship: the belonging, memories and identities that exceed and complicate *the three nationalities* logic. While a wealth of studies delved into the societal implications of post-conflict and post-agreement citizenship, in this chapter I take a less explored trajectory by focusing on the affective dimensions of navigating and inhabiting Dayton’s afterlives. The focus of

this chapter thus is on the affective politics of (not) belonging, as crucial dimensions of the concept and practices of citizenship. As mentioned, I draw on feminist conceptualizations that expand our understanding of citizenship as an ongoing, dialogical and multilayered process, encompassing multiple and overlapping senses of belonging (Lister 2003; Mouffe 2005; Yuval-Davis 1999, 2006). Through this perspective, questions of affect play a crucial role in shaping how belonging comes into being and is constantly negotiated through variously enacted mechanisms of attachment that bind individuals to others and to objects (Ahmed 2010; Roseneil 2013). Here, I track the implications of post-Dayton citizenship by zooming—in into the lived experiences, sensations, views and memories shared by the women I interviewed for this project. If the so-called peace has reduced citizenship to an all-encompassing focus on ethnic belonging, how do the women featured in this book negotiate their positioning vis-à-vis institutionalized narratives? Which kind of imagined communities do they inhabit?

The narratives discussed here attend to the specific historicity and multilayered complexity of post-Dayton BiH. *Post-Dayton* here signifies a geopolitical site made and kept alive by the ongoing intersection between the legacy of conflict, the politics of international intervention, as well as the trajectories of post-socialist transformation. Rather than a relic of the past, the conflict, its violence, its traumatic memories, the divisions it produced and the relations of sociability it shattered continue to reverberate and intimately shape personal and collective lived experience. Refracted through post-Dayton lived experiences are also political and affective contingencies engendered by the failed promises of international conflict resolution and peacebuilding, as well as by the dissolution of socialism as political alternative and site of belonging. The personal narratives of this book's protagonists offer powerful illustrations of the complex and diverse meanings belonging assumes in the context of post-Dayton as a *thick* present of permanent crisis. Narratives reveal efforts to make sense of the ambivalent legacy of socialism, conflict and post-conflict transformation, as my interlocutors situate themselves vis-à-vis the ruptures, crisis and openings that these complex processes have produced.

In the chapter, I explore the entanglements between the conflict, the exclusionary enactments of the post-Dayton regime and the personal stories and experiences narrated during the interviews. My focus here is on the tropes of belonging, exclusion, sense of loss and also

renewed attachments to variously imagined communities, in some cases also in proximity to ethno-nationalism. In many of the interviews, the experience of conflict appears as both rupture and defining moment that intimately, yet differently, shapes the interviewees' positioning *in* Dayton's permanent impasse, as well as informing aspirations for a life otherwise. In a narrative move I encountered in various interviews, attempting to make sense of the conflict as rupture/defining moment also often involves a gazing back, to recover certain memories while perhaps silencing others. Another recurring theme is disillusionment in the face of post-conflict transformation's damning failure. There are also points of friction among the narratives discussed here as the boundaries of belonging assume different meanings which are shaped by personal experiences, professional interests and political inclinations, as well as by moments where the women I interviewed speak from diverse and shifting subject positions of women, feminists, Othered citizens, mothers, survivors and so on.

In Tito's Time: Nostalgia, Silences and Feminist Counter-History

Several women I interviewed refer to the cultural landscape and political values embedded in the socialist system of the former Yugoslavia. In the context of political transformation that ensued post-1989, the socialist past became highly contentious. For example, in Croatia where the infamous *Globus* article against Yugonostalgic feminists who rallied against patriotic readings of wartime sexual violence was published, the mere evocation of a Yugoslav belonging was viewed with extreme suspicion by nationalist leaders, while media and political propaganda often publicly equated Yugonostalgia with national treason (Kesić 1999; Pavlović 1999). With the outbreak of the wars and with the post-conflict overpowering focus on resolving *deep-seated* ethnic divisions, critically addressing the legacy of socialist past inevitably took a back step. In the aftermath, the neoliberal logic of post-conflict transformation supplanted the language of post-1989 "transition", wherein nostalgia mediated through socialism is often dismissed as an attempt to romanticize the socialist past or at best derided as having assumed the negative connotation of being *anachronistic*, *passé*, *naïve*. As Srećko Horvat and Igor Štiks point out, these liberal readings avoid digging

deeper into critical questions about disempowerment and the search for political alternatives that simmer behind these feelings and longing (Horvat and Štiks 2012).

Examples of popular "Yugonostalgia" abound throughout the countries of the former Yugoslavia. These range from the continued popularity, relevance and consumption of cultural products of the Yugoslav times, such as films and music, in particular bands from the 1980s ex-YU punk scene to places like Tito's Bar in Sarajevo, a pub dedicated to the memory of Tito and all things ex-YU, now an institution within the city (Velikonja 2017). While elements of this nostalgia can be simply as retro-trend or a fleeting fashion, delving into the multitude of Yugonostalgic manifestations highlights deeper social, political and affective implications (Choi and Deiana 2017). Cynthia Simmons argues that nostalgia for Yugoslavia is symptomatic of an emerging *counter-discourse*, as an attempt to disrupt nationalism, as well as dominant neoliberal triumphalism of peacebuilding and Europeanization, that could provide a nuanced appraisal of the recent history (Simmons 2009). Monika Palmberger reads Yugonostalgia as a predisposition that is rather forward-looking and that entail hopeful aspirations for the future (Palmberger 2008, 2016). Set against the backdrop of dominant narratives that frame Bosnia through the trope of failed state, violence and hopelessness, other scholars propose taking seriously the memories, promises and failures of socialism and their critical potential (Gilbert et al. 2008; Horvat and Štiks 2012; Choi and Deiana 2017).

In a similar vein, I view these multiple imaginaries and sense of belonging rooted in the socialist past as attempts to staying attached to hope and promises of normality in the overwhelming post-Dayton present. I argue that memories of *life at the time of Yugoslavia* narrated during the interviews signal more than a straightforward longing for the bygone past of socialism. Rather, I view these narratives as attempts to re-adjust in the face of the personal and collective affective contingencies engendered by the post-Dayton impasse which, lest we forget, is shaped by multiple "posts": post-socialist, post-conflict and post-international intervention. Having grown up in SFRY, some interviewees often speak of *Tito's Time* as an important dimension in defining their sense of belonging. The evocation of Yugoslavia in the narrative interviews revolves around two key tropes: the (perceived) equal positioning of women in socialist times and an inclusive sense of belonging where

ethno-nationalist cleavages are seen as irrelevant, or so the story goes. By evoking a history of women's equality, interviewees' reflections and memories work to re-imagine/remake a community of belonging for women that seems shattered, absent, if not even impossible in current days Bosnia-Herzegovina. The *ghost* of the former Yugoslavia is often filled with memories of familial circumstances, companionship and a set of social relations which are now foreclosed. Crucially, this evocation is imbued with a sense of possibility and hope which, interviewees note, stand in sharp contrast with the curtailing of alternatives post-Dayton. The following extract illustrates what we could define *nostalgic* tropes, as the protagonist remembers growing up in the (apparent) gender-equal society that Yugoslav socialism had promised to build:

> As a matter of fact I was born in 1947, immediately after the 2nd World War and at that time Yugoslavia was a new socialist country that was rebuilding everything [...] *That socialist society gave opportunities to women. So my culture, the culture which I was brought up with, had women everywhere around*. We had women ministers. Yugoslavia had a woman prime minister in the 80s, except Margaret Thatcher nobody else had a woman prime minister in Europe. Not only a prime minister, a lady from Croatia, Milka Planinc, but we also had ladies ambassadors. We had ladies director of big companies, managers. I remember the mother of one of my friends. She was director of a big building company. So it was quite *normal*. (Personal interview, April 2010, emphasis added)

Similarly another interviewee evokes a socialist society of equal opportunities that, as the story goes, was shattered because of violent ethno-nationalism:

> *In former Yugoslavia we resolved the issue of women's status in many respects.* We had the right to vote since 1943, equal pay, equal opportunities. However, things started to change during the war. (Personal interview, March 2010, emphasis added)

Interesting is how in these quotes the legacy of socialist Yugoslavia emerges through a familiar narrative of women's inclusion in decision-making and equal opportunities that, if we wanted, paints a rather idealistic, or at least partial, picture of the gender politics of socialism. As mentioned in previous chapters, despite the existence of welfare rights, job security provisions for women, and reproductive rights,

gendered inequalities in employment and decision-making were retained in socialist Yugoslavia, as well as traditional gender relations in the private sphere (Ramet 2010; Bonfiglioli 2015). At the same time, as Chiara Bonfiglioli writes, albeit the emancipatory politics of socialism was limited, opportunities to work outside the home, gain economic independence and achieve self-realization became central elements of women's identity in socialist times (Bonfiglioli 2015, 59). The extracts above thus convey this sense of presence, visibility and opportunities enabled precisely by the working/mother model of socialist citizenship. Useful to read the narratives of citizenship in Yugoslavia quoted here is Luisa Passerini's reminder that memory speaks from today (e.g. Gabaccia and Iacovetta 2016; Passerini 2016; Hiner 2016). In other words, the point for me is not whether the women I interviewed offer an accurate account of socialist Yugoslavia, what is interesting in these stories is how the protagonist frames *Tito's time* to invoke a community of belonging and a sense of identity. These are intertwined with equal opportunities and the presence of women in the public sphere and, crucially, with a sense of *normality* that nationalism, conflict and the post-conflict regime of being and remembering has shattered.

The picture emerging from the different stories of socialist Yugoslavia is, however, not straightforward. As illustrated above, for some women I interviewed the equal opportunities system of the former Yugoslavia appears as an important and desirable political and cultural reference. In this instance, interviewees make sense of their identity and express their understanding of gender roles through a nostalgic rendering of a pro-women and progressive Yugoslavia. This perspective orients them critically towards nationalism and its conservative gender roles. For another interviewee, as I show below, memories of the former Yugoslavia are intrinsically linked to the emergence of a feminist conscience. Thus remembering, here, takes the narrative form of a counter-history where belonging is expressed as a critical positioning in a feminist community that, while rooted in the time of socialism, also stands in tension with the patriarchal underpinnings of state socialism.

As mentioned, when considering the legacy of state socialism in the region, feminist scholars point out the socialist system formally granted citizenship rights and entitlements to women but also compromised the emergence of a gender critique in both the private and public domain. Now well-known feminist critiques contend that while the socialist model of citizenship granted certain rights to women, these were

nevertheless confined exclusively to their status as mothers and workers. Other suggests that since in socialist societies the family came to be perceived as a *safe* space of dissent in opposition to the intrusiveness of the state, this very idealization often compromised the possibilities for developing a critique of gender relations within the private domain (Einhorn 1993; Galligan et al. 2007). As Einhorn (1993) and Dević (1997) write, it is precisely within this context that the *neofeminist* movement emerged in the former Yugoslavia and set out to challenge the gender inequalities embedded in both official/public and popular/private discourses.

In the former Yugoslavia, instances of women's activism, which can be traced back to the Anti-Fascist Front of Women (AFŽ), remained visible throughout socialism (Einhorn and Sever 2003; Cockburn 1998; Dević 1997). Early feminist groups in the late 1960s comprised of professional women working in the social sciences, arts and journalism. At the end of the 1970s, such groups were at the core of the neofeminist movement (Neofeminizam) (Jancar-Webster 1999; Ramet 2010; Cockburn 1998). Ana Dević points out that the independent character of this movement, made of non-Party-affiliated professional and intellectual women, was enabled by the permissive authoritarianism of the Yugoslav party which allowed relatively free circulation of foreign periodicals and international academic exchanges and which, in order to preserve its permissive reputation compared to other "oppressive" socialist regimes, decided against suppressing/controlling the movement (Dević 1997). One of the women I had the opportunity to interview for this project is Dunja Blažević, renowned art critic and Yugoslav feminist. She had been among the key feminist intellectuals who began mobilizing for a critique of the resilient patriarchal relations in Yugoslav society. Contrary to the other narratives discussed in this section, here memories of the former Yugoslavia are deeply intertwined with the personal and collective emergence of feminist belonging in ways that complicate her position within the citizenship regime of Tito's time:

> […] Of course I was very involved or interested in what was going on in society and, our generation, this post-Second World War generation of women in former Yugoslavia, well, we started to think about the position of not only our generation but also our mothers' generation. What happened to them? because they participated equally in the war and then they disappeared even legally in the constitution. *I mean there was not the problem like in the rest of Europe, the equal pay for men and women was not an*

> *issue in Yugoslavia but the fact was that patriarchy and this private sector was still very conservative. On the public level we were absolutely equal, you know, but that was something we, our generation, of course wanted to point out and to discuss these facts.* What is private, what is public, what is in fact put under the carpet and so on and what is declared. But the fact was that there was no equal number of women in all these political structures. (Personal interview, September 2010)

As mentioned, one of the key initiatives of the movement, which grew out of feminist groups active in Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana but also included women from Sarajevo, was the organization of the first international conference which was held at Belgrade's Student Cultural Centre in October 1978. The conference was an idea of the feminist sociologist Žarana Papić and Dunja Blažević. The event which was titled "Druc-ca Žena. Žena pitanje, novi pristup?" ("Woman Comrade(ss). The Woman's Question, A New Approach?") and involved feminists from the region and different countries in Europe, such as Helen Cixous and Dacia Maraini. Despite the complex relationship of *Neofeminizam* with state socialism and the difficulties encountered in the following years in establishing an all-encompassing Yugoslav feminist movement, the conference is remembered as a significant event when analysing the development of feminist discourses and practices as alternative to the official model of citizenship. As clearly expressed in the slogan, the event reflected the objectives which animated the emergence of second wave Yugoslav feminism: to problematize the private sphere which was rendered invisible within socialist rhetoric, addressing the inequalities hidden in the socialist model of citizenship and reproduced through the resilient public/private dichotomy. The emergence of neofeminist groups and this catalyst event indicate that, despite the tendency to sweep under the carpet questions of gender equality within popular discourses and in the official state rhetoric, Yugoslav feminists crafted a space for articulating a critique of the dominant citizenship discourse. A number of scholars point out that the extent to which the feminist groups amounted to a movement should not be overstated as the groups remained at the fringes and did not reach out to a broader audience (Korac 2003; Helms 2003). What remains particularly significant is the agentic nature of these interventions in forging spaces of citizenship as an alternative to formal politics, and the legacy this holds for the development of current feminist discourses in the successor states of former

Yugoslavia, including Bosnia. The following extract highlights these inter-generational connections as important elements that weave into the fabric of a (Post)Yugoslav feminist community of belonging, that survived in spite of broader contentions and whose spirit animates current feminist formations:

> Then, well, I was, and also Nada Ler-Sofronić[1] was at the university and our dear colleague and friend who died Žarana Papić,[2] organised this group Za Žena, this first family.
>
> So that was kind of … very hot and, why I mention that it's because the new generation of feminists refers to this conference which means that it was not a one-time event but it continues and it was fruitful for us. And the girls who participated to that conference became really serious public names in different fields from Vesna Pusić in Zagreb, Vesna Kesić, also Slavenka Drakulić and a lot of women still alive and still very active today…
>
> This is something that was part of my activity next to art. I couldn't separate in fact my engagement professionally in art and my personal engagement. (Personal interview, September 2010)

This narrative reveals a different disposition towards socialist Yugoslavia. While still expressing an attachment to *Tito's Time*, it articulates a more critical perspective on the legacy of state socialism by drawing on the experiences and political commitment initiated with the *Neofeminizam*. Here, memories of feminist political engagement complicate attachments to socialist time through self-positioning within a critical community of belonging. Particularly interesting is how this story maps continuities across generations of feminists in the region, evoking a sense of collectivity that undermines neat categorizations of ethno-national identity, blurring and re-imagining the boundaries of belonging, both affectively and geopolitically.

All the excerpts discussed in this section express an attachment to the cultural and political imaginaries of the Yugoslav socialist era. While a certain affinity undergirds these accounts, different *orientations* towards this legacy emerge complicating and adding interesting layers to the protagonists' narrated sense of (be)longing. While the first accounts do not (wish to) acknowledge larger gender inequalities retained in the socialist system, the latter demonstrates a more critical perspective towards the *rhetoric* of equality. This critical perspective becomes even more explicit as

the protagonist positions herself within a feminist community of belonging that is in tension with existing practices and boundaries of citizenship.

I view these intricate narratives as attempts to outlive the legacy of violence and conflict by anchoring oneself to (the memories of) an alternative community of belonging, at the intersection between the socialist imaginary and the critical feminist experiences emerged in its midst. A re-imagining potential infuses these attempts to *hang in there* and *refuse to let go* of the remnants of normality and equality ascribed to “my culture, the culture I was brought up in”, as one interviewee puts it. I read these attachments as efforts to critically distancing and protecting oneself from what Lauren Berlant calls *histories that hurt* (Berlant 2011). Borrowing from Svetlana Boym (2001), I suggest that rather than a paralysing longing for a (real or perceived) past, these nostalgic manifestations are oriented towards the future, i.e. towards the promises of equality, normality and feminist transformative politics that the interviewees have invested into, during Tito’s time and currently. The following excerpt is illustrative of this point:

> […] *So for me, women could do anything. I was used to having women around*. And I got shocked at how terribly this society changed after the war. *This nationalist society, which is totally divided, became very traditional*. Influence of religion suddenly became very important, very strong. *And within this religious, traditional society woman has a certain place which is not a public space*. Women should be at the family disposal, dealing with certain areas in their life, not with everything. And I think this is the reason (why): war and the fact that this society became very nationalist, very much divided and shaped by the influence of religion. And suddenly it became very unusual that you go to politics or that you go to do this and that… *but it will change by time, because you cannot ignore a long history*. (Personal interview, April 2010, emphasis added)

The conflict in this extract works again as a rupture. This excerpt makes a connection between the rise of nationalism, the break out of conflict and the entrenchment of patriarchal power relations. This is a common narrative that highlights the gendered impact of conservative nationalism and militarization as *sudden*, when in fact gendered processes in the private sphere had existed also during socialism and certain processes of re-patriarchalization that had been set in motion during the times due to economic restructuring as SFRY opened to the free market. What is

interesting is how interviewees remember this juncture as the moment that irremediably forecloses the promises for women's equal positioning in the public sphere embedded in socialist Yugoslavia and in the better future *that could have been*. For those with a long-standing involvement in feminist activism, however, investments in the promises of equality are sustained by a continuous critical engagement with the multiple and malleable workings of patriarchal power that persist or appear anew in the post-socialist and post-conflict moments:

> Then it (the issue of patriarchy) became again hot after all that happened in former Yugoslavia. *And many, how to say, rights we had before, women lost in this new conservatism*. This is not only here (in Bosnia) I mean, in all these new born countries which are really poor on that issue. So we had to do it again, *de nouveau* as the French say, and to start this activism in a different way. (Personal interview, September 2010, emphasis added)

Set against her involvement in second wave Yugoslav feminism and the first women's conference, this interviewee's account evokes a feminist community of belonging which establishes a genealogy of feminist discourses in the region, shifting from the "post-second world war" generation of Yugoslav feminists to the younger generation of feminists who are "still active today". The evocation of this feminist-imagined community is also particularly significant given the divisive history of the region. It suggests that despite violent ruptures and transformations, the divisive legacy of war and the entrenchment of nationalism as by-product of the so-called peace have not irremediably marginalized and silenced personal and collective investments in the critical potential of Yugoslav feminism in defining women's identities and belonging (see also Zaharijević 2015).

Outside Belonging: The (Im)Possibility of a Bosnian-Herzegovinian Identity

During my first fieldwork trip in 2010, discussions about the exclusionary nature of the Dayton Peace settlement were framed around the Sejdić-Finci European Court of Human Rights verdict which paved the way for the issue of constitutional reform, or at least that the time it seemed so.[3] I often began my conversations drawing on the example of the constitution as starting point to explore the interviewees' views on the dominant architecture and vocabulary of citizenship. This allowed

me to introduce the scope of my research through a tangible example, using an issue that was relatively topical at that time. This *ice-breaker* question yielded richer responses than I anticipated. To begin with, it became clear that although EU political circles and as well as academics held high hopes, interviewees were much more sceptical about the possibilities that the verdict of EUCHR would eventually lead to change. With hindsight, these perspectives turned out to be far-sighted given that the issue of constitutional reform remains outstanding at time of writing and has fallen off the EU negotiating table. At the same time, discussing the constitution opened opportunities for the idiosyncrasies of Dayton's so-called peace to come to the fore, as a number of women talked frankly and passionately about the ways in which the curtailing of alternative attachments and belonging deeply affects their sense of identity and positioning in post-Dayton BiH.

Women's reflections highlight frustrations with the notion of ethnic belonging as the all-encompassing dimension of identity. Feelings of not-belonging and a sense of exclusion infuse these narratives, which bring into sharp relief the deeply personal implications of ethnicized exclusions perversely enabled by the politics of consociationalism. Conversations were often filled with details of familial circumstances and relationships that are foreclosed in the current citizenship regime. Interviewees also offered personal critical reflections on how the peace has worked to legitimize nationalism as the tool that serves the interest of the powerful elites, at the expense of ordinary citizens. In the following extract, a sense of loss emerges in relation to the bonds and system of sociability that war has shattered as the protagonist expresses a disavowal of the ethnic foundation of citizenship:

> Yes, *the law is forcing citizens to recognise themselves as either Croat, Serb or Bosniaks, or some strange category called "the Others", there is no possibility to recognize yourself as a "Bosnian-Herzegovinian" or something similar related for the country identity. For me… I have no country. I cannot recognise myself in these categories. I have lived most of my life in former Yugoslavia. My family was originally from Vojvodina (Serbia) and also from Croatia, and we live in Bosnia-Herzegovina. So I wouldn't recognise myself in either of the three countries.* In former Yugoslavia you had the possibility to define yourself as Yugoslav, not only as Serb, Croat etc … but you also had the opportunity to be neutral. *Until citizenship is associated with nationality I do not feel represented.* (Personal interview, March 2010)

For another contributor, a sense of loss is propelled by the overwriting of a loved one's identity and their personal involvement in the war, as well as by experiencing the broken promises of Dayton, as a system that favours political manoeuvering, marginalizing *ordinary* experiences and belonging of those who lived the war, and struggle in its aftermath.

> Oh the Others. What are they? That's a pity and that's awful for me because my husband is from a mixed marriage. Then he is nothing, he's other. And he was born in Sarajevo and was fighting for freedom and now he's Other. And there are so many people that are from mixed marriages, for example, or that don't feel that they belong to those three nationalities. And what are they? (Personal interview, September 2010)

In a narrative move I often observed in my exchanges, this interviewee cannot help but view citizenship in these circumstances as meaningless and empty (Hromadžić 2015):

> So the main problem is nationalism but this is only the tool. They are using it. In the world, in other countries, I think it is the same, they are using it too. They are Catholics, they are Protestants. In the whole world it is a very good tool. Nationalism and religion are used for bad purposes [...] Politicians are creating problems and they are using nationalism as their mean for creating those problems. Because it is a mean for them to make people afraid of others. So they can rule people and they can manipulate them. So nationalism is their tool and they do it very successful. Citizenship is not very important. It is not important that you are a citizen, it is important that you are Croat, or that you are Serb or that you are Muslim. That's the only thing which counts the end. (Personal interview, September 2010)

Echoing these sentiments, a journalist and activist who works tirelessly for the rights of wartime victims, expresses frustration and anger at the politics of disenfranchisement and despair ushered in by decades of Dayton's citizenship. In the following extract, the sense of not-belonging is inflected through personal wartime vicissitudes, but also animated by the protagonist's long-standing work for social justice.

> For me the biggest problem is that the constitution of my country is not recognising me ... *I am not recognised by that constitution*. So in this country I don't exist, because, even now after the decision of the Human

> Rights Court which recognised the Jewish people and the Roma people, I belong to the category which is not at all recognised. I am Bosnian! I am simply trying to live in this country without going around with the flag of my religion. *I am just Bosnian, just somebody that happened to be born in Bosnia. That is my citizenship, that is my nationality.* (Personal interview, May 2010, emphasis added)

Given the consociational provisions provided for by the peace settlement, *simply being Bosnian* is foreclosed and relegated to the residual category of the Others, the subject position available to those who do not (wish to) conform to the dominant ethnic logic of belonging. Citizenship, as framed in the institutional context, loses meaning and becomes yet again an empty concept:

> I am somebody who was born and lives in Bosnia and I do not exist in this country! […] *Every time when I write down my name and write Bosnian, somebody will put me in the group "Others". This is a huge issue and nobody is talking about these "Others".* They do talk about Jewish people and Roma people and that's good but they are forgetting all of us who are just Bosnians, who do not care about their religion, about Bosniaks, about Serbs, about Croats. I just don't care, I am Bosnian. And many people are like that. *And that's what this constitution made, because this constitution would recognise you only if you were part in the war.* I was part of the war because I was a victim. I didn't take any side, I mean I did because I was put on one side but I never voted for politicians […] That's like when somebody asks me what my nationality is. *I am tired, I am tired of nationality.* (Personal interview, May 2010, emphasis added)

These reflections are illustrative of how the women who contributed to this project navigate the paradoxes of Dayton's so-called *peace*. In some instances, these narratives resonate with accounts of wartime struggles experienced by those who faced ensuing pressure to declare one's national identity. As Ivana Maček documents, those who had lost the option to declare themselves as Yugoslav or refused to strengthen divisions along ethno-nationalist lines strived to hold on to the idea of a Yugoslav nationality throughout the war and hoped that divisions would end with the conflict (Maček 2009). In this respect, the narratives discussed here reveal a continuation of wartime struggles and sense of disorientation into decades of so-called peace. On the other hand, the narratives discussed here have resonances with the notion of *invisible*

*citizen*s deployed by Azra Hromadžić to highlight the predicament experienced by those whose identity and complex personal history simply do not fit the Serb/Croat/Bosniak constitutional grid and the consequent ethnicization of everyday life. As Hromadžić writes "As a result, the former Yugoslav mixed citizens have been transformed into spatially unmappable, bureaucratically invisible, and socially marginalized (anti-) citizens" (Hromadžić 2015). In a similar vein, the experiences discussed here reveal the deeply affective and embodied reverberations of a peace agreement that, perversely, has reproduced and institutionalized the very divisions it aimed to overcome, rendering those who do not and cannot identify within categories of ethno-national belonging essentially as invisible citizens.

Even years after these encounters, I vividly remember how powerfully the protagonists of this book conveyed a sense of displacement and disillusionment with the failed promises of peace. At the same time, I suggest that inhabiting the category of the "Others" can be seen as a creative attempt to re-orient oneself in the paradoxical reality of the so-called peace. Belonging in post-Dayton Bosnia relies upon a tension between ethno-nationalist affiliation and the possibilities of a civic identity which essentially results into political disenfranchisement. The stories featured in this section suggest attempts at negotiating this tension in favour of a more fluid Bosnian-Herzegovinian identity which is imbued with feelings of exclusions and displacement. And yet, it is also productive because, in its disruption of institutionalized and neat categories of ethnic identity as all-encompassing dimension of citizenship, it upholds a wider sense of belonging with those who have been marginalized through the politics of nationalism and the implementation of the peace agreement. The frustrations with the system of ethno-politics discussed here present interesting similarities with the demands and themes that resulted in the wave of citizens' protests which emerged across BiH in 2014 (Murtagh 2016; Arsenijević 2015). In their impetus to challenge the nationalist status quo and the post-conflict politics of dispossession, the protests and plenum movement signalled an important political moment in the effort to remake citizenship in post-Dayton Bosnia through re-claiming a radical form of politics. The 2014 events illustrate how a sense of not-belonging can even momentarily translate into a productive and agentic force. I suggest that traces of that political potential perhaps were already in formation in the stories of displacement recounted by the women who

contributed to this project, some of whom were later actively involved in the 2014 mobilization.

Although the excerpts discussed in this section share an underlying sense of displacement and not-belonging, fascinating and politically important here is the diversity of personal experiences, social bonds and political reflections evoked in these stories. Also significant is that these stories do not explicitly address gendered experiences and feminist concerns. Therefore, while the quotes discussed here highlight a crucial tension between the women's experiences and sense of belonging and the imposition of pre-given identities in the current citizenship regime of post-Dayton Bosnia, the re-negotiation of belonging narrated in this section does not illuminate the tensions between gender and ethno-national identity. These instead will take centre stage in what follows.

Of Feminists …and Mothers: Disruptive Attachments

Several women I interviewed referred to the conflict both as a rupture and defining moment for a renewed sense of feminist belonging. Interweaving personal experiences, as well as reflections on the tensions between the conflict, the entrenchment of nationalism and women's experiences, the gendered implications of post-conflict/post-agreement citizenship take centre stage in these narratives. Here, a critique of the dominant citizenship discourse in Bosnia-Herzegovina is undertaken unequivocally through a feminist gaze. The contributors' critical reflections highlight a multiplicity of themes which are illustrative of the diverse personal experiences and political inclinations shaping their understanding of and aspirations for citizenship. Some contributors express a concern with women's political representation and gender equality, thus denoting a proximity to liberal understandings of citizenship. Others situate their visions of citizenship more explicitly within the history of Yugoslav feminism centred around anti-nationalist politics. These express a refusal of the patriarchal and divisive logic of ethnic differentiation, as evoked through Virginia Woolf's phrase "As a woman I have no country" famously associated with the dissident feminism of the 1990s (Zaharijević 2015). Underlying this political identity is a perception of the restrictive and masculine order of ethno-national belonging and the disowning of citizenship based around the exclusionary association of the state with ethnicity.

In the following extract, a feminist activist offers a powerful critique of the Dayton's citizenship regime that on one level shares similarities with the sense of not-belonging and otherness discussed earlier. Added here, however, is a feminist perspective that brings into light the masculine order of ethnic citizenship.

> You are probably introduced to our Constitution. We have this- the three musketeers Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks and then we have the Others. And this identity of the others is never defined. We don't know WHO are the others. We know that the others are not Croats, Muslim or Serbs obviously but this category was never defined. Croats, Serbs and Muslims are also written in male nouns, you know. So we can also claim, we can say that women are the category of others, but also Roma people, gay people, the whole LGBTIQ population, feminists, painters … you know you can put a lot of people in this category of the Others but it is not defined. (Personal interview, May 2010)

This activist expresses discomfort with the oppressive boundaries of citizenship as ethnic belonging that she describes as a burden. Locating herself into the community and legacy of dissident Yugoslav feminists, her narrative also metaphorically *lifts the cage* of ethnicity as the foundation and all-encompassing dimension of citizenship. In doing so, she re-imagines the boundaries of belonging:

> But for me citizenship is not an important category in my life. I have a citizenship of Croatian Bosnian and I am the lucky one 'cos I don't need visa to travel and enter European countries but I think that citizenship in respect to Bosnia, I see it as a burden. Something that really puts you in a cage that is called Bosnia-Herzegovina and you cannot leave because you are born here and because you are Bosnian and Herzegovinian regardless of … but if you are Serb or Croat then you are lucky 'cos you can get their documents and you can travel. I really see this category as very limiting category to people and I think for me as a feminist this category is complete nonsense. *I mean I would agree with Virginia Woolf as Virginia Woolf said my country is the whole world, I have no country.* This is basically how I feel. I think because I was lucky enough to be taken out of this place in 1992, you know, then you feel like someone takes you out from this ground, from your roots, from whatever you want to call them. Because it is yours, you are born here, you belong here and then you live somewhere else. You live in Zagreb, live in Utrecht whatever. And all of these places I

feel are also mine and I reckon that wherever I go I could feel the same. So, I mean I love Sarajevo, I love Bosnia-Herzegovina but this it shouldn't be my destiny. (Personal interview, May 2010, emphasis added)

As in other interviews, the conflict emerges in this extract as a rupture that shatters pre-existing feeling of belonging—"your roots"—and takes the protagonist elsewhere, allowing new bonds and attachments to develop that continuously undermine neat boundaries of citizenship as national and as ethnic belonging. Citizenship here emerges as a multifarious process of (be)longing inflected through personal experiences of wartime displacement, through the mobility and opportunities for travelling that having a Bosnian Croat passport allows and, crucially, shaped by political commitment to anti-nationalist feminism.

Similar themes also emerge in a group interview I undertook with the team working at the Sarajevo Centre for Contemporary Art. Under the direction of renowned curator Dunja Blažević at the time of my first fieldwork trip, the centre has been involved in a number of exhibitions that promote local women artists.[4] At the time, SCCA had a strong female leadership and a number of renowned women artists and curators. The interview I had originally scheduled with the director turned into a collective discussion involving other two team members. From the outset, our conversation centred around the tensions between the positioning of women and feminists in Bosnia and the current citizenship regime which the protagonists view as masculine, oppressive and disempowering.

E: your topic (gender and citizenship) is really interesting for me because, you know, citizenship and the issue of nationality or ethnic belonging is very masculine, and the state itself, the government, everything is masculine. How to identify yourself as a citizen? Or as woman?
H: I think this idea of citizenship is not accepted here in general. People don't act as citizens, they don't ask questions from the position of citizens but they ask questions from the position of the national identity or their national belonging.
D: which is really terrible!
H: which is really bad… in fact (made) by the state, by these parties.
D: Men impose men's philosophy.
H: yes, but not only with this gender issue also in general. This is accepted. Of course this is a men's world!
D: it's a man's approach.

> H: but the problem here is that nobody really takes it seriously, the position of the citizen because the national position is more important in culture, in art, in every other aspect. Or if I'm a woman and I'm a citizen, what is my position without national community?
> D: What is my identity?
> E: or religion, because they are very connected you know. So if you say I'm a feminist and I have no country, which might sound cheesy but that's what it is. For me being a woman and being a feminist: this identity is far more important than any other identity.
> D: This is why you have to be against if you really are conscious about yourself. Not being identified with this group. This is of course our everyday issue. (Personal interview, September 2010)

This conversation interweaves many of the questions this project is trying to unpack. It shows the protagonists grappling with the meanings of citizenship from their positioning as women, feminists and artists living in post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina. In the end, however, they reach a clear answer to their predicament: challenging nationalist rhetoric and disowning citizenship as ethno-nationalist belonging is of utmost and everyday importance for these feminists. In doing so, these interviewees locate their sense of belonging within the legacy of Yugoslav feminism, continuously disrupting the gendered and ethnicized boundaries of institutionalized citizenship practices and discourses.

In the following extract, a feminist activist similarly reflects on the current meaning of citizenship and its feminist alternatives. Interestingly, however, a different set of questions and answers emerge, as re-imagining citizenship focuses on efforts to transform the Dayton's institutional architecture through gender equality mechanisms. If the other extracts offer an expression of dissident feminism, here feminist citizenship assumes the meaning of taking Dayton's institutions to task and demand fulfilment of gender equality provisions.

> I also believe that the Constitution of Bosnia must guarantee equal rights for women and men. Repeating this article from the Universal Declaration of human rights is not enough. They say equal treatment regardless of race, gender blah blah blah. It has become blah blah blah because I think, you know, there has to be an article that says equality of women and men in BiH is guaranteed by this constitution. Equality means that women and men have to represent at least 40% in all governing bodies, public institutions and so on. I also think that is true also for persons with disabilities,

> that constitution has to say that it guarantees that persons with disabilities have equal opportunities as all other citizens who have no disabilities. And that they would be represented by 10% in all bodies, because I think it is possible it will take time but it is possible. (Personal interview, April 2010)

The quotes included in this section illustrate how the interviewees further problematize the current citizenship regime of Bosnia-Herzegovina by foregrounding the profoundly gendered nature of ethno-national discourses. Interviewees are critical of institutionalized practices and discourses of citizenship which they perceive as masculinist and hostile to women's and feminist sense of identity. As previously discussed regarding the narratives of "otherness", reflections discussed here reveal a sense of displacement, and to the questioning of one's own identity and place in the nation, as one interviewee puts it: "If I'm a woman and I'm a citizen, what is my position without your national community? What is my identity?"

Within these narratives of feminist belonging, however, the answer to this plight seems to be very clear as interviewee suggest that, for them, their sense of identity as diversely positioned women and feminists is more important than other forms of ethno-nationalist identification. In these narratives, embracing a feminist perspective translates into a rejection of nationalist discourse and the imposition of ethnicity as the all-encompassing dimension of belonging. For these interviewees, feminism represents an important political identity that situates them in opposition to dominant discourses and practices of citizenship. Here, the political commitment to feminism(s) provides a political identity and a community of belonging wherein interviewees can locate themselves and re-imagine citizenship. However, they do so in different ways which are inflected through personal vicissitudes, as well as through diverse visions of feminist citizenship as dissident or working in proximity to the state in order to uphold its commitment to gender equality (see also Zaharijević 2015).

The extracts analysed in this section provide a powerful illustration of the narrative strategies interviewees mobilize that challenge the imposition of narrow categories of ethno-national identity, revealing attempts at re-imagining citizenship through (diverse) feminist lenses and values. This re-imagining effort does not exclusively focus on women and gender as some interviewees continuously extend their attachments to reach out other marginalized groups. Feminist political identity and belonging

entail forging a sense of solidarity not exclusively among women but also with a number of other *Others*, as two contributors put it:

> So we can also claim, we can say that women are the category of others but also Roma people, gay people, the whole LGBTIQ population, feminists, painters… you know you can put a lot of people in this category of the others. (Personal interview, April 2010)
> I also think that is true also for persons with disabilities, that constitution has to say that it guarantees that persons with disabilities have equal opportunities as all other citizens who have no disabilities. (Personal interview, April 2010)

Paying attention to gendered and other processes of exclusions enabled by the current citizenship regime of Bosnia-Herzegovina, feminist belonging and politics thus emerge as dialogical, critical and ever-shifting to include wider contentions around collective action and (dis)empowerment in post-Dayton Bosnia. The tapestry of narratives discussed so far reveals points of friction and resonances, foregrounding cultural, historical and political elements which define the multiplicity of subject positions narrated by the activists I interviewed for this project. Among a number of conversations, a specific experience, that of motherhood, emerges as an interesting theme shaping these women's positioning, identity and agency. In the following extracts, the connections between motherhood and a feminist sense of identity take centre stage. On one level, these narratives resonate with gendered tropes of women as caring, nurturing and acting responsibly to protect their children. However, these accounts also challenge the gendered underpinnings propping up ethno-nationalist discourses by situating motherhood within a feminist sense belonging premised on the rejection of citizenship's ethnic and gendered foundations. Furthermore, these narratives offer powerful illustrations of how the protagonists negotiate their commitment to feminism and assess the implications that becoming mothers had for their identity and politics. The following extract is poignant as the protagonist describes her positive experience of motherhood, while also recounting concerns she experienced about its possible impact on her sense of the self:

> So now I have one year old son which actually helped me set my priorities much better and I really... I mean I enjoy being a feminist mum and it's

> really a great thing that happened to me because it has really helped me to prioritise much, much better. And you know I was also afraid that this was going to change me in different ways but it didn't. It actually was really, like, a really good thing that happened to me as a feminist, from this perspective. (Personal interview, April 2010)

Another interviewee speaks about being a feminist and a mother as a key lived experience and dimension of her political identity:

> My standpoint is that I am a feminist and I am a mother of a child with a disability. This is really which forms everything I do. My approach is always coloured by that. […] I am a feminist. I am a mother of a disabled child. So these are things that are important for me. I am very fond of Sarajevo, although I've spent two thirds of my life living abroad, but I am very linked to Sarajevo. (Personal interview, April 2010)

For a feminist activist who moved to Bosnia from Italy in response to the war, motherhood signals a foundational shift, ushering in a deeper entanglement in the everyday politics of Dayton's citizenship. As this becomes *scripted* so closely in her children's identity, she has to confront the Dayton's regime of being and remembering under different, inescapable, terms:

> Then with the birth of my sons, things changed. It surely changed my perspective in the sense that I have a different kind of investment in this country. Especially because all the dynamics of this country are reflected upon them. As for me, I am a foreigner I could always wash my hands of this country. I mean, if I'd grow tired of it or if I wouldn't be so fond of it anymore, I could always leave and leave this place behind. However this changes from the moment that you decide to have two sons who were born here and live here whose (Bosnian-Herzegovinian) identity is inescapable, despite the fact that I or my partner are both immigrants in some way. In fact it was after their birth when, for the first time, I have seriously contemplated leaving this country. Especially when we discovered that they are not citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina but they are citizens of the Federation, while their father who was born in Banja Luka is a citizen of the Republika Srpska. So this whole idea that you have different levels of citizenship in one country is already worrying. […] so a very rigid definition of citizenship which, on top of that, as you know is also defined through ethnic affiliation. Probably this problem begins to affect you in a different way when it is forced upon the skin of your sons …(Personal Interview, April 2010)

These narratives are both revealing and interesting as they interweave a political commitment to feminism, the disavowal of citizenship's ethnic foundations and the diverse experiences of motherhood each of the three women recounts. In one way, the reference to maternal politics might seem at odds with a feminist emancipatory politics as it evokes traditional gender construct and gender roles: in other words, it links women's political action and citizenship to their traditional role as mothers. Particularly in the context of peace, militarism and war, the notion of maternal agency is a contested topic in that it might reify universalizing tropes of women's natural peacefulness and care, and thus contribute to de-politicize instances of activism (Cohn 2013). While tropes of care and nurturing certainly emerge in the extracts above, interviewees spoke about motherhood as a much more complex lived experiences which they inscribe within ongoing reflections about their political commitment and interests.

Furthermore, I suggest that in the context of re-imaging citizenship *Post-Dayton*, narratives of feminist motherhood assume interesting political implications vis-à-vis the ethno-national order. Lest we forget that ethno-national discourses rely on powerful constructions of femininity and masculinity which identify gender-specific roles and duties for the good *national(ist)* citizen. In the Post-Yugoslav context, the construction of women as mothers has been crucial in dictating the norms of conduct and behaviour for women, whose bodies and duties have been confined to those of *symbols of the nation and vessels for its reproduction* (Slapšak 2001; Mostov 2000). As discussed in earlier chapters, in the nationalist dissolution of former Yugoslavia precisely this discursive manipulation of motherhood and other aspects of women's lives played an instrumental role in propping up the myth of national identity and citizenship, and the militaristic logic which led to the Yugoslav wars. Infamously, the outbreak of war marked an escalation from discursive manipulation to war strategy, wherein women became targets of sexualized and ethnicized violence precisely because of their life-giving and symbolic centrality in the myth of opposing ethno-national groups. Societal and cultural elements of this logic still linger post-Dayton in the entrenchment of nationalist discourses enabled by the consociational peace settlement, as well as in the unresolved gendered legacies of conflict.

Given these political underpinnings of motherhood, both historically and in the legacy of violent ethno-nationalism post-Dayton, the narratives quoted above assume a critical and creative significance.

By establishing connections between a feminist political identity and their lived experiences of motherhood, these accounts complicate essentialist understandings of motherhood underpinning the ethno-national order of citizenship. If feminists are seen as disloyal citizens to the ethno-nationalist group, the *feminist mother*'s critical potential lies in how interviewees re-appropriate the experience and identity of motherhood in ways that disentangle it from the norms dictating the *proper* conduct and behaviour of the *good nationalist woman/mother*. Reflections about being a feminist mother offer interesting insight into interviewees' understandings of belonging that disrupt the ethno-national order, revealing these negotiations and experiences as political. At the same time, these narratives are illustrative of multiple and intersecting layers of identity encompassing interviewees' positioning in diverse ideological, geopolitical and experiential *communities*.

Complicating the Tapestry: Belonging in Proximity to Ethno-nationalism

While the majority of women I interviewed for this project would not identify as members of the three constituent groups, references to ethnicity and national identity emerged in two interviews which I conducted with an elected representative of a nationalist-oriented party and the president of an association of women survivors. Ethnicity emerged in both interviews, even though in ways that are differently shaped by the protagonists' respective biographies and current positioning in the politics of post-Dayton Bosnia. The interview with the SNSD-elected representative stands out from all the other interviews in that it took place in a very formal context in the Parliament Buildings in Sarajevo. Much of the information disclosed during our conversation aimed at offering *official* answers to my questions and possibly to convey a positive image of the Bosnian institutions, as well as narrating herself as a supporter of gender equality.

> Since 2000 BiH really improved the role of women. We have made a significant improvement in gender equality. BiH is the first region in this region to adopt the law on gender equality. Today the situation is that the funds which are allocated to political parties are reduced of 10% if they don't have enough women in their assets within the parliamentary assembly. (Personal interview, April 2010)

The interview continued with an explanation of the gender mechanisms in place, at the respective state and entity level, and of the strategies developed by the government and the gender agencies to tackle issues such as gender quotas, equal pay and so on. Acting (and speaking) as a representative of the contested state government, my interlocutor offered an informative answer on the institutional mechanism in place. However, our conversation did not immediately disclose political inclinations, or illuminate personal opinions and perspectives, apart from conveying a certain support for gender equality initiatives. Yet, when asked to comment on the gendered nature of ethno-nationalist citizenship and on its effect on women's positioning, glimpses of personal reflections and political inclination emerged. This moment revealed an interesting tension between a concern for gender equality conveyed during our conversation and the implication that the predominant political discourse holds no bearings on the role and status of women:

> We had a bloody war here in BiH and this is something which defines all our activities. You know that We, the nations and the people do not have confidence (trust) in each other. The people are frightened that somebody else could take their rights, including the rights to make decisions. The main issue is what the three main nations that live here will do to make the country in which they live. How will the country look like and how will they create the country. […]Bosniak people because they are majority believe that they have the possibility to overcome the other two nations. According to the Serbs, BiH in the way which was created by Dayton Peace Agreement should be unquestionable and so RS is unquestionable because it was created according to Dayton. The Croats which live in the federation together with Bosniak people do not feel well and also ask for their issue to be solved. (Personal interview, April 2010)

Wanting to probe more, I then asked my interlocutor to assess whether the legacy of the war had a divisive impact of women, to which she poignantly replied: "Women are not out of this situation, they belong to each community. All women think the same as their community".

In this narrative, references to ethno-national identity emerge, albeit not explicitly, suggesting the protagonist's proximity to this narrative, for instance when she states "We, the Nations, the People". Bringing to light elements of tension between the commitment to pursue gender equality, an unwillingness to critique (or even acknowledge) the gendered nature of nationalism and the identification with ethno-national

narratives, this narrative potentially adds interesting layers to our understanding of women's complex experiences of nationalism that further complicate the tapestry of narratives discussed in this book. It was unfortunate that given the formality of our encounter, I could not dig deeper into the negotiations between feminist, gender and ethno-national identity that the interview had potentially hinted at.

In the second interview with a woman who leads an organization for the rights of women survivors of wartime sexualized violence, ethnicity emerges as she recounts the effects of a traumatic experience of violence that the interviewee endured during the war. As mentioned earlier, the issue of gendered sexual violence in the context of armed conflict, and as an extension in the Bosnian War, is shaped by troubling intersections between gender and ethnicity as defining boundaries of competing nationalist communities. As relevant literature has long demonstrated, sexual violence in conflict assumes public significance as strategy aimed at violating not only the victim but at annihilating also the broader community, in virtue of women's centrality to, and symbolic importance for, the honour of ethnic groups/nations (e.g. Enloe 1990; Alison 2007; Mostov 2000; Albanese 2001). In the context of the Bosnian conflict, wartime sexual violence during the Bosnian War thus was not only gendered but also ethnicized (Alison 2007). The following extract reveals these complex intersections still at stake as the interviewee recounts this personal experience fifteen years after the end of the war:

> In my personal experience I'm never going to go back to my birth place, while the chetnik kokarda is there, because they raped, they killed, they destroyed everything they could possibly destroy [...] I use the word Chetnik not to refer to ALL the Serbs but only the pathological and sick examples, outcasts, rapists, murderers. You know what it means to do that to a woman, even during peace times, not to mention during the war. You do not only think about the act of raping, about the child, what happens later, will they behead you. [...] One should have strength to cope with that: they are killing, you are giving them away your house, your everything, I can never forget that, never! I have some family friends of Serbian nationality and they are still very good friends and some of them helped me during the war. But then again there are the people who went into our houses and raped me and marked me for the rest of my life [...]
>
> I am not superstitious, I do not pray and do not fast, women come here who are fasting, that is their choice, I was not brought up that way, I will never understand why. (Personal interview, August 2010)

This powerful account interweaves the gendered impact of wartime sexual violence and the after-effects experienced on a personal level, with the ethnic dimension of the violence, as illustrated by clues such as the use of the word Chetnik and references to the Serb aggressors. As Inge Skjelsbæk found in her research with survivors, narratives of ethnicity are a salient dimension defining the identities of women who experienced sexual violence during the Bosnian War, together with narratives of victimization, survival and gendered experiences (Skjelsbaek 2006). In this sense, this account shares similar patterns with the stories analysed in Skjelsbæk's study, unravelling the intricate layers shaping this interviewee's identity as she recounts her experiences of navigating the aftermath of violence and the political post-conflict context. Given personal traumatic vicissitudes, making reference, even implicit, to the ethnic dimension of this experience might be to some extent inevitable. For instance, Cynthia Cockburn's research suggests that individuals who suffered ethnic cleansing or violence because of their (perceived or real) affiliation with a specific group often might embrace that belonging which, in turn, might become a chosen identity (Cockburn 2007, 92). In this sense, an ethnic narrative offers a way of reckoning with the aftermath of violence. The political implications of this process are, however, ambivalent given that, in the politics of post-Dayton Bosnia, survivors' experiences, identities and claims for justice inevitably become enmeshed with enduring nationalist narratives of collective victimhood. As Elissa Helms writes, these entanglements delimit how wartime sexual violence is understood and spoken about producing a tension between survivors' experiences and concrete needs, and collective narrative of victimhood and innocence (Helms 2013, 198).

The narrative above resonates with the process of identity formation in the aftermath of violence described by Skjelsbæk and Cockburn wherein the language of ethnicity comes to the fore, even though the protagonist does not locate herself completely with the ethno-national and religious (Bosniak Muslim) community of belogning. For instance, this is exemplified in the statement "I do not pray and do not fast" or, more importantly, when she explains that she does not endorse an exclusionary nationalist perspective because of her relationship with family friends of Serbian nationality. In the telling of this story during our conversation, the protagonist configures her identity as inevitably shaped by having endured gendered and ethnicized violence, as well as by attempts at outliving its legacy through becoming an activist in response to this

experience. On a personal level, the narrative discussed here indicates affective attempts deployed by this interviewee to make sense of the deeply embodied ramification of the conflict's violence, but also to locate herself in the politics of post-Dayton in ways that fit in with dominant patriotic narratives on the legacy of wartime violence. And yet, this proximity to the predominant politicization of ethno-national affiliations pursued by the nationalist elites also implicitly props up the patriarchal logic of women's victimhood's centrality to national honour that made the violence possible in the first instance (Helms 2014). A centrality that stands in contrast with inadequate public support for ensuring survivors' entitlements and with the lingering stigma attached to wartime rape experienced by survivors. As will be discussed in the following chapter, precisely because of this proximity, survivors' experiences and rights become deeply (re)entangled in competing nationalist narratives in ways that downplay concrete everyday needs and create hierarchies of victimhood which, in turn, compromise establishing wider solidarities with other women's groups.

Conclusion

If the so-called peace has reduced citizenship to a logic of ethno-national belonging and reproduced elements of the conservative gender order historically associated with the violent dissolution of multi-ethnic Bosnia and the former Yugoslavia, what meanings might belonging assume for the women who contributed to this project? The answer emerging from the stories shared by the protagonists of this book is not a straightforward one. To the contrary, the narratives I interweave in this chapter produce a complex picture of the diverse impact conflict, violence, loss and the ongoing transformations of various "posts" have for the interviewees' subjectivities and sense of belonging. Interviewees' reflections, multilayered relationships and memories featured in this chapter are illustrative of the different affective and narrative mechanisms of adjustment to the impasse of *life Post-Dayton*.

I organized narratives around four broad topics which stood out from my analysis of the interview material. This thematic structure has allowed me to interweave women's experiences together, while also paying constant attention to the diversity in their investment in the affective politics of citizenship post-Dayton, as well as in their conceptualization of alternatives modes of (be)longing. I began with narratives that evoke

attachments to the values, culture and life associated with the time of state socialism. In these accounts, the Yugoslav cultural space and system of sociability come to the fore shaping interviewees' sense of belonging and their critical orientation towards the dominant discourse of ethno-nationalist identity politics. While there is a tendency to dismiss attachments to the Yugoslav past as naïve or anachronistic, I have suggested that under a sense of belonging and imaginaries that might be grouped under the notion of Yugonostalgia (Simmons 2009; Palmberger 2008) simmer important strategies of adjustment to the conflict as rupture that might open opportunities to re-imagine citizenship and belonging. I have argued that, rather than a simplistic longing to the past, attachment to this fluid Yugoslav-imagined community might provide new hopeful directions and "visions for a better future" (Palmberger 2008, 355) through the forging of wider allegiances. At the same time, I have drawn attention to the protagonists' diverse orientation towards the legacy of life in Tito's time by emphasizing the political potential of narratives which display an explicit commitment to feminism to undertake a more critical outlook on the legacy of state socialism and negotiate alternative spaces of feminist citizenship as a lasting legacy amidst Post-socialist and post-conflict ruptures. By establishing a genealogy of feminist practices of citizenship in the region, beginning with the neofeminist movement, continuing throughout the decades of conflict and infusing current feminist belonging and identities, these narratives place women at the centre of the imagined communities of belonging. Such communties are continuously reconfigured as feminist activists establish new bonds that exceed essentialist boundaries of identity, as well as experience moments of friction, differences and ruptures.

Other interviewees similarly express a sense of disorientation and discomfort in relation to the dominant institutionalized logic of ethno-nationalist belonging and define their identity through a narrative of "otherness". These narratives offer important insight into how the women interviewed navigate and make sense of the narrow and essentialist category of ethno-national identity through attachments to more fluid Bosnian-Herzegovinian or Yugoslav identity, or by embracing the very constitutional category of "the Others". Conveying a sense of displacement and "not-belonging", these narratives illustrate the personal and collective plight experienced by the contributors who do not fit within the imposition of pre-given ethno-nationalist identities, bequeathed by

the legacy of conflict. Paying attention to these narratives of otherness provides further evidence of the exclusionary and problematic nature of the notion of ethnic citizenship, but it also reveals a remaking potential for citizenship in the forging of new bonds rooted precisely in this sense of *unbelonging*. While these narratives highlight a crucial tension between the interviewees' experiences and sense of belonging and the citizenship regime of post-Dayton Bosnia, these accounts do not further illuminate the gender dynamics associated with such discourse as the protagonists locate their personal and collective concerns in the wider exclusions experienced by all the Others, rather than arising from their subject positions as women.

The tension between the logic of ethno-nationalist citizenship and interviewees' commitment to feminism as a defining element of their political subjectivities takes centre stage in the third section. As the interviews' extracts illustrate, for these contributors inhabiting a feminist-imagined community stands in tension with the politicization of ethnic, national and religious affiliation and its attendant-gendered logic embedded in the current citizenship regime of Bosnia-Herzegovina. In these narratives, a feminist identity and belonging is inflected through personal experiences as well as defined by diverse political inclinations and different understandings of feminism, an illustration of the multiple layers shaping women's dynamic identity formation. I concluded this section by discussing the trope of the "feminist mother", narrated by interviewees as an important dimension of their political identity. Establishing a crucial link between motherhood and feminism rooted in the rejection of ethno-national citizenship, this narrative complicates and undermines the gendered and ethnicized logic which places women's life-giving agency at the service of the nation. As interviewees navigate their feminist identities and disentangle their lived experiences as mothers from the conditional nature of women's citizenship embedded in ethno-national discourses, interviewees re-cast themselves as dissident citizens.

Finally, I discussed two instances in which narratives of ethnicity emerged complicating and enriching the tapestry narratives discussed in this book. In the case of the interview with SNSD representative, references to ethnicity and the commitment to gender equality highlighted a site of tension between the endorsement of ethno-national discourse and the development of a critical perspective on its gendered nature. This narrative adds interesting layers to our understanding of women's

engagement with ethno-nationalist discourse. However, due to the interview's dynamics and given the lack of comparable data it was not possible to further develop this argument. In another interview, narratives of ethnicity in proximity to nationalism emerged as the protagonist recounts the complex personal and political impact of the traumatic experience of wartime sexual violence. While on the one hand, given these personal vicissitudes, endorsing an ethnic narrative might be inevitable, the proximity of this narrative to the politicization of ethno-national affiliations pursued by the nationalist elites stands in tension with survivors' concrete needs. It delimits opportunities to voice their own experiences and collective demands for citizenship in ways that might challenge the nationalist gendered and ethnicized rhetoric.

Overall, the tapestry of narratives discussed in this chapter offers a complex picture of women's identities and sense of belonging as they navigate in different ways the legacy of multiple transformations. Read together, these accounts stand in tension with the neat and narrow categories of ethno-national affiliations as the basis of citizenship. Evoking a broad repertoire of cultural, geopolitical and historical references (socialist, liberal, Yugoslav, Bosnian, feminist) and to personal experiences (motherhood, artist, intellectual, politician, survivors), the narratives discussed in this chapter provide a powerful illustration of the multilayered and complex nature of the interviewees' identities and senses of belonging. Attending to the complexity of intimate, affective and lived experiences brings into sharp focus a tension between, on the one hand, the interviewees' rich, multidimensional and at times incompatible narratives of citizenship and belonging and, on the other, the technocratic, reductive and exclusionary institutional solutions that continue to centre on neat categories of identity as the all-encompassing dimension and operating technology of Dayton's citizenship.

The tapestry of narratives discussed here offers crucial insight into how the women I interviewed for this project make sense of post-Dayton as thick moment of impasse shaped by multiple and intersecting processes. They reveal complex negotiations and visions of citizenship inflected through personal vicissitudes and diverse entanglements in the politics of post-Dayton Bosnia in ways that complicate and undermine institutionalized practices and discourses of citizenship. These are important details, stories and relationships that might be overlooked if we focus exclusively on the institutional dimension of citizenship, peace and security. A key point in this chapter is that the experiential, the affective, the intimate,

as well the incongruent, in the diversity of women's narratives and senses of identity should remain at the centre of our feminist engagements with the complexities of war/peace.

Notes

1. Nada Ler-Sofronić is renowned feminist and academic in Bosnia-Herzegovina. She is currently the Director of Women & Society Research, Policy and Advocacy Centre in Sarajevo. She is considered by many as one of the major gender expert in the Balkans. During my time in Sarajevo, I had the opportunity to have an informal meeting with her in order to discuss my research. Nada Ler-Sofronić was sceptical of the legal framework for gender equality introduced in the successive phases of peace implementation and the real situation of women in Bosnian society. She pointed to this discrepancy an example of the contradictory nature of post-Dayton citizenship for women, i.e. democratic and inclusive in its outlook but profoundly exclusionary in its enactment (personal conversation, Sarajevo, March 2010).
2. Žarana Papić was a renowned feminist sociologist and activist. She was among the founders of the Centre of women's studies in Belgrade and a supporter of the anti-nationalist and anti-war group Zene U Crnom (Women in Black), Belgrade.
3. Two citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina who were prevented from being candidates for the Presidency and the House of Peoples of the Parliamentary Assembly allegedly solely on ground of their ethnic origins (as they were, respectively, of Roma and Jewish origin) applied to the EU Courts of Human Rights. The court decided that the constitutional law is in breach of the European Human Rights Convention and recommended changes in the constitutional provisions (Sarajlić 2010).
4. See http://scca.ba.

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CHAPTER 4

Women's Personal Narratives and the Multi-layered Legacies of War

One way in which Feminist IR scholarship fundamentally challenges mainstream accounts of war and violence is by foregrounding the complex and ambivalent experiences of complicatedly diverse women in the face of conflict. Feminist lens reveal war as a profoundly gendered practice, both at the practical and at the symbolic level (Elshtain 1987; Karam 2000; Kumar 2001; Alison 2009; Cockburn 2010; Cohn 2013, 22; Enloe 2014; Parashar 2015; Wibben 2016). Populating abstract accounts of war and violence with discursive and embodied gendered experiences, an important contribution of feminist scholarship has been to lay bare the problematic assumptions of academic research, media analysis and policymaking that frame women exclusively as victims or natural peacemakers. Drawing on essentialist notions of femininity which construe women as maternal and nurturing, one central yet contested narrative situates women in proximity to peace (Ruddick 1989). On the other hand, as Carol Cohn writes, a multi-layered feminist analysis foregrounds the manifold ways in which gender, intersecting with other power differentials, inflects embodied experiences of war, amplifying the vulnerabilities of some and entrenching the power of others (Cohn 2013, 33). Such approach complicates traditional narratives of war as a man's game by deconstructing narrow assumptions on women as natural peacemakers or victims and men as fighters. Rather, it insists that we pay close attention to women's vulnerabilities in the face of

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armed conflict as well as to the many other facets of women's positioning in the politics of war.

Drawing on these insights, this chapter revisits the ambivalent impact of the Bosnian conflict in affecting women's lives and sense of security, as well as opening up opportunities and spaces for women's political action. As mentioned, a focus on agency is crucial within feminist re-conceptualization of citizenship as a lived practice that casts women as political agents (Lister 2003), even if/when constrained by a situation of violence and victimization such as in the context of war. Thus, interweaving feminist literature with interview material, this chapter charts complex narratives of women's experiences of/during the Bosnian War and unearths the dynamics shaping women's practices of citizenship in the transition to the so-called peace. I begin with an overview of the narratives surrounding gendered experiences of the Bosnian conflict. These bring to light tensions between an overpowering focus on women as victim of the war, more complex narratives of their positioning in the politics of war, as well as sharp differences among feminist readings of the conflict. In the remainder of the chapter, I attend to the ways in which the women I interviewed reflect on their positioning in relation to the war and the legacy of violent ethnonationalism. Evoking memories of personal and collective experiences endured during the conflict and its aftermath, these narratives provide a powerful account of the complicatedly different ways in which interviewees were deeply affected by war as well as reacted to it. In these narratives, the war becomes a catalyst that impinges on women's sense of identity and security, but also galvanizes for action.

Gender, Nation and the Contested Narratives on the Bosnian War

A tension between narratives that emphasize women's vulnerabilities to violence during the war and critical approaches that draw attention to the complex gendered and ethnicized underpinnings of ethno-national conflict has shaped the international and local discourses on the Yugoslav Wars. In her analysis of the correlation between media representations and ethnic violence, Dubravka Žarkov points out that "during the wars and immediately afterwards, the focus of feminist analysis as well as activism, nationally and internationally, was firmly on women's victimisation" (Žarkov 2007). The war in Bosnia brought the issues of gendered

violence under international spotlight, particularly as stories about the use of mass rape by Serb forces against Bosnian Muslim women appeared in the pages of newspapers and TV reports (Allen 1996; Hansen 2000, 55). Women as key targets and victims of the Bosnian War are the dominant images and stories that come to mind in relation to the media reports of the time (Helms 2013, 25), as well as in some of the literature (Faber and Stiglmayer 1994; Allen 1996). As Lene Hansen echoes, media coverage and academic analysis of wartime rape in particular are illustrative of specific gendered and ethnicized assumptions in Western debates which informed calls for or against international intervention (Hansen 2013, 168–171).[1] These narratives also brought to light differences among feminists, internationally and in the former Yugoslav space, as to whether the use of sexual violence was a gendered crime or a crime against the nation (Helms 2013, 50). One reading of the violence tended to privilege the gender dimension of the violence, offering a somewhat simplistic analysis that obscures the contextual ethnic dimension. Mediated through radical feminist insights into sexual violence and patriarchy, this reading of wartime sexualized violence revolved around a specific notion of "Balkan" patriarchy construed through essentialist figures of "violent (and prone to rape) Balkan men" and "Balkan women as victims" (Hansen 2013, 179–210). Another narrative framed the use of rape as an exceptional strategy mobilized by Serbs in order to commit genocide against the Bosniac and Croatian nation. This narrative of genocidal rape was mobilized internationally to articulate calls for international military intervention, with the support of radical feminists, as well as feminist activists specifically in Croatia. Catherine MacKinnon article "Turning Rape into Pornography: Postmodern Genocide" (1993) offers an example of these tropes. Here, MacKinnon traces a link between the use of wartime rape and the argument that pornography was an inherent feature of Yugoslavia and as an extension of Serbian masculinity. Exacerbating tensions between patriotic readings of the violence that highlighted the Croatian ethnicity of those targeted and feminist analyses that resisted replicating the language of nationalist elites, the article became entangled in the deep divisions between Yugoslav feminists. In a response to the article, Vesna Kesić questions both the empirical accuracy and the theoretical underpinnings of MacKinnon's piece as insensitive to the complexities of the gendered and ethninicized violence during the wars and dismissive of the more sophisticated analysis developed by anti-nationalist Yugoslav feminists (Kesić 1994). Kesić and other

anti-nationalist activists in Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia inscribed the violence used by Serb forces in their critique of gendered nationalism and in their politics of anti-militarism. It is through this political stance that they were able to stand in solidarity during the wars and in spite of being tagged as traitors and disloyal citizens by the leaders of their respective nations (Kašić 1997; Zajović 1997).

Appealing to humanitarian and interventionist sentiments alike, Western feminist readings of conflict-related sexual violence gained international currency in the context of the Bosnian War. If, on the one hand, international media brought attention to the issue, this coverage was also exploitative often relying on the commercialization of survivors' stories. For instance, such concerns were raised in a thought-provoking article titled "Anyone Here Been Raped and Speaks English?", published in *The Guardian*, August 2, 1993. Here, Linda Grant writes "Having had their fill of both pretty Muslim virgins sobbing out their tales of sexual violation and British couples cradling the Bosnian rape babies they have adopted, the media have lost interest. One issue, however, still burns: what has happened to these women in the wake of their ordeal?" (page 13) Grant's article draws attention to the problematic assumptions underpinning the discourse on sexual violence during the war. These simplistic and essentialist narratives have been the subject of critical feminist interventions.

Besides highlighting crucial tensions among Yugoslav anti-nationalist and patriotic feminists (Helms 2003, 74–79), the focus on women as ultimate victims of the war silenced and obscured the complex experiences of women from the region, as well as their feminist analyses (Kesić 1994; Korac 1998; Žarkov 2007). As a number of feminist scholars have been eager to point out, not only does the predominant focus on women's victimization offer an incomplete picture of women's positioning in the Bosnian War, but this discourse also reflects the hegemonic position of Western academia and the relegation of Yugoslav feminist insights to its periphery (Kesić 1994; Slapsak 2001; Duhaček 2006; Žarkov 2007; Moranjak-Bamburać 2003; Jung 1994; Kasić 2004; Miličević 2003). Readings of gendered wartime violence that imply homogeneous conceptualizations of "powerless raped Bosnian women" (Hromadžić 2006, 169) offer a stark example that dismisses precisely these complex interventions. Originally initiated by the media, and later adopted by feminist academia in the West, the subtext of Muslim women as only victims

evokes the international imaginary of a Muslim Bosnia, as a rural community characterized by conservatism and traditionalism.

Against this "moral map" (Žarkov 2007, 145) the image of a chaste, innocent and then ashamed and silent Muslim woman is drawn[2] (e.g. Stiglmayer 1994). Feeding an Orientalist myth of a rural traditional Muslim community, this geopolitical imaginary essentially maps an East/West divide onto the victimhood/agency dichotomy implying Western feminists as saviours and spokespersons for Bosnian (Muslim) women. Elissa Helms points out that the absence of Bosnian women and their perspectives are often missing from these narratives. This absence contributes to stereotypical representations about the victims, their traditional and conservative Muslim background and essentialist assumptions about the stigma experienced by survivors in their Islamic communities (Helms 2013, 65–66). These images stand in contrast to the multiplicity of women's positioning in the politics of war, the diverse backgrounds, as well as the experienced shared by survivors in academic studies (Korac 1998; Skjelsbaek 2006). Dominant narratives of sexual violence in war essentially dissolved the complexity of women's multiple identities and diverse experiences of conflict into the trope of innocent, silent, rural victim that was appealing to the international public, as well as the nationalist elites who mobilized survivors' stories for their own nationalist agendas (Helms 2014). Furthermore, public concern for wartime sexual violence equated "violence against women with a single form of abuse while all other and equally intolerable forms of violence remain hidden" (Korac 1998, 2).

International spotlight on conflict-related sexual violence, thus, implicitly eclipsed the manifold dimensions of women's experiences in the Bosnian War, including that women supported or also committed violence[3] and that others actively participated in a wide range of activities in response to violence, victimhood and vulnerability. For instance, research illustrates that nationalist ethnocrats in the region had promoted the role of women as soldiers for the respective nations (Mostov 2000; Žarkov 2007). Pursuing strategic nationalist interests, representations of women soldiers in the local media were often contradictory and continued to rely on gendered tropes of beauty and purity. This was essentially a strategic move the nationalist intelligentsia crafted within the (gendered) demands for collective mobilization and sacrifice. The participation of women as active fighters remains largely hidden in feminist analyses of the Yugoslav War (Simic 2018). As Dubravka Žarkov

contends, “the victimized body seems to have been not only the most visible of all the bodies in Yugoslav war but also the most visible body within feminist discourses—activist, as well as academic” (Žarkov 2007, 213).

The (in)visibility of certain female bodies and experiences brings into light how public discourses on the Bosnian War reproduced specific gendered and ethnicized stereotypes. More complex identities and experiences, as well as the interconnections between victimization and agency, were instead marginalized (Korac 2006; Žarkov 2007; Helms 2013). Unearthing this complexity is crucial to acknowledge women as full-fledge political subjects. That is, to acknowledge women as genuine citizens with a political stake in the post-conflict moment. The history of women’s active role and collective organizing in response to the war offers a productive entryway to examine the complexity of women’s lived experiences as citizens in post-conflict and post-agreement Bosnia-Herzegovina. Evidence suggests that wartime violence was profoundly gendered. Yet, as in other contexts of war, women took on different roles in response to the conflict such as breadwinners, combatants, activists for peace and humanitarian assistance, and in support groups.

These facets exemplify the ambivalent dynamics shaping women’s experiences of war whereby women retain agency in in the context of victimhood and vulnerability, such as it is created by war and violent ethno-nationalism. Women’s collective and individual agency during and in the immediate aftermath of the Bosnian War occurred mainly within the creation of informal groups initially set up to deal with the humanitarian emergency arising from the conflict. By crafting a space of activism in the midst and aftermath of war women in Bosnia began to complicate, and in some instances challenge, the very nationalist logic which, as Cynthia Cockburn and Dubravka Žarkov put it, relegates women to the world of birthing and mourning and elevates men to the world of arms and glory (Cockburn and Žarkov 2002, 13). I view this site of agency as political and suggest that, by blurring the boundaries of dominant discourses and practices, this mobilization constitutes a productive enactment of citizenship in the face of conflict. Drawing on these insights, this chapter explores the dynamics shaping women’s lived citizenship post-conflict. The war emerges as a key defining moment that profoundly shaped life trajectories, personal challenges and current political dispositions. Attending to these stories reveals resonances, as well as stark differences

which are shaped by women's diverse entanglement in the politics of war and its aftermath. In what follows, I discuss how narratives about women's victimhood remain prominent internationally and in the post-Dayton political context with profound implications that constrain survivors' stories, activism and solidarities. The chapter ends by outlining the creative potential of feminist and women's activism born out of the conflict.

The Legacy of Wartime Violence and Women's (In)Visibility

In autumn 2010, Bosnia-Herzegovina made it to the international news once again. Perhaps unsurprisingly major attention was not devoted to reporting the EU's final decision on lifting visa restrictions for the citizens of BiH, or to the fact that despite democratic elections being held, the winning parties were still struggling to form a government in the Federation. Instead, the news widely reported concerned a controversial decision by the government of the Federation of BiH to ban Hollywood actress Angelina Jolie from filming her directorial debut in Bosnia.[4] The ban responded to complaints raised by the association of Women Survivors of War (Udruzenje Žene-Žrtve Rata, UŽŽR) upon allegations that Jolie's plot, which touches upon the story of the women who were sexually assaulted during the Bosnian War, was to include a love story between a Bosniak woman and her Serb aggressor. While the involvement of a Hollywood star explains the spotlight in major international publications, this episode is significant in highlighting how 15 years after the end of war the "victimised body" (Žarkov 2007) remained the most visible representation of women in BiH within international media discourse. Despite international and local outcry, this moment of visibility did not act as a catalyst for addressing the status and rights of survivors of wartime sexual violence, still an outstanding legacy of the peace process. To the contrary, it worked to reignite larger disputes over responsibility of war crimes and tropes about innocence and victimhood mobilized to ensure support for competing nationalist agendas, a strategy that became particularly visible in 2010 and successive electoral campaigns. The centrality of survivors' stories in sustaining the collective memory of the war and claims to Bosniak victimhood implicitly diverts attention from the nationalist perpetration of gendered exclusions, illustrated by ongoing institutional resistance to fulfil survivors' demands for reparation and justice (see also Helms 2014; O'Reilly 2016).

My contention is that by actively reproducing this logic associations such as UŽŽR also implicitly compromise opportunities for addressing the conditional nature of survivors' citizenship.

Even though the ministry revoked its decision, the controversy foregrounded complex entanglements of the legacy of wartime sexual violence and women victims/survivors', experiences in the post-Dayton nationalist politics. The ban was met with public outcry, not only as the representatives women's victims association expressed outrage at the possibility of this project being allowed to take place. Members of cultural associations, feminist groups and the film industry clearly expressed dissent against what was perceived as an instance of state censorship. Both nationalist politicians in Serbia and Republika Srpska vehemently opposed the making and screening of the film on the grounds that it portrayed the Serbs as evil. Some Bosniak political elites in the Federation, on the other hand, were eager to support the concerns voiced by the women's survivors. As Elissa Helms writes, the controversy, the film as a cultural artefact and its screening in the region brought into sharp relief the symbolic centrality of survivors' stories, and their purity, in the ongoing construction of Bosniak victimhood. The arguments mobilized against the film foregrounded the collective ethno-national dimension of victimhood and in doing so reproduced dominant (patriarchal) accounts of the war (Helms 2014). In a similar vein to Helms, I suggest that, even though objections over the re-telling of wartime violence as a site for romance voiced by survivors' organizations are understandable, the rationale of such solidarity holds ambivalent implications precisely for their claims for justice and reparation. Since emphasis in the objection was about violence against Bosniak women, solidarity was granted precisely because this narrative reproduces and props the very gendered logic of nationalism that made the violence possible in the first place.

A similar tension emerged during my fieldwork when, just before the Jolie affair, I conducted an interview with the president of Udruzenje Žene-Žrtve Rata. The association works relentlessly to lobby for the prosecution of war criminals still at large and for the rights of the women survivors. These activities are meticulously recorded and highly publicized through the involvement of media. As a powerful visual reminder of this long-standing fight, every inch of the association's office walls is covered with newspaper cut-outs and pictures, portraying protests, war criminals, women who disappeared or passed away. The often polemic

and exclusionary strategies pursued personally by the president and the association, however, have been at the centre of criticism before Jolie's project. For instance, the fact that the organization has, in a way, monopolized the narrative on the unresolved legacy of conflict-related sexual violence has not been well-received by other victims' groups and NGOs (e.g. UNFPA 2010, 10, *The Observer*, October 23, 2010).

The interview with UŽŽR's president reflects these complexities. The personal experiences endured during the conflict emerge both through a narrative of hardship and victimhood, but also as a story of resilience which propelled the protagonist into her long-standing search for justice. This personal story thus offers a powerful example of the inextricable connections between women's victimization and agency in war and its aftermath. At the same time by continuously shifting between personal traumatic vicissitudes, detailed information about the activities of the association other members' harrowing stories, the interview also reveals tensions and ambivalences in the fight for survivors' rights and justice, and slippages between the association's narrative and ethno-national gendered rhetoric.

> We are a specific group, if we have nothing in common with another organisation then there is nothing to discuss with them [...] I don't think that there is any association who can involve this category of war victims. There is a large number of women whose families don't know about what they went through so they are hiding it from their husband, from their children and also there are girls who cannot be mothers anymore because of different operations. (Personal interview, August 2010)

The story continues discussing how the association has become a safe space for survivors, some of whom had kept their experience secret from their families. The association's roles vary from "bringing so many women together with their husbands again" to help "women with very severe scars left in their psyches and sexuality". The connotation evoked is one of exclusive legitimacy and competence to deal with the complexities of survivors' experiences.

> They had a lot workshop with psychologists and psychotherapists but it cannot be compared to the sessions we have when we are alone and cry out and laugh out loud and speak freely about what happens because in the courts there are some rules and you have to be very strict and very precise with their numbers was it five times ... three times ... and they cannot

> change their statements so they have to concentrate on numbers and precision so that's why when we are only together is better, they share the worst and the hardest things. (Personal interview, August 2010)

In its powerful illustration of the long-standing hardship that survivors face in everyday life, this excerpt offers a narrative of resilience and solidarity among survivors. The development of a specific bond, emerging from the collective experiences among women survivors, is articulated through a narrative of "sharing the worst and the hardest things" which can be seen as a strategy to keep going in compromised conditions of existence (Berlant 2011). Yet, by isolating the category of "war victims" this is also an exclusionary narrative that dismisses opportunities to build alliances with other women's groups. As the interview goes on, ethnicity begins to emerge more prominently in the story:

> Even though there are nongovernmental organisations we have to be in politics because some political parties are against us. We have to fight back, because we cannot have people that we have not elected speak on our behalf, we don't want such Bosnia and Herzegovina. […] I am using every moment to go to my Višegrad, I have a house there. I am still going there to build a house, build even more because I want to present the image that I am still there, I'm not ruined, to show to them that they have not managed to destroy me, that they have not killed everything in me (they have killed everything in me, but I would not let them know that). Even though the municipality is held by those very people who are responsible for the war crimes. I don't hate the nationality itself. I divide people into human and not human. I don t have anything against you (the translator) even though you are from Belgrade. […] Why would I hate the family of Pecikoze who were my neighbours, where I was born, Dragan came so many times to rescue us saying: Run, Run, here they come! […] They have not done anything, I have no reason to hate them because they are Serbs. But there are the animals. […] one should have strength to cope with that. […] This girl was raped and strangled with a belt and her only guilt was that she was a Muslim […]
>
> If they thought they would destroy one people, they were mistaken. […] I am not a believer I was not raised that way but I wonder why they did it? Because if they want to erase a nation, this could never happen! (Personal interview, August 2010)

This excerpt foregrounds a personal story of resilience and survival in the aftermath of violence and illustrates the complexities of adjusting to

relations with the ethnic community associated with the perpetrators. In this narrative, a logic of distancing herself from a Bosniak nationalist identity and slippages wherein the collective "we" is clearly ethnicized are both at play. The personal gendered experience of being a survivor and the collective ethnic identification of victimhood thus intertwine in complex ways. As Inger Skjelsbæk's research with CRSV survivors has shown, on a personal level the process of dual identification through both gender and ethnic narratives is inevitable, as survivors make sense of their ordeal which, lest we forget, was not only gendered but also ethnically motivated (Skjelsbaek 2006). At the same time, however, the subtext invoked in this account also resonates with the victimization of the Bosniak nation. This is poignantly illustrated in the final sentence wherein the allusion to the use of sexual violence as an attempt to erase a nation emerges. In a similar vein to the debate over Jolie's film, by foregrounding the collective aspect of victimhood, this narrative re-inscribes survivors' stories in nationalist rhetoric wherein gender dimensions of these experiences is in tension with collective interests.

Proximity to dominant ethno-national narratives has contradictory implications both at the symbolic and at the practical level. For example, this was clearly visible when, as stated in a UNFPA 2010 report, the women's group initially managed to persuade the Federation government to allow them to be the sole organization in charge of processing applications for compensation (UNFPA 2010). Despite this vicinity, the rights of survivors remain unaddressed as reparations so far have focused mainly on male veterans and the fighting against impunity of perpetrators is still ongoing (Mlinarević et al. 2015). As Maria O'Reilly's extensive research on gender and transitional justice illustrates: "these gaps and deficiencies have precluded just recognition, redistribution and representation for many survivors by failing to acknowledge harms incurred by many victims, satisfy demands for material and symbolic reparations and provide a public platform to voice experiences" (O'Reilly 2016, 425). Not only was this a source of friction and division with other women and victim's organizations, but this move resulted in enhancing the group's association with a Bosniak nationalist agenda which, all rhetoric to the contrary, relies on gendered exclusions. On the one hand, the suffering of survivors is strategically mobilized to gain political and electoral support. On the other, survivors' citizenship rights have never been a political priority, as successive governments have failed to adequately fill the gaps in reparation and transitional justice mechanisms.

As highlighted by feminist analysis, the unresolved legacy of wartime violence in post-Dayton BiH resonates with one of nationalism's gender paradoxes wherein the symbolic centrality of women and women's bodies to the construction of the nationalist collective is met with their marginal citizenship. The interview with UŽŽR's president reveals the personal complexities of grappling with the legacy of wartime violence. However, falling back into the wider and inevitably exclusionary (i.e. ethnicized and gendered) nationalist political agenda, the proximity of survivors' activism within dominant ethno-national narratives exists in tension with claims for gender justice. As Belma Bećirbašić has noted, within this logic survivors and their personal stories become "walking metaphors" of the collective trauma (Bećirbašić 2011), implicitly propping up the very patriarchal logic that made the violence possible and that is complicit in institutional neglect of gender justice. While this story offers an insightful account of activism propelled by gendered violence during the war, the transformative potential of this site of agency for addressing survivors' clams for justices and remaking citizenship for women is inevitably fraught.

War as a Catalyst for Action

Most of the women I interviewed pinpoint the conflict as a defining moment for becoming involved in various forms of activism or for a renewed commitment to political engagement. Interviews reveal a diversity of experiences brought up by conflict as my interlocutors recount their engagement in a spectrum of activities, from involvement in political parties to setting up women's NGOs. These narratives resonate with feminist understandings of war as a context productive of women's complex and multi-layered vulnerabilities, as well as catalyst for agency as women endure and sometimes participate in violence, organize and take political action, and work to recover from the conflict and build peace (Carol Cohn: p. 30). For some interviewees, grappling with the legacy of war meant discovering or renewing their commitments to feminism, while others responded to war by organizing with other women or working for humanitarian aid and post-conflict recovery. Another participant's response was to organize locally across ethnic divisions, reaffirming a more fluid post-Yugoslav identity in the process. Another interviewee, on the other hand, talked about getting actively involved in nationalist politics. Interweaving assessments on the legacy of war and personal

experiences of the conflict, these narratives offer a powerful account of the manifold ways in which the women I interviewed were affected by the conflict as well as reacted to it.

Attending to these stories of women's (re)action in the face of war and its legacy is crucial to capture how women experience the transition to so-called peace, offering insight into the agentic nature of citizenship wherein women cast themselves as protagonists in the politics of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The stories discussed here also stand in contrast as interviewees link the personal and the political side of their experiences, or refrain from sharing more personal details. I believe this to be illustrative of different dynamics shaping our research encounters-rather formal and in a professional environment in the first two cases, more open and informal in the latter. At the same time, these multiple visions are important in illustrating how interviewees interpret their experiences differently, as well as my questions. Offering reflections on the different roles, they adopted in the aftermath of conflict, the three accounts discussed here stand in productive tension as they reveal multiple, perhaps even incompatible, visions and experiences of citizenship:

> I became involved in policy relatively late, when my children grew up. After the war. After different jobs. I was a manager of company. I owned my company. The only experience I missed was engagement in political party. However I didn't like the multi party structure of BiH because it was related to start of the war. Because before the start of the war, we used to have one political party in former Yugoslavia. It was the communist party. We didn't have any differences, conflict of opinions everything was known. It means that after that we started to have nationalist parties and the war started. When war was over I thought that the state of democracy was not at the level which I would like to be involved in. So practically I became involved with a new political party, The Alliance of Social Democrats (SNSD,) in 1998. Soon I became the president of the women's association of that political party. (Personal interview, April 2010)

In this excerpt, war and its aftermath work as a catalyst for engagement in the arena of formal politics. What is particularly significant in this narrative is that it illuminates an aspect of women's engagement with the politics of the Bosnian War which has received less attention in the research, that is women's active participation in ethnonational discourse. In fact, even though my interlocutor presents her

own party as antithetical to those who were in power prior and during the war, the Alliance Party SNSD is renowned for its nationalist political agenda aimed at promoting Serb interests, threatening the secessions of Republika Srpska and challenging the state institutions.[5] What is interesting in this narrative is that it complicates stark understandings of women's experiences of the war and its aftermath that rely on women as helpless victims or as natural peacemakers. Rather it demands that we pay attention to women's experiences in the backdrop of the Bosnian conflict to include active involvement with nationalist politics. Poignant here is how throughout our conversation my interlocutor was keen to outline gender equality as an issue of relevance for the government political agenda and enumerating the achievement (and less so the pitfalls) of the gender mechanism in place within BiH institutions. While our conversation was very formal, details about my interlocutor's involvement in the Women's Association suggest an interest in pursuing women's issues. Yet, when I asked for a comment about the problematic relation between women's equality and ethno-national discourse in Bosnian politics her answer was telling. Having recounted the history of armed conflict and its lasting divisions, she states:

> So once you know all these facts you can see that the issue of women is not the most important one. The most important issue is can we live together? (Personal interview)

A tension between the pursuing of gender equality and women's issues and the nationalist logic that privileges the rights and interest of the ethnic group is at play in this narrative. The idea that a transformation of gender roles is secondary to the "national" question resonates with the "delaying tactics" highlighted in the scholarship that complicates the relationship between feminism and nationalism (e.g. Kandiyoti 1996; Enloe 2014). As Cynthia Enloe writes "women who have called for a more genuine equality between the sexes – in the movement, in the home - have been told that now is not the time, the nation is too fragile, the enemy is too near. Women must be patient, they must wait until the nationalist goal is achieved, then relations between men and women can be addressed" (Enloe 2014, 62). I see traces of this logic in the narrative discussed here. While this story depicts a move towards political action as a result of the war, it also illustrates that the mobilization women's

citizenship claim exists in a tension with collective ethno-nationalist interest.

Other accounts identify the conflict as a defining moment for becoming active in a spectrum of initiatives, be it providing humanitarian and legal assistance in response to the state of emergency left by the war, or creating a space wherein to challenge the divisions brought by the politics and violence of ethnonational conflict. These stories are consistent with the scholarship that highlight the agentic nature of women's experiences in the post-conflict moment (Cockburn 1998; Cohn 2013). Yet, specifically addressing gender issues does not always emerge as a political motivation or strategy for activism in these interviews. As the narratives below illustrate, fuelling this engagement is both a concern to act for/with ordinary people in the face of large physical, symbolic and political disruption, as well as diverse personal vicissitudes. For one interviewee who trained as a lawyer and lived in Australia during the war, the post-conflict moment created favourable conditions for returning home where she worked in the recovery programmes sponsored by the UNCHR.

> As a legal adviser I came here with some experience working with ordinary people. It means after war I started to work first of all with refugees and displaced person in an organisation called HCRPC Commission for claims of displaced persons and refugees […] That was first, actually the first here in Bosnia and Herzegovina, contact, work, life with people who was in some kind in danger. I previously had experience working with refugee people in Australia. […] After HCRPC I continued working with UNHCR with people who are seeking refugee status here in Bosnia and Herzegovina and BiH citizenship. (Personal interview, May 2010)

During our conversation, very few personal details were shared, even though a key message that transpired from this interview is the feeling that little attention to the conflict's reverberations on Bosnians' everyday life has been paid throughout the peace process. It is this concern with the every day that draws her to work with the local community, she explains. While the interviewee did not openly discuss her views on gender issues, one interesting aspect for thinking about the boundaries of citizenship in our encounter is the negotiation between local/the international that emerges throughout the story and how the war and

its aftermath complicates this interviewee's positioning as both a *victim* who had to flee war as well as as an agent in post-agreement politics.

For another contributor, moving from Belgrade to the divided city of Mostar as a young woman, the narrative of getting involved in Mladi Most, a safe meeting place in the midst of ethnic division and large-scale destruction, is also a story of finding one's bearings in a new city. The development of Mladi Most's activities, thus, runs in parallel with the personal story of becoming an activist and developing new bonds to/in the city that blurred existing divisions and the sense of isolation brought about by the war.

> Since I was grown up enough to make my own decisions I'm part of this NGO efforts to rebuild the society post-war. Basically, Abrašević is a very personal choice. It represents something very important for me and for what this town will be in years to come. [...] I didn't live here actually before. I was born in Mostar but I lived in Belgrade for a long time. I came here in '94 and in the first few months that I arrived here I met friend in my street who said I know a very nice place where you can feel free, there is a lot of people there, International volunteers, so I said ok take me there. That was Mladi Most, it was the first association post-war in Mostar where the aim was to provide a safe meeting place for youth and that point Mostar was divided with ... you know' 94'-95 was a bad situation and you couldn't cross from one side to other. And that's how it all started actually. I felt that living in Mostar I had to be responsible and I had to try to change something. Otherwise I couldn't live in a place Mostar would be without all that we do. And that's how it started one thing led to another project, festival, cooperation and so on. (Personal interview, August 2010)

Interweaving personal and collective stories of activism, the narrative traces the development of Mladi Most into OKC Abrašević. Abrašević is renowned in Mostar and the rest of BiH for its promotion of anti-nationalist discourse, responsible alternative media and cultural activities. Even though not gender-specific in its focus, but rather rooted in the leftist and antifascist Yugoslav tradition, cultural interventions, programmes and activities revolving around Abrašević' play an important role in disrupting the exclusionary processes embedded in the dominant citizenship regime in post-Dayton Bosnia. This kind of critical engagement emerges clearly in the following excerpts when this interviewee reflects on the imposition of ethnic categories through the Constitution:

> First, we don't have a constitution, we have a Dayton Peace Agreement which act as a constitution but which is useless, one, and discriminating. In the preamble of the constitution you have everything, the word should be discrimination and then you continue to read it and it is discriminating. so first of all, I hate this concept.

She then continues explaining that another problematic issue for citizenship is that nationality is determined via patrilineal lineage thus erasing the complexity of mixed and more fluid identities:

> So here, women as mothers who give birth they don't have a say in the child's identity. So for example if you have a marriage of Serb woman and a Muslim man, their child would be Muslim, they would feel Muslim and it's something about tradition which reinforces that from a country with a lot of mixed marriages we came to a country where people would easily find themselves in this constitutional category. And that is something for me personally and for a lot of people, if not all or the majority of people in Abrašević, which represents a problem. Because for us we find it is very narrow to … it would mean to give up on half of your education and your cultural references, to be a part of just one group first of all, and here a lot of people because they come from different backgrounds cannot feel exclusively as part of one nationality. And just recently with a few friends we started this initiative. First, we wanted to form the national identity of Yugoslav, pertaining to all of us, the generation which was brought up in Yugoslavia and educated as Yugoslav. And today we cannot step on it and we cannot say I don't want this anymore. So first that was the idea, and then we said since the constitution is as it is and we have these Others, and there was already the initiative of Roma and Jewish people, so we were thinking why not ask for some constitutional changes and to propose some action which could pay attention, to us "The Others", whoever we are and give us political representation which we do not have since '92. (Personal interview, August 2010)

This account foregrounds a political perspective rooted in the notion of (and belonging to) a fluid Yugoslav identity which in the constitution is relegated to the category of "The Others". From this subject position, a powerful critical perspective on the institutional understanding of citizenship post-Dayton unfolds. While communicating a sense of displacement and not belonging shared also by other interviewees, this narrative expresses a commitment to reclaiming political agency precisely from the standpoint of exclusion. I suggest that adjusting and re-orienting oneself

to being rendered “The Others” as a result of conflict and post-conflict transformation thus entails a transformative potential for remaking citizenship. Although we see hints in this narrative to the gendered nature of citizenship (by which the nationality is determined along patrilineal lineage), mobilizing around a feminist agenda or around women’s claims does not emerge as a political priority in this story. In an attempt to dig deeper, I asked for her views on women’s status and rights vis-à-vis a citizenship discourse:

> I feel that we have more rights here than in any other country because we really have a lot of rights but […] they don’t mean anything, they don’t’ implement them, there is no mechanism really. We have less rights as human beings than I would say I have less rights as a woman.

While acknowledging the lack of implementation of gender equality legislation, a feminist identification does not come to the fore. Remaking citizenship here is understood within the fluid boundaries of an imagined Yugoslav community.

At the same time, Abrašević activists engage in discussions around gender issues and feminist initiatives are often reported and debated through its independent media web portal.[6] During my first fieldwork trip, the portal contributed to critical discussion around a campaign organized by a series of women’s NGOs aimed at convincing women, and more generally citizens, to vote for women candidates at the 2010 general elections.[7] The gist of this article is particularly significant for this study as it identifies a number of flaws in the campaign, including the reproduction of stereotypes about women (e.g. utilizing a slogan and presenting statements of candidates which revolved around their role as mothers and housewives), the choice of advocating for women candidates regardless of political affiliation, therefore implying that women in nationalist parties could pursue a less problematic and exclusionary politics than their male counterparts. In doing so, the article questioned the gendered assumptions of this campaign, as well as the portrayal of women as innocent in nationalist rhetoric. The above examples illustrate OKC Abrašević as a space for debate and discussion of different issues, including gender, that contribute continuous efforts to re-imagine and re-enact citizenship outside the boundaries dictated by the dominant ethno-national discourse.

Women Working for Women: The Politics of Small Steps

Women's organizing in the immediate aftermath of the Bosnian War occurred mainly within the creation of informal groups initially set up to deal with the humanitarian emergency arising from the conflict (Walsh 2000). In line with the shift of the international approach to civil society building and its focus on creating a NGO sector (e.g. Belloni 2001; Fagan 2006), women's groups became among the main beneficiaries of international funds and training. This led to the bourgeoning of recognized women's NGOs active in different areas of interventions. Networking among antinationalist feminists active in the region became crucial for the development of women's and feminist organizing in the aftermath of the war. Particularly important was the email network Zamir (For Peace) which allowed communication between activists in Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia during the conflict and in the immediate aftermath (Cockburn 1998; Helms 2003; Korac 2006). Important elements of continuity remained between women's instances of activism in post-war Bosnia, women's anti-war and anti-nationalist movements of 1991–1992 and the legacy of feminist groups which were formed in the Former Yugoslavia. This context is relevant to understand stories of post-war activism shared by a number of interviewees. A common element in these stories is how by responding to the state of emergency produced by the war, women became involved in activism around gender and women's issues:

> [We] founded the organisation during the war as a new form of group of friends who were helping women who came to Banja Luka because of the war, left Banja Luka or were passing through Banja Luka. I am a doctor and L. is a lawyer. I helped in hospital and L. was helping a lawyer with legal advice. We didn't even know that we were something like a NGO. We were basically blocked here. The RS was blocked. You couldn't travel anywhere. After the war ended in 1996 we started travelling, we went to the federation and saw that women were organising and starting NGOs so we also decide to form an NGO here.

This narrative is consistent with Maja Korac's notion of "a politics of small steps" (Korac 2006, 516) that describes women's organization during the wars and in the immediate aftermath. Interviewees recounted

how the activities often began as a result of informal initiatives among friends and acquaintances who felt compelled to act in response to the state of emergency created by war. NGOs were then formally established in the post-war years also as result of cooperation with international groups and institutions. At the same time, the end of the hostilities meant that contacts among groups active across the region could be fully restored (Cockburn 1998; Korac 2003).

Narratives centred around a "politics of small steps" emerged regularly both in interviews and in informal conversations with women activists in my successive trips to BiH. As a psychologist working with survivors whom I interviewed in 2006 told me:

> I got involved because I realised that partly I was accepting the war and all the things that were happening. I couldn't accept that. I could not accept to be hopeless. First we started with some general group talks, in order to explain what words like stress or trauma meant so that people would understand what was happening to them. We also tried to explain that it was normal … because of what they had experienced in the war. So that was the beginning of the psychological support. (Personal interview, July 2006)

The group sessions were initially small and informal but later numbers grew in response to the enormous scale of atrocities and violence. The people who participated were mostly refugees and women. Then, the stories of sexual violence started to emerge, very often through confidential conversations:

> When we started it was a door to door service based in one town but there were women that needed help also in other towns. So we managed to get pass cards from UNPROFOR so that we could go the other towns and meet those women, refugees and victims. (Personal interview, July 2006)

This interviewee explains that addressing the issue was very complex. She felt this was a completely new territory and soon activists realized the necessity of having specific professional skills in order to deal with this kind of trauma. With the arrival of international funds and training opportunities, there was a shift from the "emergency" support to a more specific service that focused on supporting survivors. Attending to these experiences adds interesting layers to our understanding of women's experiences of war in ways that complicate images as mere victims,

rather they were often among the key drivers in responding to the state of emergency.

A similar story of activism in response to the conflict emerges in an interview with the director of anti-trafficking organization, whom I met in Mostar. In this story, the emergence of ethnic divisions in the lead up to the war suddenly shakes her identity and sense of security.

> I am engineer of economy. I used to work in a bank. I had a very, very good position before the war in bank. During the war I lived on east side. It is Croat side …[Mostar is] divided between Bosniak and Croat people. I could not leave my flat because I was born on west side. When I asked my director of my bank to receive me, to employ me. He told me please I cannot take you because HDZ[8] and the government were pushing them. But for Bosniak people I was Ustaša,[9] it is wrong word. But for Croat people I was Balija,[10] because I am Bonsiak and I needed to escape. (Personal interview, August 2010)

Since her husband was an Embassy representative and the family had lived in Prague for 8 years they sought refuge there:

> And we escaped On 1 of July 1994. In March was signed Washington agreement between Croats and Bosniak and I returned. I returned as other woman, as Croat woman with passport of Croat woman and I came to Mostar. European Union came in Mostar and I was employed there. I started to work for EU and I was involved in humanitarian work. I try to support women, all women in Bosnia Herzegovina. Not only Bosniak, not Croat, not Serb. All women in need. (Personal interview, August 2010)

In this narrative, the protagonist grapples with the memories of the conflict through an account of the personal plight that many in Bosnia-Herzegovina had to face as a result of the politicization of ethnic identities. As in other stories discussed throughout this book, a deep sense of not belonging takes centre stage in these memories of the time leading up to the war. The feeling of insecurity which accompanied the totalitarian and contradictory occupation of belonging is exacerbated by the material implications of the new politics of exclusion, as illustrated by the sudden loss of jobs and restriction to movement. In a similar vein to other accounts, this is a story of escape from war. It also depicts the desire to return immediately after the signing of a truce between the warring parties. Returning home to war-torn Mostar signals a new phase

in her life leading to involvement with the EU in a new role as humanitarian worker. Recounting this moment of adjustment and re-orientation to the new contingencies brought about by large-scale destruction and humanitarian emergency leads her to make a broader assessment of the legacy of the war for the status and role of women in BiH.

> […] But I think according to my own opinion, I think that the war in BiH helped women in some way. Because before the war I had a very good life. My husband was director of a big factory. I had very good work in the bank. […] I had no need to be fighter. I had everything what I needed. But during the war I learned that my power is in my [she touches her heart] and I need to be fighter. I think many women in Bosnia and Herzegovina empowered as a result of war. But we are traditional country and men in Bosnia-Herzegovina are on first place. Always. If you analyse who are the policymakers in Bosnia-Herzegovina? Who were very active in the war? Men. Who have the best positions in government? Men. I think that it is necessary to have very, very strong pride and for BIH women to be fighters. And they need international support also, really, really support. (Personal interview, August 2010)

Echoing feminist analysis of war, this contributor depicts the conflict as a moment of social upheaval which forces new roles upon women pushing them to become *fighters*. The use of fighters in the narrative is an interesting word choice that evokes power and strength and, if we wanted, re-positions women as key agents in the politics of war. At the same time, this narrative reconsiders its "empowering" effect as she concedes that entrenched networks of male power and gendered processes of exclusions were (re)produced in the shift from war to peace. As the interview went on, personal memories and experiences began gesturing towards the collective. Her narrative becomes more explicitly political through a sharp assessment of the conflict and its aftermath as ambivalent for women. This narrative thus mirrors a striking political trajectory from familial and familiar life to displacement and insecurity. This woman did not explicitly identify as a feminist, yet her story shows how personal experiences in/of conflict led to her mobilization in humanitarian work for women and then in anti-trafficking networks. In doing so, she developed critical insights into the positioning of women in BiH society and a commitment to address the issues of trafficking, also a gendered consequence of conflict and post-conflict dynamics.

In the following two stories, accounts of the conflict are inextricably and explicitly connected with feminist activism. Interviewees' recount how their personal lives became entangled in different ways in the gendered reverberations of the Bosnian War and its aftermath. Addressing the gendered impact of conflict and transforming gendered structures reproduced in the so-called peace becomes a crucial political goal in these accounts. At the same time, the two stories stand in conversation and contrast with each other for the diverse temporal and geographical feminist trajectories they reveal.

For a feminist activist, her affective encounter with the Bosnian War begins in Italy where stories of large-scale destruction and extreme gendered violence began to emerge amidst media daily reports. Her narrative describes how she became deeply preoccupied with understanding more about the conflict and its deeply gendered violence:

> Naturally when the war broke out in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the level of destruction escalated, and especially when the stories of violence, of rape used as warfare strategy began to emerge, all of this certainly transformed this war into my social cause, my obsession: I didn't know how to help. Naturally I started looking for books. Particularly it was with this book "L'Arma dello Stupro" (The Weapon of Rape) that I reached an absolute moment of empathy. So I started to be on everybody's case in order to organise some kind of support. Given that at the time I was involved with a feminist group, a friend of mine from the group tried to help me give vent to this frustration (concern) by putting me in contact with a NGO from Calabria.

She recalls starting an awareness raising campaign in Italy with them which introduced her to people from the Yugoslav region, including a woman from Bosnia. In 1994, she eventually decided to set out for the Balkans where she began working as a volunteer on the ground for six months:

> I had an interview in which I said that I had never done anything like that before, but, yes, I was interested and I was ready to give it a go. […] So what was supposed to be a six months experience has become my job with CRIC which lasted until March 2003. And also a life choice, because in the meantime other things happened. I met my partner and in 1998 we decided to come back to Sarajevo to live […]

From Calabria in Italy's deep south to Croatia to Sarajevo, this story maps out an interesting feminist trajectory which stands in contrast to the experiences of other local interviewees discussed in this book shaped by the trope of escape, return and entrapment. At the same time, it also shares some similarities in locating the war as catalyst for activism, in this case fuelled by a feminist sense of empathy and solidarity. As in other accounts discussed here, the personal and the political intertwine strengthening affective connections to Sarajevo.

> Then when I started to use the language, it was like a punch on the face because this language is also sexist. […] Generally the fact that this language has three genders, masculine, feminine and neuter, but everything is nevertheless articulated in a sexist way. […] so this was really like a boomerang for me. You go back to things that you thought you had resolved, so I found myself having to explain to people again what does it means to be a feminist, having this specific vision […]
>
> So I found myself with all these questions to be faced again and in some instances this becomes too much at some point you realise that everything is becoming political and you don't have a moment to breath. You realise that sometimes you are running the risk of impersonating the stereotype of angry feminist who continuously gives out judgements and corrects the language and expressions that has been used.
>
> This is why at this point you have to stop and find a more dialogical way not only because it is really hard personally but also in order to have a political impact.

Personal circumstances shaping this activist's encounter with the war differ significantly from those of the other *local* women whose bodies, identities and sense of security had a much deeper entanglement in the violence at the symbolic and practical level. In a way, her *privileged* distance from the deeply personal effects of the politics of war allows for the kind of lucid critique illustrated in the extract above. Yet, on a personal level it also rings true with other experiences of adjustment to the contingencies and violent reverberations that the war had for Bosnia's society and women in particular. In a similar vein to other local experiences, this story of feminist activism runs parallel with finding one's bearings in post-conflict Sarajevo, making it home and, crucially, finding new ways to engage in feminist activism.

The following account stands in conversation and contrast to the story above. Here, a Sarajevan activist locates the beginning of her feminist story in wartime Bosnia-Herzegovina. Witnessing and experiencing the state of emergency lays the foundation for her long-standing involvement with women's issues and passionate feminist activism which continues today through various interventions:

> Actually my activism started since basically '92 when the war started because I was working with women who were in Omarska concentration camp.[11] That's actually how I got involved into women's issues and in human rights. I worked with them. I was also volunteering with United Nations translating something etc. you know how it goes during the war. So I was working with them. My mum was also engaged with, was working with civil victims of war so I was with her walking around hospitals etc.

Through this experience, she got introduced to some of the programmes of B.a.B.e.[12] in Zagreb. On her return to Sarajevo, she began working for a feminist organization Žene Ženama[13] and founded another feminist group:

> Then we decided we want to start our own group and that's how we started with Cure[14] in 2004, and I was active in Cure until last year even before that actually because I just thought I want focus more on art and culture because this is what interests me. I think that I've tried many markets working with women's issues and then feminism but I believe that I have this beautiful power to transform the planet. And for me it is important to be as radical as possible now because we really live in a fascist time and I think that if we want to change something we shouldn't accept that feminism is called gender issue etc. all of these things. (Personal interview, April 2010)

In the previous narrative, commitment to feminism becomes the catalyst for transnational political engagement in response to the state of emergency created by the war. The dynamics of agency described in this story follow a pattern shared by other local interviewees. Here, encounters with the traumatic experiences endured by some women in the war signal the crucial moment which sparks interest in feminism and women's issues. As in the previous story, the commitment to feminism becomes a central theme in this interview. Foregrounding her personal and deeply political formation as a young woman in exile and faced with the deeply

gendered legacy of wartime violence, the above narrative can be read as a *Bildungsroman*. On the one hand, the feminist script recounted here maps a personal trajectory inextricably connected with the dissolution of the Former Yugoslavia. Poignant here is the reference to the Omarska camp as infamous locus of ethnic cleansing and the trope of escape, in this case, to Croatia. Yet, as we follow the protagonist's steps from Babe to Crvena, an alternative map of feminist citizenship practices is also drawn that challenges and exceeds the gendered and ethicized conditions of citizenship in the shift from war to so-called peace. In this narrative, a powerful conceptualization of the empowering dynamics of agency emerges, firmly rooted in the state of emergency of the war and intrinsically linked to the development of a feminist consciousness and political identity.

Conclusion

Populating abstract accounts of war and violence with discursive and embodied gendered experiences, an important contribution of the feminist scholarship has been to lay bare the problematic assumptions of academic research, media analysis and policymaking that frame women exclusively as victims, or natural peacemakers. These simplistic narratives were mobilized in the context of the Bosnian War. The focus on stories of gender-based violence implicitly eclipsed the manifold dimensions of women's experiences of the conflict constructing women as ultimate victims. Starting from the premise that victimization and agency are inevitably intertwined, this chapter draws on interviewee's narrative to charts women's diverse positioning in relation to the war and explore the complex roles they took in those circumstances. This is crucial to understand the conditions shaping women's practices of citizenship in the transition to so-called peace. Such complexity indeed comes to the fore in the personal accounts of the women I interviewed wherein the conflict emerges as a key defining moment that profoundly shaped life trajectories, personal and collective challenges and current political dispositions. In this chapter, I attend to the ways in which the women I interviewed reflect on their experiences in relation to the war and ethnonationalism and negotiate their positioning in Dayton's complex peace. Evoking memories of personal and collective experiences endured during the conflict and its aftermath, these narratives provide a powerful account of the complicatedly different ways in which interviewees were deeply affected by war as well as reacted to it. In these narratives, the war

becomes a catalyst that both impinges on women's sense of integrity and security, but also galvanizes for action. Yet the relationship between the war and each of the women who contributed to the project is extremely diverse, and so is their positioning post-Dayton.

The outstanding legacy of wartime violence remains profoundly enmeshed in the nationalist foundations of post-Dayton politics. In this context, the (in)visibility of survivors' collective stories often serves competing nationalist agendas and rubs against institutional neglect to take survivors' claims for justice and access to citizenship rights seriously. Personal experiences shared by one activist survivor who contributed to the project highlight strength and resilience in the face of traumatic vicissitudes as well as political commitment to fight for justice. At the same time, her experiences' proximity to ethno-national narratives has ambivalent implications for survivors' concrete needs, as well as for developing strategic allegiances with other women's groups. In the second part, I discussed narratives of women's diverse reaction to the aftermath of conflict which propelled contributors into different forms of activism and political involvement. Collective and personal stories wherein war experiences are intrinsically linked with the beginning of feminist activism or around women's issues are particularly important. These hold a critical and productive potential that challenges the all-encompassing notion of ethnic citizenship and its gender order.

Notes

1. Hansen identifies three broad narratives developed around sexualized violence as warfare strategy with complex implications in their framing of the Bosnian conflict and for the articulations of policy responses in favour or against military intervention, as well as more ambivalent positioning.
2. Some of the essays collected in Stiglmayer (1994), and particularly the foreword by Roy Gutman, provide a significant example of this discourse on the Bosnian wartime rape. Other writings (e.g. Boose 2002; Mertus 2004; Rejali 1996) exemplify a substantive focus of the research on victimized women. Here, I am not questioning the validity of this kind of research as indeed addressing issues of wartime rape and violence against women remains extremely important. However, I maintain that it is also necessary to produce a more nuanced understanding of women's experiences of armed conflict.
3. Biljana Plavšić, a leading figure among the Bosnian Serbs and former president of Republika Srpska, was among the war criminals sentenced by ICTY

(see: http://www.icty.org/x/cases/plavsic/cis/en/cis_plavsic_en.pdf). A report published by BIRN (Balkan Investigative Report Network) discusses accusations against women who were involved acts of violence and torture. These involve a total 40 women suspects (see Balkan Insight, February 7, 2011, Bosnian War's Wicked Women Get Off Lightly, "http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/bosnian-war-s-wicked-women-get-off-lightly"). The title of the BIRN article is telling of gendered tropes associated with women who commit violence (see also Gentry and Sjoberg). During a personal conversation with a researcher interested in this topic, I was told that obtaining information on women war criminals proves to be very difficult not only because of the pending investigations but possibly because of a general attempt to keep this phenomenon invisible. A major difficulty this interviewee encountered in attempting to conduct research was organizing interviews with women suspected of war crimes (Personal Conversation, May 2010, Sarajevo).

4. For coverage of this story in the UK, see, e.g., *The Independent* (London), November 1, 2010; *The Observer* (England), October 24, 2010; *The Guardian* (London)—Final Edition, October 22, 2010; *The Times* (London), October 19; *The New York Times*, October 16, 2010. For coverage in other European newspapers, see, e.g., *El Pais* (Madrid) November 5, 2010, Il *Corriere della Sera*, November 20, 2010. For coverage in the region, see, e.g., http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/jolie-cuts-down-number-of-filming-days-in-bosnia-over-rape-victims-protest and http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/serbian-media-mogul-accused-of-undermining-jolie-s-film.
5. SNSD had become the strongest Serb party after the 2006 elections, overtaking the overtly nationalist Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) which was originally founded by Radovan Karadžić. At the time of fieldwork, the SNSD also took the presidency in the Republika Srpska, the entity with a population of Serb majority.
6. For instance, the Abrasmedia team conducted, interviews by with feminist activits who organized a series of activities on the occasion of International Women's Day can be accessed here: http://www.youtube.com/abrasmedia#p/u/63/1iQdhTs8qS0 (last accessed August 22, 2011).
7. The campaign "101 reasons to vote for a woman" was discussed in an article shared in Abrašević's portal. It consisted of a series of actions including meetings with candidates during the electoral campaign, the distribution of promotional material through women's NGO's, the media and an advertising campaign. The promotional material consisted of a leaflet containing 101 statements of differently positioned citizens which advocated for voting for women at the election. The logo of the campaign reproduced a cartoon-like figurine of a housewife and the slogan

recited "Domaćice više zbori i za svoje mjesto se izbori" (Housewives speak more and fight for your place/rights. The slogan plays with a double meaning of izbori = elections and izbori se = to fight successfully). While some of the organizationsnvolved in the campaign suggested that the message aimed to be ironic and witty, a number of interviewees were critical of campaign during our conversation and expressed a similar critique to that voiced in the article published by Abrašević.

8. HDZ is the Croatian Democratic Union, historically the strongest Croat party in BiH with very strong link with HDZ in Croatia. The party split into two factions in 2006: HDZ BiH and HDZ-1990.
9. The term Ustaša defines the Croatian fascist movement developed during World War II. In the context of the rise of nationalism(s) and breakup of Yugoslavia has acquired a negative connotation and has become a pejorative name used to identify Bosnian Croats.
10. Balija is a slang with a derogatory meaning utilized to identify Bosnian Muslims (Bosniak).
11. This is the concentration camp (or investigation centre as it was defined by the militaries) run by Serb forces located in the mining town of Omarska, in northern Bosnia-Herzegovina. This was a site of major atrocities in the first year of the war, where internees were tortured and killed. This is also one of the site where sexual violence took place.
12. Feminist organization founded in 1994 in Croatia. B.a.B.e. stands for Budi Aktivna. Budi Emancipiran (Be Active. Be Emancipated) see http://www.babe.hr/hr/o-nama/.
13. Žene Ženama (Women for Women) is a long-standing feminist NGO in BiH. According to their website: "a self-organized women's group which contributes to development of civil society through empowerment of women and women's groups and advocates for respect of women's human rights in all spheres of private and social life" http://www.zenezenama.org. I had the opportunity to visit their headquarters in Sarajevo and discuss their activities during an informal meeting (Personal Conversation, Sarajevo March 2010).
14. Cure (Girls) is a feminist NGOs whose members are predominantly young women. According to their website: "Cure foundation is a feminist activist group that works for positive social changes through education, cultural and research programs" (http://www.fondacijacure.org/index.php). Among their activities, Cure also hold an annual festival of Women's art Pitchwise which includes exhibitions, music events and workshops with activits from BiH and the region. See (http://www.fondacijacure.org/pitchwise/?lang=en). I met with Cure activists numerous times (March 2010, August 2015, September 2016), as well as attended some of their initiatives in Sarajevo such as a march for International Women's Day and the Pictchwise festival in September 2010.

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CHAPTER 5

Collective Visions for Citizenship and Challenges of Transversal Politics as Practice

Continuing the focus on the agentic nature of citizenship as lived practice, this chapter is concerned with exploring opportunities and challenges in articulating and sustaining collective women's citizenship claims in the aftermath of the peace agreement. Understanding citizenship as a lived practice is crucial for feminist research and politics as it allows us to recast women, in their complex diversity and roles, as political agents. Agency even in small-scale political action can propel a transformative process which is vital to the development of women's citizenship claims and, in doing so, expands citizenship beyond issues of rights and obligations (Lister 2003, 199). Human agency also locates citizenship in a dialectic relation with society, embedded in social and cultural relations (Lister 2003). In this expanded feminist framework, civil society broadly understood as the space of informal political action, emerges as a dynamic space wherein citizenship is lived, negotiated and contested from women's multiple positions. This is also the space wherein the horizontal dimension of citizenship as collective action among citizens is forged through collective bonds, social movements, different forms of grassroots activism and participation in civil society organizations (Predelli et al. 2012, 189). Feminist reformulations of citizenship entail the possibilities to develop instances of transversal politics as defined by Yuval-Davis (2006) or moments of "solidarity in difference" (Lister 2003, 199). These concepts (solidarity in difference and transversal politics) identify a commitment to building allegiances among

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diversity, without losing the attachment to one's own identity and values. The notion of transversal politics, thus, offers a seductive framework for feminist analysis and politics in that it captures opportunities to building alliances across women's multiple positions, as well as shared interests with other marginalized groups.

In this chapter, I examine how the women who contribute to this project articulate notions of collective action involving women and other allies. In doing so, I also explore opportunities and challenges for transversal politics given the complexities shaping citizenship practices post-Dayton. Instances of women's organizing in the aftermath of war represent a productive entry point for analysing women's efforts to enact their active role as citizens and articulate women's collective claims. As mentioned this occurred initially within the creation of informal groups initially set up to deal with the humanitarian emergency arising from the conflict (e.g. Walsh 2000). By crafting a space of activism in the midst and aftermath of war, women in Bosnia began to complicate, and in some instances challenge, the very nationalist logics which, as Cynthia Cockburn and Dubravka Žarkov put it, relegate women to the world of birthing and mourning and elevate men to the world of arms and glory (Cockburn and Žarkov 2002, 13). Women took on new roles responding to crucial dynamics emerging from the conflict such as humanitarian relief, domestic violence and reconciliation, and in the process, some developed feminist interventions organizing "as women, for women, and on women's issues" (Cockburn 2002, 71). While the legacy of ethnic atrocities during the war led to the division of some women's groups along ethnic fault lines, a number of women's and feminist organizations found ways to cooperate across the ethnic divide.

As mentioned in previous chapters, the women who contributed to this project recounted how they took on new roles during and in the aftermath of conflict. They *learnt* how to respond to the state of emergency arising from the conflict, as well as to deal with their personal/collective plight caused by violence, trauma and the extreme politicization of ethno-national identities. Those who had been involved in feminism before the war recall how they had to reinvent activism in response to the new challenges posed by the patriarchal foundations of violent nationalism. Some had left as refugees and came back in the immediate aftermath of the war with a newly found commitment for feminist and grassroots activism. Some became activists for justice after experiencing violence and injuries. Others became involved in formal politics

with multi-ethnic, as well as nationalist parties. Some arrived in Bosnia through humanitarian work; others became involved in the work of international institutions. Discussing the role played by women's groups in the violent dissolution of former Yugoslavia, Maja Korac provides a poignant description of women's active roles as a "politics of small steps" (Korac 2006, 516) which captures the informal and non-institutionalized character of women's collective and individual agency and aptly describes a kind of activism born out of the "exceptional" situation of the war. Borrowing from Korac, I suggest that while the interviewees' active roles in the aftermath of conflict took on a multiplicity of trajectories, with different political implications, in some instances women's experiences translated into a politics of small steps that could re-imagine citizenship for women. This chapter asks: to what extent can this multiplicity of experiences be translated into spaces of collective action? Can solidarities across women's multiple positions as well as wider allegiances challenge the dominant order of citizenship?

Research into women's collective organizing in the aftermath of the war suggests that sustaining collective political action for transformative ends has been a complex endeavour. A number of dynamics challenged the cohesion of women's groups and compromised the articulation of collective citizenship claims and demands. Cynthia Cockburn's extensive work with women activists in Bosnia illustrates circumstances that compromised opportunities to translate women's work into a broader movement for social change (Cockburn 2002). There were difficulties in establishing connections and networking among groups in the aftermath of large violence and disruption. Some activists were unwilling to initiate a critique of gender inequalities that could have challenged familial and intimate relationships in a moment when women were still mourning and grieving their personal and collective losses (Cockburn 2002, 71–78). Research on women's post-war organizing thus reveals complex negotiations with the material and societal legacy of the conflict, as well as with the politicization of ethno-national affiliations (Cockburn 1998; Helms 2003). These intersections complicate the development of a feminist critique of nationalist rhetoric, and often, instances of transversal politics were only possible through strategic avoidance of contentious issue, as Elissa Helms' extensive research also points out (Helms 2013).

Another significant aspect shaping the configuration of women's activism and opportunities for collective women's claims in the post-Dayton context is the politics of international aid and civil society

building. Existing studies draw attention to the framing of women's NGOs in terms of humanitarian assistance and service providers rather than political entities (Walsh 2000). Others examine the ambivalent role of international programmes and donor agendas in both creating spaces for women's activism and constraining their objectives (Helms 2003; Pupavac 2005). Martha Walsh's research on women's NGOs in the politics of post-war reconstruction and peace implementation raises questions regarding the effectiveness of these groups in bringing about social change given that often these emerged as service providers/single issue groups. Walsh suggests that NGOs' impact in the post-war context has been mostly confined to the micro/local level of humanitarian and service provider activities, while broader changes through explicit social/political activism have been more difficult to achieve (Walsh 2000). Walsh concludes, perhaps hastily given the complexity of the post-Dayton context, that women's groups generally missed the opportunity "to make a link between aid and empowerment" (Walsh 2000, 180). Nevertheless, critiques on the technocratic nature of civil society remain valid after two decades of international peacebuilding efforts (Donais 2017).

Throughout the successive decades of international peacebuilding programmes, women's groups have emerged as key target of international programmes and funding aimed at building civil society with ambiguous effects (Belloni 2001; Helms 2003; Fagan 2005). Helms argues that the gendering of international aid was both enabling and constraining (Helms 2003, 28). Relying on essentialist framing of women as natural peacemakers and agents of reconciliation, international peacebuilding discourse reproduced ideas about innocence in relation to the war, which in turn position women as *outsiders* in the domain of politics. On the other hand, some organizations were able to mobilize this positioning vis-a-vis the corrupt and male-dominated world of politics, in order to achieve their political goals (Helms 2003, 28). This has also often entailed a strategic avoidance of more critical stances, such as openly using the label feminist or confronting gendered exclusions. Pupavac offers a starker critical reading of international programs for gender equality and, more specifically, those around women's empowerment in politics and micro-credit, as technocratic, top-down and ill-conceived to address structural inequalities (Pupavac 2005). In her study, the NGO world emerges as self-serving and unaccountable, a view shared by some of the women who contributed to this project (Pupavac 2005, 396–397).

Some of the challenges highlighted in the literature are to some extent still in place after nearly two decades of so-called peace. This chapter brings into sharp focus the constraints to collective mobilization produced by the intersection between the divisive logic of war and ethno-nationalism, its entrenchment through the stratification of the agreement and the ambivalent outcomes of internationally driven peace-building processes focusing on the space of civil society. The narratives discussed in this chapter illustrate how interviewees navigate and make sense of these challenges through their reflections and aspirations for collective action. As discussed in previous chapters, their responses are inflected through diverse political stances, as well as shifting understandings of collective action itself. These encompass motivations to act as/in solidarity with "Others"/citizens opposed to the logic of war and the power of nationalist elites, to organize as diversely positioned women working for women and/or as diversely positioned feminists who extend their political stance to confront the gendered processes post-Dayton politics relies upon and produces.

Furthermore, interviewees evoke a wide range of mobilization strategies to *work around* the restrictive political space of post-Dayton Bosnia. These can be seen as shifting across the interplay between, interactive and mutually constitutive, "invited" spaces of activism that might focus on formal channels for activism, such as those legitimized by international donors and institutions, and "invented" spaces of activism that seek to re-imagine the very meanings and contours of citizenship through less formal, yet critical interventions (Miraftab 2004; Zaharijević 2015). Understanding citizenship practices through the frame of intersecting spaces is thus useful to capture the shifting nature of informal politics in the neoliberal *post-conflict* moment as grassroots activists often *move across* these spaces, articulating and inventing different tactics to pursue their goals. The challenges to civic activism discussed by the women I interviewed for this project are also emblematic of the wider reverberations of Dayton's unexpected consequences and failures into citizens' everyday life.

The Post-conflict Condition: Entrapment and Hope

My longest fieldwork trip coincided with the electoral campaign for the 2010 general election which saw a heightened climate of tension spurred by disputes among dominant ethno-nationalist parties in order to garner

electoral support through fear of the ethnic other. During the months prior to the election, reciprocal accusations and denials of war crimes and political manipulation of the legacy of war and ethnic divisions featured daily in local media outlets. While the deep inscription of conflict narratives in everyday life might be inevitable in the tortuous process of outliving conflict, the electoral campaign offered a glaring example of the toxic after-effects of Dayton's machinery. The consociational formula has implicitly legitimized governing and aspiring nationalist elites to openly pursue this rhetoric for political and economic gains. Those months spent in Sarajevo, thus, offered a privileged entry point to observe the long-term and ambivalent impact of conflict and conflict resolution interventions. Thanks to the lengthy conversations I began to learn how the women who contributed to this project navigate this multi-layered legacy in their everyday. Crucially, fieldwork encounters and conversations brought into sharp relief how dynamics produced by elite-driven peace agreements and institutionally focused consociational formulas have deep ramifications that reach beyond the domain of political representation. These reverberate in the public and private practices of everyday life, as well as infusing possibilities for thinking about the future. How to re-imagine citizenship for women and more broadly negotiate alternative spaces for collective action in this restrictive and overwhelming political context?

A journalist whom I interviewed in 2010 offered a stark analysis of 15 years of Dayton's unfulfilled peace. She was sceptical about the role of internationally led civil society programmes aiming at women's empowerment, suggesting that such interventions are often merely confined to bare subsistence. This argument resonates across the interviews and shares similarities with critical readings of international aid (Walsh 2000). She also felt that women organizing alone could not challenge deep-seated structures of ethno-national power legitimized through patronage, corruption and Dayton's dysfunctional political system. A key concern to emerge in our conversation was the economic impact of both war and post-war processes in citizens' everyday life.

> War still has a strong impact on everything in Bosnia: tomorrow the main newspaper opens with the story of the founding of the remains of people who were killed during the war. We are still talking about the reconstruction of houses destroyed during the war. We still have two schools under one roof. We still talk about Serbia expecting that Republika Srpska becomes part of Serbia itself. It is a terrible impact. But the strongest

> impact is the fact that we still have major economic problems. One third of the Federations' budget goes to pay the pensions to the war veterans and of the families of those killed during the war. This is a part of the population who makes a lot of pressure on the government and this is still a legacy of the war. The electoral campaign still deals with issues related to or unresolved after the war. Very rarely there are discussions about the future, even in the EU there is always talk about nationalist conflict so it is definitely a very strong image. As a citizen and as a journalist I am waiting for somebody with good common sense who would say "yes we had a war. It is terrible but we need to go forward, we need to continue to live. (Personal interview, August 2010)

A feminist activist echoed the sense of frustration with the never-ending post-war/post-Dayton transition. She was sceptical about the very meaning of citizenship and democracy in this context. She expressed disillusionment with the possibilities for change through electoral politics, given the ubiquitous manipulation of ethno-nationalist rhetoric at the hands of nationalist elites:

> I think that 15 years is quite a lot of time. It's a lot of time actually and I just hope … I mean the question is do I have any hope in the fact that something is going to be changed in elections? I don't think so because people are not changed and they are the ones who vote. They (nationalist parties) always create this situation of fear, you know… They create this situation of fear where people who thought of maybe voting for someone else they'll think now maybe they are right. "You see these Serbs, if they continue with this politics then I would have to vote for this guy". This is how people actually think about. We cannot expect the people here in the Balkans to understand democracy really because we never had it. It was never lived here. So we don't have this tradition of democracy and it is really hard for me to expect that something is going to change in this election. […] I think nationalist parties have aces in their sleeves and that's national vital interest. That is given to them by international community so … (Personal interview, April 2010)

During our conversations, I regularly asked my interlocutors whether they saw any opportunities for crafting spaces for collective action and what they thought were the challenges in coming together to confront dominant citizenship's exclusions. A mix of anger, sadness and frustration with the constrained and repressive configuration of so-called peace underpins many women's responses. These reflections convey a

bleak sense of immobility and a sense of entrapment in an ever-elusive post-conflict transition. Echoing perspectives and feelings highlighted in other studies (Helms 2013; Jansen 2015b), they often express distrust with the realm of formal politics and/or disgust at the political machinations of local nationalist elites. While lamenting citizens' disenchantment with radical politics and civic activism, these narratives also uphold a yearning for citizens' collective action. Rather than highlighting gendered experiences, however, ideas about collective activism are understood in a wider sense. A fluid notion of community essentially made up of all those "Others" who do not fit into the dominant citizenship order underpins these narratives. Some contributors rest their hopes and worries in an ambivalent notion of civil society, infused with normative aspirations for citizens' collective responsibility and conceived in contrast to the technocratic world of NGOs. Others, even though aware of the complications associated with an ethnically dominated system of political representation, refuse to give up completely on electoral politics, lamenting the lack of strategies that could get citizens involved. Citizenship practices evoked here thus encompass multi-level interventions shifting across the formal and informal arena of politics and activism.

A feminist activist calls into question the politics of dispossession and disempowerment ushered in by Dayton's failed promises in affecting citizens' disengagement with politics:

> The point is not to change the electorate who already votes, but the indecisive and the abstainers. I cannot really see any strategies to bring people who abstain to the polls. There are a series of initiatives, for example to encourage women to vote, but I am not sure how effective they will be in the end because people here are also very fed up. People have their back broken because you cannot be begging for 15 years and then wake up one day to be a citizen. That's how people have been reduced to feel, like beggars, to ask for favours and for political patronage which is something that you cannot change in six months (of electoral campaign)… and here not much has been done to change this situation. There isn't a collective civic responsibility of citizens as such, there's only a small minority who keeps fighting (Personal interview, April 2010)

Another contributor, a journalist and activist for social justice, spoke sharply about the international approach to civil society building as

meaningless, echoing critiques about the technocratic nature of international peacebuilding programmes and the unrealistic expectations placed on the role of NGOs (Fagan 2005; Donais 2017; Belloni 2001):

> But there is not civil society in this country. You can go around and meet different NGOs. I know that there are more than 2000 NGOs in this country, probably even more. I am not sure what are they doing, or if nothing. That is completely absurd. I don't know why do we have these organisations because most of these 2000 only exist to take money and they would do whatever you give them money for. And that's sad, that's horrible. But they don't know what the role of the civil society is. So I don't know, we have to do something but after 15 years living this kind of life, I don't know how, when and what should we do. (Personal interview, May 2010)

In a similar vein, an activist from Mostar evoked the disempowering effects of multiple post-socialist and post-war transitions and the empty promises of civil society as irrelevant for lived citizenship practices:

> In my opinion [the problem] is the fact that we don't have a tradition in civil society. So when we were supposed to enter our transition period[1] we entered the war period. And then there was post-war period and some people even today would say it's still post-war, 15 years after it is post-war. We are somewhere in this limbo, in between, the whole country where you don't know… You didn't finish naturally some processes and you are entering already something that you don't know. So generally, I think that when this term civil society was imported here, I don't think that anybody really realised what it means in terms of responsibility as a citizen. 'Cause for example the official registration of our NGO and all the others in our language means association of citizens,[2] which means that a certain number of citizens act together because they want to be part of society. That was the first reason this lack of tradition, and the second is the mistake of donors. It's first to pump millions and millions and billions into this country and at one point they created several thousands of NGOs which could never have survived, they served for one year or two. Then there was nothing. There's no continuous support from donors. […] (Personal interview, August 2010)

A lawyer working at OSCE also laments political apathy evoking the never-ending trope of transition:

> Why are people not so active? Probably because of internationals here, for example High representative of OHR… But the problem is that people in Bosnia rely on their activities. They expect that somebody from the outside solves our problems. This is a big, big mistake. Why? Is it because people are in a post-trauma status? Or post-war? Is it a result of transition? 'Cause we are in transition but I am sick of that word. We are in transition for 15 years. It's 15 years since the war ended, how long is transition? (Personal interview, May 2010)

These narratives are both interesting and revealing in the invocation of multiple transitions underpinning attempts to make sense of an intricate post-Dayton impasse. Crucially, the women's responses inscribe current struggles for civic engagement at the nexus between the dissolution of former Yugoslavia, the break-up of conflict, the dysfunctional afterlives of the peace settlement, as well as the dominant paradigm of neoliberal NGOization. Read together, interviews offer a complex depiction of the forces shaping citizenship practices where ethno-nationalism, and its legitimization through consociationalism, is but one of the structural dynamics. The elusive promises of transition to peace are, thus, understood in the broadest sense to encompass interlocking international/local processes shaping the post-conflict moment, as well as longer-term transformations ensued post-1989. While paying attention to the constraining effects of consociationalism's afterlives is significant to understand citizenship as a lived practice, the complexity evoked in the interviews offers a broader picture of the forces at play, which would not be revealed by exploring the ethno-national perspective alone. In this respect, the interviewees' perceptions of citizenship in Dayton's complex and incomplete peace bring into light the pitfalls and oversimplifications of dominant paradigms that insist on focusing exclusively on ethno-nationalism when trying make sense of Bosnia's impasse.[3] The gendered implications of Dayton's multiple transitions are, however, downplayed in these narratives, wherein collective action is understood to encompass a fluid a sense of solidarity with citizens that hold an anti-nationalist stance.

As the excerpts above indicate, a key trope underpinning interviews is the women's sense of a never-ending transition to peace and the depressing inescapability of the politics of despair which Dayton's dysfunctional governance has paradoxically contributed to legitimize. In his ethnographic work on Sarajevo's everyday life, Stef Jansen foregrounds similar experiences in what he terms the post-Dayton meantime (Jansen 2015b).

He describes this predicament "a sense of living in continuous suspension between a war that has not quite ended and a future—widely held to be related to EU accession—that has not quite been embarked upon" (Jansen 2015a). Interviews and informal conversations alike convey similar feelings of entrapment in a post-conflict condition. A profound disenchantment is palpable towards the elusive promises of redemption and resolution offered by the various uninterested international institutions, such as the EU for example. Echoing the narratives of a sense of displacement and not-belonging discussed in earlier sections, these Beckettian tropes[4] illuminate the personal/collective predicament of living in "Bosnia's perpetual status quo" (Ahmetašević 2017).

In a similar vein to Jansen, rather than dismissing the sense of suspension as a mere tale of disengagement, I view these narratives as poignant illustrations of how the women I interviewed navigate and make sense of compromised conditions shaping everyday citizenship practices. In their yearning for alternatives, albeit unknown, these narratives also reveal fragile glimpses of hope in their undefeated attachment to "doing something" from a position for not-belonging. Thus, in their potential for "forging new commonalities", they might offer opportunities for transversal politics. These narrative moves have resonances with the possibilities articulated by Jasmna Husanović as "hopeful practices" that begin with "telling the stories of our losses, pondering our old/new belongings, revising and re-imagining our pasts/presents/futures" (Husanović 2009, 102). Some of the activists quoted in this section were later actively involved in the popular mobilization and the plenum experiments. These took place in 2014 in Sarajevo, and in the rest of Bosnia, to contest Dayton's politics of despair (Hemon 2015) and, I would argue, demand a new form of radical politics and meaningful citizenship. With hindsight, seeds of those imaginative practices had been already there in the stories of struggles, feelings of entrapment and yearnings "for doing something", even though the contours and trajectories of collective action were yet to come. For some contributors who identify as feminists, the collective mobilization opened opportunities to strengthen the links between feminist activism, the struggle for the commons and radical politics.[5] Other interviewees, however, felt that processes left little space for their voices and concerns as women and feminists, re-affirming the importance of activism around/in women's and feminist spaces.[6] These insights remind us of the complexities of women's political stances and diverse feminist strategies that inform interviewees' lived practices of

citizenship. In doing so, these narratives point to the ongoing contentions and negotiations that crafting shared interests and demands entail.

The Ambivalent Meanings of Post-Dayton Civil Society

Another interesting theme emerging from interviews is the women's ambivalent perceptions of civil society as a locus for emancipatory politics. As the quotes discussed in the last section exemplify, many interviewees express critical views on international institutions and donors' interventions which, since the implementation of the agreement, have legitimized NGOs as key partners in efforts to restore and consolidate peace in BiH. These reflections resonate with earlier critiques on the political economy of internationally led civil society building and the resultant process of NGOization in the context of BiH, as well as in the wider scenario of post-1989 transition (Helms 2013, 90–119; Simmons 2007). In the implementation of the agreement, it has been observed, international actors involved conceived "civil society building as an essentially technical enterprise which lacks a political vision" (Belloni 2001, 175). NGOs have thus emerged as "cheap" implementation agencies of the various peacebuilding priorities (Belloni 2001).

Throughout Dayton's successive decades, these have been invested with a wide array of roles ranging from humanitarian aid to post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding. In the latest understanding, civil society organizations are conceived as credible partners in holding the government accountable for the EU accession process (see also Kostovicova 2013).[7] Expectations that these interventions would achieve the sheer level of social change placed upon civil society activism have been unrealistic, or their impact has been mixed, given Dayton's dysfunctional afterlives and citizens' consequent disillusionment with politics (Fagan 2005; Donais 2017). At the same time, the complex intersections between the politics of internationally driven activism and the local peacebuilding context complicate our original understanding of the local/international encounter in peacebuilding as clear/cut, as well as the romanticization of grassroots local activism (McLeod 2015).[8] As a result of this interaction, the contours and meanings of civil society at the local/international nexus are better understood as inevitably ambivalent, fuzzy and unstable. The sphere of civil society activism is certainly shaped by international norms, structures and funding priorities, characteristic of the neoliberal appropriation of

community-based collective action, but also by the interjection of local interests, actions and hopes which produces a contentious mix of cooperation and conflict (Hudson 2016).

This ambivalence transpires in the reflections shared by the contributors on the arena of informal politics as site for emancipatory politics. Interviewees raise well-founded questions about the sustainability of internationally funded NGOs and their role in facilitating and nurturing instances of emancipatory politics. They are critical of donors' changing and imposing priorities on the local context, highlighting a mismatch between international intentions and the knowledge of/in the local context, as well as the technocratic, managerial logic underpinning peacebuilding interventions. In this way, responses imply a neat distinction between the international and the local, even when some of the contributors have been actively involved precisely in those activities. It is indeed through their inside knowledge and experiences working with international funds and organizations that they are able to articulate such a robust critique. It is thus intriguing, yet not surprising, that they also reproduce some of the assumptions they were so eager to critique. Poignant here, for instance, is how participants speak about political apathy in ways that implicitly evoke the trope of Bosnian citizens as disempowered, in need of assistance, and direction, reminiscent of the logic of liberal peace. There are differences in the ways in which participants make sense of this apathy, as either resulting from complex post-socialist/post-conflict processes of disenfranchisement to more simplistic assumptions that reproduce essentialist tropes about Bosnian citizens. These interpretations are exemplary of the interviewees' diverse lived and professional experiences (e.g. working for OSCE supporting grassroots organizations vs being a member of leftist international network), as well as political inclination (from an anarchic/leftist tradition to a more liberal standpoint).

Noticing these tensions brings into light the complexity within which practices and discourse of activism go on post-Dayton. The activists I interviewed for this project invest the notion of civil society simultaneously with normative aspirations for alternatives to the all-encompassing logic of nationalist citizenship and critiques on the technocratic field of neoliberal NGOs. Yet in the precarious post-war and peacebuilding economy, the availability of international funds has also offered the necessary, albeit problematic, resources for the articulations of those aspirations. As Elissa Helms writes, the NGO scene became the locus

in which, however reluctantly and critically, many of those interested in civic activism and anti-nationalism found refuge (Helms 2013, 90–119). In this site, I would argue they crafted opportunities for negotiating, albeit momentarily, alternative visions of citizenship. As we know, the emergence of women's organizing during and in the aftermath of war can be seen as an important point of departure for analysing women's lived experiences of citizenship and the negotiation of spaces for agency in the post-conflict moment. This landscape of activism was diverse, ranging from informal local groups created in response to the emergency created by violence and large-scale destruction to remnants of socialist-time networks and international organizations' local spin-offs. Negotiations in this contentious landscape of activism hold contradictory implications for the enactment of feminist-oriented collective citizenship practices.

Interviews discussed in the previous chapter illustrate women's activism as shaped by different, personal and collective, interests, motivations and experiences of socialism, ethno-nationalist politics and conflict. With the signing and implementation of the peace agreement, international emphasis on the development of civil society led to growing numbers of internationally funded NGOs. Many of the recipients were existing or newly founded women's organizations bestowed with hopes, funds and responsibilities in the wider field of post-war reconstruction, democratization, refugee returns. Reflecting arguments highlighted in other studies of women's activism in (post)conflict Bosnia (Helms 2003, 2013; Cockburn 1998, 2013) as well as other contexts (Miraftab 2004), interviews illustrate how the burgeoning of women's NGOs offered opportunities for the women involved to articulate citizenship practices and claims often under the broad of umbrella of women's issues. In this way, an arena of informal politics emerged as alternative to the realm of institutional politics which, as some interviewees point out, is largely dominated by the focus on ethno-national interests and by networks of male power.

It is important to acknowledge the generative potential of these instances of women's mobilization in remaking spaces of citizenship by troubling, even momentarily, the conservative gender order underpinning the continuum of nationalism, war and peace and producing women exclusively as mothers and victims for the respective nations (Simmons 2007). Yet, longer term, the political implications enabled by this site

of mobilization have been far more ambivalent in challenging gendered exclusion and creating alternatives to the masculinist order of citizenship. As interviewees point out, post-war women's activism has been shaped by the very same challenges highlighted in more general discussion about civil society, such as the changing funding priorities and the question of sustainable activism. Interviewees also reflect on the tension between the predominantly technocratic/service provider nature of many organizations and the political aspirations for confronting gendered exclusions and interactions underpinning feminist citizenship practices. Interviewees' perspectives thus have resonances with the depoliticizing effect produced by the neoliberal logic of "Ngoization" (Gal and Kligman 2012) and "projektomanja" (Simmons 2007) long highlighted in feminist analyses of peacebuilding practices in Bosnia and other contexts (e.g. Pupavac 2005; Karam 2000; Nakaya et al. 2004; Björkdahl and Höglund 2013). Faranak Miraftab's notion of invited spaces of citizenship as internationally legitimized interventions that offer coping mechanisms of survival is also particularly pertinent here to capture the role of some women's organizations within the technocratic nature of neoliberal civil society (Miraftab 2004).

A journalist offers a thorough critique of the politics of international aid targeting women as project-led, unaccountable and unsustainable. This critique is significant given that for years a general reluctance to scrutinize women's NGOs in the context of Bosnia seemed to have been at play (Pupavac 2005):

> "After the war there were plenty of NGOs organized to help women, especially women victims during the war. And there was a lot of aid from international community which was given to those. In a period of time, I would say 2000–2005, most of them disappear because of the lack of the money. So and that is too bad. Of course, we do understand that the international community cannot help Bosnia-Herzegovina forever but the goal hasn't been achieved, in the sense to continue the work of these organizations and to respond to the goal to help women. So that was too bad. Because if those organizations have been made only, have been established to fulfil the project as long as there is the money that is too bad. Somebody should, especially the donors and that's what I believe, help those women in the sense to make the organizations self-sustainable. […] I think that they (women's NGOs) are really fighting for survival. So from project to project and then that's it, basically that's what they are doing. […]

> That is really problematic when, you know, NGOs became the purpose for themselves. Only for themselves. When they serve only themselves. I was about to do a show about the purpose and the goals of our local NGOs and it was impossible to do the show because they were not ready to be critical about themselves. It was just impossible to find another side that would say ok, this is where we are mistaking, This is something that we need to do some little bit about". (Personal interview, September 2010)

A feminist activist echoes this view drawing on her own experiences working in the NGO sector:

> "The problem was that every year donors, different donors; USAID, Embassies, UNDP, all these usual suspects how I call them, would invest money. One year in trafficking, the other year in violence, a third year in AIDS. And there's no strategy. It's just giving some small funds to organisations who work, or would accept to work on any issue you give them because they would get some money from it but (are they) achieving something? If we could measure the results of all of this money spent in women's issues? if we want to call them women's issue but I think they are global issues, really issues the we all should invest in". (Personal interview, April 2010)

My successive fieldwork trips brought into a sharp focus questions about NGOs' and grassroots organizations' sustainability in the shifting and shrinking funding priorities, particularly given Bosnia's lessening relevance in international security and policymaking agendas. During informal conversations and interviews alike, activists often spoke of growing competition among civil society organizations. In 2015 and 2016, it certainly seemed that for some activists the lack of funds and the increasingly more complex funding application process, denoting a classical neoliberal emphasis towards professionalization, had become key concerns for their sustainability.[9] Others who had been involved in less formalized types of activism, such as the recent citizens' protest and plenums, seemed to be more focused on reflecting and taking stock of both the challenges and openings that those experiences of collective mobilization produce. Contrasting viewpoints also emerge between contributors who continued to envisage feminist activism in a wider collective anti-nationalist sense and those who saw a value in upholding a logic of women's interests.

Interviewees' reflections are illustrative of different strategies for mobilization developed and imagined by activists to navigate the uneven and complex terrain of collective action. Some interviewees seem to privilege small-scale and localized informal interventions. They talked about following a more careful engagement with international donors that would allow them to hold on to a set of principles and to work on a specific set of themes, for example interventions in the public space, the use of art.[10] Some felt that the ripples of the citizens protest had inevitably strengthened the links between their feminist activism and larger questions of everyday politics. Other interviewees denote a less critical approach to the neoliberal funding paradigm.[11] Thus, while acknowledging pressures to continuously tailor their projects in order to fit funding requirements, they felt nonetheless compelled to apply for the widest opportunities in order to sustain their feminist activism.

However, there were also activists who spoke about working strategically and in cooperation with institutions in order to pursue specific goals, the monitoring of the national action plan for UNSCR1325, work on domestic violence and law on gender equality were in case in point. A feminist activist whom I interviewed in 2010 describes efforts to find openings for transformation, as small as these might be, within the existing consociational structures. The following reflection on the challenges and achievements for localized feminist activism in BiH illustrates this predicament:

> This is my opinion: I think we have numerous obstacles. There's obstacles in human behaviour in the perception of women, of gender. We have the challenge of a patriarchal society and then we have also another challenge of the country as it is, its legal division and its legal status. But … It always amazes me how much we accomplished [which] the other Ngos movement in gender haven't done in other countries which don't have the obstacles that we have. Because I think that we are all dealing with this patriarchal society, with the position of women, with the political theory but then again we have this additional burden. I'm always amazed at how much we actually accomplished and I wonder how much would be able to accomplish if we didn't have this (Bosnia's division). Those are the things that we cannot fight against, this legal system because then we would be totally accused of not being whatever… We are accused now, so I can imagine what it would be then. But I think we are just finding different methods of assisting women. I think it is possible but it does take greater

> effort. It's worth it and I really think is doable. But that's when I really think positive about all Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are other days when I think everything is hopeless here. (Personal interview, August 2010)

This strategy is both pragmatic and personally challenging. One the one hand, this form of mobilization translates into strategic avoidance of contentious issues, such as confronting openly the dominant nationalist rhetoric in RS which would lead to accusation of *disloyalty*. On the other hand, it also involves working strategically to take advantage of Dayton's autonomous structures and contentions to achieve some tangible goals, such as the passing of the law on gender equality for instance. In some cases, thus, the complex consociational machinery can "be an advantage. Because the RS doesn't want to be worse than the Federation and the Federation doesn't want to be worse than the RS". While such proximity to the structures of power compromises a more open feminist critique, it might also afford an opportunity to hold RS institutions and politicians accountable, or at least attempt to do so. As this interviewee points out, albeit this proximity might be uncomfortable, it also reflects a commitment to deploy different methods for women's activism in order to navigate the complex terrain of post-Dayton politics. Navigating such compromises and paradoxes is often unavoidable for feminist enactments of citizenship as testified by the experiences of women's movements across Europe (e.g. Roseneil et al. 2012) and even more so in the context of Bosnia.

As Cynthia Cockburn writes, a feminist movement with a wider popular support and depth of strategic organization would be necessary to address the contextual circumstances of post-Dayton politics, the multiple material and societal legacies of violent ethno-national conflict and neoliberal intervention (Cockburn 2013). Such a "holistic movement" (Cockburn 2013, 34) is not ready at hand for women in Bosnia, as well as globally (Enloe 2017). Yet, we should not underestimate the determination of women's activists since the aftermath of the war to push for change, as well as the glimpses of feminist energy as activists continue negotiate spaces of citizenship in Dayton's complex and unfulfilled peace. This is particularly significant given that gender and women's concerns have been marginalized in the peace process and/or mobilized to further ethno-nationalist (and patriarchal) rhetoric. The extracts above highlight a multiplicity of strategies deployed by activists to navigate Dayton's ethno-national structures, the entrenchment of nationalist power, as well as the terrain of

international funding. Following Faranak Miratab's insight (Miraftab 2004), we can see women's and feminist-oriented citizenship practices discussed here as articulated in invited spaces, i.e. activities supported by international donor and local organizations that might achieve a specific goal but not necessarily challenge the wider gendered order underpinning Dayton's peace. There are also more creative and critical interventions that by "inventing" spaces for informal politics aim to disrupt, albeit momentarily, Dayton's politics as we know it. I will further the discussion on the potential of these fluid strategies for negotiating spaces of feminist activism and alternative visions of citizenship in the following chapter.

Navigating Powerful Social Pressure

Women I interviewed for this project point out that, within the multitude of women NGOs, some groups are able to skilfully navigate the divisive political and institutional structures in order to achieve concrete collective goals. It is possible to identify examples in which women's groups have been successful in collectively working around common issues. For instance, local women and feminist NGOs were involved in a collective multi-level advocacy campaign on the introduction of gender quotas which laid the ground for to the adoption of the law on gender equality in 2003 as required by the membership in the Council of Europe. Another example is the network of cooperation across the two entities (the Bosniak Croat Federation and the Bosnian Serb Republika Srpska) tackling the issue of domestic violence. As quotes in the previous section illustrate, not only is this pragmatic cooperation with the local institutions personally challenging, but this approach complicates, perhaps even prevents, the development of a wider critique of the correlation between the nationalists grip on power and the gender stereotypes reproduced through Dayton's citizenship discourses.

Interviews and my observations suggest that strong social pressure is in place to silence, discredit and often intimidate women and feminists who dare to openly critique the interest of nationalist elites and their gender implications. For instance, a local activist within a LGBT organization recounted having experienced various forms of harassment and threats from sympathizers of nationalist parties because of their identity and politics as LGBT/queer collective and their work against enforced ethno-nationalist rhetoric.[12] In another public controversy, president of Republika Srpska, Mirolad Dodik stageda personal

attack on Oslobođenje journalist Gordana Katana mobilizing sexist and sectarian language when she dared to ask the RS president to comment on a series of accusations for illicit activities against a relative.[13] An interviewee working in the broadcasting service, on the other hand, described how in 2010 she became the target of a media campaign that, she recounted, was connected to her dismissal from the position. There is an indication that, as a journalist who is renowned for her media inquests into episodes of corruption involving nationalist elites, she became a target of harassment precisely because of her outspoken anti-nationalist stance. Bringing to the fore the tension between critical women's experiences and voices and the dominance of nationalist elites, these examples offer powerful insight into the trials undercutting the articulation of women's citizenship claims in the context of Dayton's afterlives. As always, the personal is highly political.

Paying attention to the personal experiences discussed here allows us to trace a continuity between the gender tropes underpinning the emergence of nationalist politics and their implicit reproduction in the so-called peace. These episodes are indeed reminiscent of the silencing tactics employed by nationalist elites in order to discredit (personally and publicly) feminists who, in the years of the wars, openly challenged the nationalist cause. The infamous article in the Zagreb newspaper Globus that accused five feminists of being national traitors, depicting them as witches, frustrated feminists dissatisfied with their personal life and "Yugonostalgic" communists still rings true (Kesić 1999). Furthermore, interviewees observe a re-patriarchalization of society, partly enabled by the entrenchment of nationalist discourses, wherein discursive and non-discursive strategies associate ideas of femininity to traditional roles, upholding conservative parameters for women's behaviour and persistent stereotypes for those who transgress them.

A feminist activist and academic discusses the resilience of gender stereotypes mobilized by nationalist elites to define women's proper behaviour, as well as those attached to feminism:

> I think that the first problem is when, you know,… when you are a feminist the first problem is to exist as a feminist in Bosnia. Because feminism in Bosnia means … when you say feminism people think of radical, 60s, burning-bras, lesbians and so on. It is almost like a taboo word. […]

> Therefore I think that the whole concept of feminism within the political nationalist ideological project is even more difficult because even social-democrats think that feminists are witches. It is a general popular belief that feminist is really not something that you want to be, apart from among the feminists. The nationalist parties are trying to do their best to mask their misogyny and male chauvinism by supporting some programmes who are going to give some money to women who have given birth to children. Social welfare programmes, you know, and constantly around the role of women as a mother.
>
> These ideological projects are also making a huge pressure on women on how they should behave in order to respond to the role of a good Bosnian woman, good Croatian woman or good Serbian woman. There are a list of things that you have to do to be a good Serbian, etc. woman and I think that this is making a huge pressure on women, and huge expectations on how they should behave. (Personal interview, April 2010)

Another feminist activist offers a stark analysis of Dayton's gender reverberations:

> I think this applies everywhere, but perhaps here you can see it more clearly. This is certainly a very patriarchal country with strong sexism which in some ways is worse than during the war. Well this is because war creates some extraordinary situations: men are at war and women stay at home, in this way women become more visible and exposed. When I was working in Croatia I worked mainly with women. When I moved here, in BiH, to work with local people I must say that the majority of them were men because the war was over and they'd all come back. Therefore, unless you work in a predominantly female environment or on women's projects and issues, you immediately realise that peace has had a backlash on women in terms of visibility, representation and presence in public space. Additionally, this is a patriarchal society because socialism was also rather paternalist. Therefore, this doesn't really help the average woman or man to move beyond this scheme. And so, you have a society which exploded, a radicalised society, an ethnic society … and it's obvious that all radicalisations imply single identities and this also means a traditional patriarchal identity. (Personal interview, April 2010)

These excerpts resonate with the multiple transitions and conflicting legacies underpinning citizenship post-Dayton outlined in earlier sections.

Here, however, a critical feminist perspective comes to the fore that unravels the gendering of socialism as well as nationalist discourses and the resilience of gendered exclusions underscoring moments of political upheaval, conflict, as well as peace and stability. Offering a multidimensional gendered analysis of Dayton's citizenship, these reflections entail a powerful critical potential that questions dominant institutionalized discourses and explicitly confront the entrenchment of nationalist power as gendered. Yet, translating these critical insights into shared spaces of feminist activism remains a challenging endeavour given women's diverse viewpoints and positioning vis-a-vis the logic of ethno-nationalist belonging.

Ethno-National Affiliation as a Challenge

Narratives discussed above highlight the multiple obstacles underpinning interventions that could openly challenge the correlations between the institutionalization of ethno-nationalism and its attendant gender order, as dominant political discourses. The legacy of ethno-nationalism, however, holds ambivalent implications also in relation to the horizontal dimension of citizenship practices, that is the relationships between women and women's groups. As insights from fieldwork suggest, confronting issues of ethno-national affiliation often becomes controversial for collective women's citizenship discourses in BiH. This is far from surprising if we acknowledge the diversity of women's relations to the dominant nationalist projects. For instance, commenting on the ordeal that leads to her dismissal as a result of a sectarian campaigning discussed earlier, one interviewee recounted a lack of solidarity she experienced from other women's groups and individuals working on issues of gender equality. She was critical of the fact that while human rights and professional organizations had made public stances, no statement of support came from the women's movement, including members of the Federation's gender centre. Regrettably, it was not possible to further investigate this episode and gather the viewpoints of those called into question. Nevertheless, I would suggest that this silence highlights tensions and fractures in the development of collective citizenship discourses. As discussed earlier, women's groups' vulnerability to social pressure might explain the choice to remain silent and not to rally in support of a woman perceived as ethnic other. On the other hand, this

episode might indicate that in crucial moments when women's issues and interests are challenged through the manipulation of ethno-national affiliations, different women's positionings taint the development of collective feminist platforms.

Other examples corroborate these observations by foregrounding contentious relations among women's groups when ethno-national affiliations intersect with gender issues. For instance, one episode refers to a case of sexual exploitation of a minor girl reported in 2010. The police in the Republika Srpska had traced evidence of the possible involvement of influential personalities, including professors, one Imam and local politicians who were consequently arrested. The episode became immediately enmeshed with antagonist political and nationalist interests of the respective "ethnic other" involved (the "Serb" RS Police and the "Bosniak" suspects). Interviewees' comments suggest that this case brought to the fore fractures and divisions tainting the women's movement which failed to reach a common cross-entity position statement for the safeguard of the young woman's rights.

> if you are a poor girl If you are sexually harassed as it was the case with this 13 year old girl there's NO help, nothing. What‘s her life now? Who came? Which women organisations came to help her to ask her (how she felt)? So that's how all of us failed. I mean, I am purposely saying all of us fail I just believe that all of us either we didn't have strength, either we didn't want to etc. (Personal interview, September 2010)

> This is what happened: there wasn't a collective statement involving all women's association reiterating that the main priority was what happened to this girl and asking for all other political considerations to be left for another moment. She was the one and only victim of this situation. This didn't happen, only some organisations openly took this position, because the fundamental preoccupation was how to avoid speaking out since this was seen as an attack toward a Bosniak politician undertaken by the Serb police. I would have expected the network headed by CURE to come out with a strong position in defence of the young girl's interest. It didn't happen as only one organisation did this, including the RS Gender Centar. However what was lacking in this occasion was a common political vision saying "ok let's all be on the young girl's side, all these other issues are not of our concern", and this is because fundamentally women's groups are also divided. (Personal interview, April 2010)

As my interlocutors point out, the development of a common feminist vision often clashes with the highly divisive nature of ethno-nationalism and the legacy of the conflict. Obstacles to a more explicit feminist critique of nationalist power, thus, are not only a result of silencing dynamics imposed on the women's groups. Rather these tensions emerge also because of women's own complex relation to the question of ethnic affiliations.

> "There isn't a strong and collective political platform (of NGOs) and this applies also to women's groups. It is true that there are some women's associations who know how to work. Without them the law on domestic violence would have not been passed. Also, the creation of the gender mechanism would have not been successful without women's groups working together. The fundamental issue is that women's groups are working pretending or not wanting to see this, avoiding opening this Pandora box of identity. This could be a good thing if it were part of a strategic vision, i.e. let's not create this conflict, we don't know how to deal with this aspect of ethnic identity therefore let's work on other issues. Within this logic there have been some achievements. However there is a lack of a common vision when political and other issues force us to deal with the contentious issue of identity". (Personal interview, April 2010)

Reflections discussed here offer some insight into the complexity underpinning the process of alliance building around feminist and anti-nationalist political stances in the post-Dayton scenario. While difficult negotiations are inevitable in the pursuit of intersectional feminism practices, moving across *divides* to craft shared feminist interventions becomes ever so challenging in a context wherein gender/ethnicity identity boundaries are enmeshed with the legacy of conflict, as well as with the system of power and patronage enabled by decades of Dayton's dysfunctional politics. While the contributors discussed in this section identify as anti-nationalist and frame their activism/analysis through feminist lens, their reflections suggest that women's positions vis-à-vis the conflicted legacy of nationalism are diverse and complex. Instances of cooperation among women's groups might offer opportunities to circumnavigate, albeit temporarily, the political and institutional division of BiH. However, the contentious relationship between gender and nationalism complicates any uniformed understanding of women's collective practices of citizenship.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I explore opportunities and challenges in articulating and sustaining collective women's citizenship claims in the aftermath of the peace agreement. Interviewees' experiences and reflections reveal disillusionment with the prospect of developing alternatives forms of collective action that might challenge the Dayton's regime of citizenship. They express frustration with the restrictive and disempowering terrain of Dayton's politics at the intersection of the sedimentation of ethno-national power, a by-product of the consociational agreement and the multiple material and societal legacies of post-conflict transformation. The chapter begins with a discussion of narratives where the struggle of navigating an intricate post-Dayton impasse comes to the fore. Interviewees' reflections evoke the complexities shaping the elusive promises of peace. They express frustrations with living in a precarious meantime (Jansen 2015b) where legacies of conflict are still alive and contested and promises of progress and resolution remain unfulfilled. These narratives are emblematic of the huge challenges in finding breathing spaces for civic activism in the *oppressive* context of post-Dayton BiH. Tying in broader contentions underpinning Dayton's citizenship, these narratives are exemplary of the interviewees' multiple allegiances encompassing a wide sense of solidarity among "the Others" who do not identify with the dominant logic of ethno-national belonging, rather than arising from their experiences as women. In doing so, however, these reflections downplay gendered exclusions underpinning Dayton's citizenship.

Gendered experiences are addressed more explicitly in the second part of the chapter where I foreground reflections that delve into the struggles and negotiations concerning the articulation of shared women's claims and feminist citizenship practices. These insights are crucial in order to extrapolate how the interlocking constraints on civic participation, discussed in the first part of the chapter, play out in the context of women's and feminist-oriented activism. Interviews and my observations suggest that strong social pressure is in place to silence, discredit and often intimidate women and feminists who dare to openly critique the interest of nationalist elites and their gendered implications. The development of common feminist citizenship claims often clashes with the highly divisive nature of ethno-nationalism and women's own complex

relation to the question of ethnic affiliations. At the same time, reflections and experiences discussed in this chapter highlight a multiplicity of strategies deployed by activists to navigate Dayton's ethno-national structures, the entrenchment of nationalist power, as well as the terrain of international funding.

While the notion of transversal politics might be a seductive theoretical concept, paying attention to the participants' perspectives and lived experiences highlights how painstakingly difficult is creating and sustaining solidarities in difference across women's multiple positions in the complex scenario of post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina. Turning to the more fluid idea of "solidarity as not-belonging" might offer opportunities to forge bonds with *the Others* as political subjects and articulate fragile, yet hopeful, collective political practices that counter Dayton's politics of despair. However, interviews indicate that these interventions might also run the risk of downplaying gendered exclusions. In the heterogeneous space of activism evoked by interviewees, visions of collective action that merge anti-nationalist stances with feminist analysis entail the critical potential to confront the gendered exclusions Dayton's citizenship relies upon and produce.

At the same time, interviews reveal multiple and contradictory political stances, different feminist affiliations, as well as viewpoints on how to tackle the thorny question of ethno-national(ist) affiliation that complicate any straightforward understanding of women's collective action. Rather, these women's lived practices of citizenship emerge through ongoing negotiations, compromises, tensions and setbacks. In a never-ending transitional context such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, the ever-present tension between what citizenship is, as delimited by the post-Dayton institutional, political discourses and what its expansion through feminist activism might promise becomes more acute. Interviewees' reflections illustrate the complexities involved in forging collective spaces for activism and make citizenship for women in the aftermath of conflict and international intervention.

Notes

1. After the events of 1989.
2. Udruženje Građani.
3. I am aware that I also ran the risk of reproducing this oversimplification in earlier drafts of this project when, perhaps my eagerness to trace Dayton's

afterlives led me to overemphasize ethno-nationalism as my analytical focus.

4. In the summer of 1993, Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot was staged in a besieged Sarajevo directed by Susan Sontag and produced by Sarajevo-born theatre director Haris Pasovic. The play assumed a symbolic and tragic significance in capturing the situation of a city/country (Sarajevo and BiH) which many felt had been left to its own devices to deal with the conflict, epitomized by the siege of Sarajevo, while its citizens, as the main characters of the play, waited in vain for Godot/international community to arrive. (For a compelling account of this production, see Sontag 1994.)
5. Personal conversations with Crvena activists August 2015.
6. Personal confidential conversations Sarajevo August 2015.
7. Personal conversations with EU officials in Sarajevo August 2015.
8. While the relatively recent turn to hybridity in peace and conflict studies is relevant here, feminist/postcolonial IR scholarship has been crucial in highlighting the *fuzziness* of the local/international.
9. Personal conversations with Cure feminist activists Sarajevo August 2015, Youth Initiative for Human rights activists September 2016.
10. Personal conversation with Crvena activists April 2010 and August 2015.
11. Personal conversations with Cure feminist activists Sarajevo August 2015.
12. Confidential Interview, Sarajevo August 2015.
13. Oslobodjenje.ba (n.d.).

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CHAPTER 6

Is Another Citizenship Possible? Hopeful Political Practices in the Post-Dayton Impasse

Taking seriously women's narratives and reflections collected for this project reveals the complexities surrounding attempts to remake citizenship for women and, more broadly, to organize collectively beyond the boundaries of institutionalized discourses in post-Dayton incomplete peace. Against all odds, women, feminist activists and their Other allies continue to re-imagine citizenship in their everyday life through individual creative practices, as well as through instances of collective mobilization. My sense is that in compromised conditions of the political, such as those emerged in Bosnia throughout decades of complex and violent *transitions*, alternative visions of citizenship are potentially articulated through a multiplicity of interventions, shifting from the *micropolitics* of ordinary life to the realm of cultural activities, to more overt and conventional forms of individual and collective mobilization. Interweaving analysis of personal narratives and collective experiences, in this chapter I highlight the creative potential these might hold to contest and re-imagine citizenship amidst the contentions of the post-Dayton impasse.

A useful starting point to make sense of these enactments is the interaction between invited and invented spaces of citizenship coined by Faranak Miraftab and later deployed by Adriana Zaharijević to study interventions of Yugoslav feminism (Miraftab 2004; Zaharijević 2015). Invited spaces, Miraftab argues, are those inhabited by grassroots activists and NGO's allies with the support and legitimacy conferred from either

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the state and/or international donors. Invented spaces, on the other hand, are those *occupied* by the grassroots through oppositional collective action that aims at confronting the status quo. Adriana Zaharijević deploys this framework to capture the evolving and shifting nature of Yugoslav feminist interventions in the backdrop of multiple transitions. In this context, Zaharijević shows, feminist groups invent spaces of citizenship through the rediscovery of a common Yugoslav past. This fluid identity propels mobilization in opposition to the nationalist occupation of identity pursued throughout the 1990s and entrenched through the means of conflict resolution. In the process also challenged and resisted is the neoliberal usurpation of the feminist project accompanying the mantra of post-socialist and post-conflict transition. As both scholars illustrate, understanding citizenship practices through the frame of intersecting spaces captures the shifting nature of informal politics in late modernity as grassroots activists often *move across* these spaces to articulate and invent different tactics in pursuing their goals.

While offering a more complex understanding of civil society and informal activism in the neoliberal moment, the notion of informal politics deployed by Miraftab continues to privilege *traditional* forms of feminist activism enacted publicly and collectively through strategies such as protest, rallies and demonstrations. Drawing on an understanding of feminism as praxis located in the everyday (Hawkesworth 2004), I propose expanding invented spaces of citizenship to encompass a multiplicity of un-bound feminist interventions shifting across personal negotiations, cultural activism and more overt forms of political organizing (Downes 2008). Articulated at the intersection of collective grassroots action, personal attachments and lived everyday experiences, the feminist constellations I discuss in this chapter do not neatly fit in traditional understanding of social movements and civil society activism, even though the protagonists might also occupy more formal spaces of mobilization.[1] Taking feminism as praxis, I also foreground the politics of the everyday as a key site wherein alternative visions of citizenship are articulated as interviewees grapple with struggles in their lives and negotiate their relationship to feminism (Guest 2016). Borrowing from Miraftab, I deploy the connotation of "inventing" to capture the agentic and performative nature of the activities, experiences and attachment in claiming *spaces of citizenship* both symbolically, as well as through more visible interventions in the public sphere.

I begin with personal reflections shared by interviewees as they make sense of structural challenges tainting the articulation of common feminist demands, while simultaneously conveying an undefeated commitment to finding new strategies for activism. These narratives illustrate convergences between situated experiences in post-Dayton incomplete's peace and broader contentions in the global politics of feminism. I then turn to reflections and interventions at the intersection of cultural activism and artistic production as attempts to outlive the legacy of conflict and gendered exclusions through alternative feminist narratives. In the final section, I discuss the fragile potential of such feminist interventions to usher in alternative visions of citizenship in compromised condition of the political.

Critical Challenges and Feminist Futures

The narratives I interweave in this section produce a compelling tapestry of the legacies and contingencies that taint the articulation of collective feminist discourses in the post-Dayton impasse. Interviewees reflect on the societal and cultural issues affecting women's positioning in Bosnian society and foreground the struggle for building a collective feminist movement. They reflect issues that have long been at the centre of feminist struggles globally such as the difficulties in the development of feminist movements and solidarities across difference, experiencing sexist stereotypes in culture and language, and the more *tangible* problem of violence against women. As interviewees point out, in Bosnia's complex and incomplete peace, the political, economic and sociocultural legacies of the conflict, international intervention and the legitimization of nationalist power it produced exacerbate these challenges.

Reflecting on these issues, one activist offers a sharp assessment of the local/international forces animating her commitment to a feminist political project, here understood through a logic of collective action, an ethos of reflexivity and (aspirations for) transnational collaboration.

> Definitely fascism and nationalism. This is something that should be discussed on a daily basis. It's very important that we do so. [...]
>
> And I think it's also important to educate people about what is civil citizen, what does it mean, how can you be an active citizen, what are your rights and obligation. (Personal interview, 2010)

By focusing on the legacy of radical nationalism and the politics of disempowerment, this reflection situates feminist concerns firmly in the wider challenges shaping citizenship practices, before moving on to discuss more specifically the challenges facing the development of a feminist movement in Bosnia:

> Solidarity is a big a question, I think, between women and between feminists. And if there's a movement or not. I think that this something that we should really re-question, discuss, try to see if we should really call it solidarity, sisterhood whatever or should we find common interests that we should work around. Because I mean everyone who was ever involved in any feminist organisation knows that solidarity is bullshit. It's invented. I think that there's more solidarity between two men who don't know each other in the streets than between some feminist organisations. And this is sad because we should really fight patriarchy, you know. That should be our single goal. But somehow we created these elites within feminist movements as well, and then we have activists, we have academics who do not speak the same language, who do not share etc. so I think that definitely political situation is such that we should really be very active and talking about this. [...] (Personal interview, April 2010)

Whether a contemporary women's and feminist movement exists in Bosnia is a matter of ongoing debate among local activists (see also Cockburn 2013). While this concern shares resonances with wider conversations on the critical challenges feminist interventions face globally, in Bosnia these are intensified by the outstanding legacies of violent transformations and questionable international strategies revolving on a technocratic notion of civil society:

> But there are many problems in Bosnia-Herzegovina. If you ask me maybe I can just be discouraged when I try to name and list them all. But I think we should really see what's going in Europe and we shouldn't allow that we stay so limited in our resources as we are already. So I think some sort of networking, cooperation, exchange is very important. Women here do not get a chance to discuss with academics in the field of feminism, they don't know what is going on … I mean you have internet or whatever… that's not enough really. (Personal interview, April 2010)

This narrative conveys a sense of frustration at the interlocking issues that the protasonist believes should be at the core of feminist

interventions in Bosnia. The sense of dejection at the thought of the seemingly unsurmountable challenges and problems affecting women's citizenship is a recurring theme in most conversations I had throughout this project. Even though this narrative is grounded in the specific context of post-Dayton Bosnia, the feelings produced by a constant struggle against the persistency of patriarchy echo experiences shared by feminist activists across diverse contexts (Cochrane 2013; Guest 2016; Enloe 2017; Deiana and Pierson 2018). At the same time, this is also a narrative of hope and determination conveyed through sustained investment in feminist activism. This activist envisions the struggle against patriarchy as a process of critical self-reflection and dialogue on the practice of solidarity. She also articulates an aspiration for feminist exchange and collaboration beyond national(ist) borders and among academics and activists. Alternative visions of citizenship are imagined through a desire for a collaborative, self-reflexive and transnational endeavour which, albeit symbolically, lifts the cage of conflict and isolation to inscribe local feminist experiences and commitment in a wider transnational context.

The theme of reflexivity also appears in a conversation with the founding member of a feminist queer collective. Our conversation touched upon contentious, yet recurrent, themes such as the commodification of feminism supported by international donors and the ever-present question as to whether a feminist movement exists in Bosnia. The interview conveyed that, from the subject position of an LGBTIQ individual and activist, citizenship post-Dayton means experiencing intertwined matrixes of exclusion and sense of (un)belonging. In a powerful reflection, this interviewee describes personal everyday experiences as a prism through which multiple legacies of violence-gendered, ethnicized and homophobic are lived and embodied in post-Dayton Bosnia. In a similar vein to other accounts, this narrative also expresses a passionate determination to finding new modes of activism and opportunities to build solidarities. Inflected through personal experiences of everyday insecurity, reflections on how to forge collective bonds take a sombre and deeply personal subtext. In this story, the collective legacy of post-war trauma interlinks with the violence of everyday life experienced by LGBTIQ folks, individually and as an activist group.

> How do we lead an open discussion when the only thing that we've learned has been violent methods? [That is why] it's mountain work because then you need to recognize messages inside and tools that you

> use inside, and how to transform this and, then, apply it as a group. So in terms of building a collective and creating a safe space within a collective … It's a very… it's a long-term task here, but with time when more people get stability and you heal yourself, the more you can build creative connections. (Personal interview, August 2015)

Re-imagining citizenship in this narrative is linked to the creation of a safe space wherein to work through the internalized and embodied effects of multiple forms violence. It is also intertwined with the struggle to create and sustain a collective while acknowledging both commonalities and diversity in life experiences of group members. My sense is that through artistic interventions—poetry, video installation, street performances and creative storytelling, the LGBTIQ collective enacts alternative visions of citizenship. As my interlocutor points out, these instances of cultural activism offer members an opportunity to express their story and *name* their identity, interjecting and momentarily disrupting the gendered narratives of citizenship after conflict. While these interventions can be a liberating and productive exercise, this activist also recounts having experienced various forms of harassment and threats from sympathizers of nationalist parties because of their identity and politics as LGBTIQ collective and the public manifestation of their work against enforced ethno-nationalist rhetoric. Inventing spaces of citizenship for this LGBTIQ group has meant putting themselves in the frontline of violence.

The complexity of sustaining feminist collective activism is key preoccupations for another feminist activist whom I also interviewed for this project. Grappling with the legacy of Dayton's exclusions and the challenges for radical politics through feminist interventions takes centre stage in the following extract:

> Everything here becomes more ugly and more brutal because this is a country with a difficult political and economic situation which is in a continuous transition. A country where the dignity of citizens does not exist and therefore everything becomes exasperated and there is a lack of awareness because there are only a few feminist associations here. There is a multitude of women's associations which employ women, work for women, yes, but feminist associations which work on the symbolic, on the imaginary are only a few, actually maybe only one that I know of. I know some individuals but you don't have any associations with a strategic vision in order to work on the language and the imaginaries. (Personal interview, April 2010)

As discusses in Chapter 4, this interviewee's affective encounter with the Post-Yugoslav space traces back to the war when reverberations of its gendered violence brought her to Croatia and later to Bosnia as an activist and humanitarian worker. Personal vicissitudes and political commitment converged leading her to settle in Sarajevo, a newly found home. Her story foregrounds personal struggles of adjustments to Dayton's incomplete, gendered and *brutal* peace, which, she recounts, compelled her to re-negotiate a novel relation and attachment to feminism. Animated by an undefeated investment in radical politics and outspoken feminist activism, her feminist vision is inflected through a constant search for contextual understanding of Bosnia's complex reality. Her narrative also conveys a longing for critical work that disrupts the symbolic and discursive context underpinning practices and discourses of citizenship.

Intriguing is how these diversely situated stories illustrate seemingly contradictory meanings of—and attachments to—feminism. On the one hand, the looming *ghost* of a unified feminist movement suggests interviewees' attachment to powerful, yet contested, singular narratives of feminism as a unifying project for women and feminists (Hawkesworth 2004). On the other hand, through their experiences and critical narratives of the challenges facing contemporary Bosnian feminism, interviewees reveal how painstakingly difficult is sustaining solidarities across difference in the post-Dayton impasse. These stories illustrate interviewees' personal and collective negotiations of powerful narratives of sisterhood and solidarity, as the basis for feminist activism with the inevitable complexities of feminism as praxis. In doing so, these narratives reveal feminism as unfinished project that grapples with multiple struggles.

Significant in these reflections is how interviewees continue to articulate a desire for finding new political strategies and, against all odds, hold on to their investments in a feminist future. Resonating with experiences discussed in previous chapters, I view these as "hopeful political practices" (Husanović 2009) grounded in the critical, yet hopeful, engagement with Bosnia's recent turbulent past. A creative potential that re-imagines citizenship infuses these narratives inflected through personal experiences, local histories and transnational aspirations. The visions of citizenship evoked in these accounts gesture to multiplicity, contradictions and negotiations of feminist belonging emerging at the intersection of the personal, the political and the international. By foregrounding feminist struggles and the political potential of (un)belonging,

this collective tapestry also undermines the boundaries of institutionalized practices and discourses of Dayton's citizenship.

This Is Not My Peace![2] Spaces of Citizenship Through Feminist Art

Feminist scholars highlight the role of national culture in (re)producing specific gendered norms which underpin citizenship practices and discourse (Yuval-Davis 1997; Anand 2014). At the same time, feminist intervention in cultural and artistic production can open opportunities for challenging these tropes and express alternative visions of citizenship.[3] Since the emergence of nationalist movements, the cultural domain played a central role in the ethno-nationalist (and gendered) occupation of citizenship and belonging. The bourgeoning in the Yugoslav media outlets of images representing the nation as a woman and exalting motherhood as a national duty is an emblematic example of gendering the nation. As discussed across this study, interviewees' experiences and reflections illustrate the resilience of powerful constructions of women as victims and symbols of competing nationalist projects. Interviewees recount powerful social pressure to silence those who dare to publicly challenge assigned roles and question the nationalist grip on power. Resonating with the tactics deployed in the 1990s that identified feminists, women anti-war activists and anti-nationalists as traitors of the homeland and *suspect* citizens, outspoken women, anti-nationalist activists, journalists and feminists in particular continue to be overtly referred as trouble makers, traitors and "witches". This is the misogynistic term and image that infamously made its way into the media, popular culture and political debates and stood in opposition to the trope of the "good national(ist)" woman (Kesić 1999). This is why, as my interviewees note, telling alternative narratives and working on the imaginary become important for some feminist activists in Bosnia. Drawing on various forms of art, feminist cultural interventions are fragile yet significant efforts that challenge the deeply gendered and oppressive totalitarian occupation of identity and belonging. In doing so, they invent new spaces for citizenship.

Since the war, local artistic interventions and cultural production have become powerful vehicles for creative self-expression and signification, enacting complex affective entanglements of those who lived and

experienced the conflict, as well as attempts to outlive its legacy. Writing on the arts' contribution to understanding the effects of war, Michael Shapiro suggests that "the arts (words, images, imaginative reconstructions, and so on) are a weapon of history; they are radically changing the ways in which the siege of Sarajevo will have been" (Shapiro 2012, 492). Infusing art with a new sensibility for themes such as memory, trauma and identity, the war experience has thus, perhaps counter-intuitively, propelled the emergence of an alternative sphere of cultural production, both survival strategy and site of civic resistance. Born in a besieged Sarajevo, two major cultural events in Bosnia-Herzegovina, The Sarajevo Film Festival and the MESS International Theatre Festival, are now popular platforms wherein complex local imaginations, histories and memories gain articulation at the local/international nexus and discussions around legacy of conflict are fostered.[4]

As art critic and former curator of Sarajevo Centre for Contemporary Art (SCCA) Dunja Blažević states, post-war cultural production is also the site where expressing gendered experiences becomes critical to both male and female artists (Blažević, interviewed by Traumane, M. 2009). In this milieu, women's and feminist artistic production come prominently to the fore. Cynthia Simmons suggests that interventions by women visual artists, filmmakers and writers, as well as art curators and administrators, run parallel to women's activities in the grassroots and civil society (Simmons 2010). These contribute to foreground women's neglected experiences, imaginations and voices in post-Dayton BiH, as well as in the international. In so doing, they also offer alternative narratives of the war, its after-effects, exclusions' and contentions, as well as the myriad of way in which women navigate these legacies in everyday life, and through art practice.

A widely known example of these powerful enactments is Jasmila Žbanić's film *Grbavica* (Esma's Secret).[5] The film follows the vicissitudes of a mother, Esma, and her teenage daughter, Sara. Their relationship is undermined by a revelation of Sara's birth, as a result of the traumatic experience of rape endured during the war. After an initial moment of shock and pain, the film closes with the relationship between Sara and Esma being restored. As Jasmina Husanović points out, compelling is how, in the film, a community of women takes centre stage: their daily commitments as mothers and workers, the multifaceted personal traumas, as well as possibilities for crafting new solidarities (Husanović 2009).[6]

The political resonance of Žbanić's work is amplified if we read this portrayal against the masculinist Dayton peace negotiations and the ensuing post-Agreement ethno-nationalist citizenship regime wherein women's experiences were and still are marginalized or exist in tension with collective nationalist interests. The film enacts a powerful, yet hopeful, critique of post-war Bosnia grounded in gendered experiences of conflict and women's subjectivities, bodies and voices in the post-war moment. I suggest that the film can be read as aesthetic enactment of alternative visions of citizenship, where women in all their complexity have a stake as protagonists and narrators of their own complex *peace*.

Echoing this view, women I interviewed for this project discuss the political role of women's and feminist art in destabilizing and complicating traditional narratives of citizenship in post-Dayton so-called peace. I place this *cultural turn* in feminist activism within attempts to negotiate and re-imagine alternative spaces of citizenship in the compromised conditions of post-Dayton politics. I had the opportunity to discuss the relationship between art, feminism and citizenship during a group interview with Dunja Blažević and the women-led team at the SCCA. They spoke of art as a powerful vehicle that generates dialogue and discussion by troubling the all-encompassing ethnic polarization and gendered logic in dominant citizenship discourses. They were eager to highlight the emergence of female artists as the most interesting and energizing phenomenon in Bosnia's artistic production in offering compelling reflections on (post)war experiences and contradictions.

> E: most of these works are very much war related… everything is here war related. It is has to be because is such a central event in our history, not only recent …
> D: yes, it's real life stronger then art. We have to deal with it.
> E: and also this decision to identify yourself with the most wounded … and these were women in the war. This is a fact you know, and being able to use now this feeling of female perspective on things it means that we are progressing in general […] and hopefully things will come to this sense when we'll be very visible and that women's articulation in the world is so important because women make half of the world population so this has to be …
> D: and of course this is not visible, these artists made them (the women who were victims) visible and the role of women in different circumstances, specially these disturbed times. So it is very good to make these things visible …

> E: for example, one of the first witnesses in The Hague were women that were in Omarska but they decided for the common good to speak out. To be strong. Which is also an act of engagement, of also sacrifice … (Personal interview, September 2010)

The inescapable legacy of the war mentioned in this dialogue is a recurring theme across interviews and conversations during my time in Bosnia. Wartime divisions still reverberate in the toxic ethno-nationalist politics that saturates institutional and political space. Also inscribed into everyday life is the war's affective legacy, deeply shaping personal and collective memories, familial histories across generations, as well as artistic production. For instance, Lana Čmajčanin's and Adela Jušić's collaborative video performance "I Will Never Talk about the War Again" powerfully enacts this predicament.[7] In the video, the two artists seat facing each other obsessively repeating the sentence "I Will Never Talk about the War Again", becoming increasingly frustrated and agitated. As in the stories discussed throughout this book, the personal and collective losses the conflict signifies, as well as the exclusionary entanglements reproduced through the *peace* take centre stage as artists, such as Lana Čmajčanin' and Adela Jušić, lay bare their experiences and emotions as the grapple with war's deep ramifications into everyday life. The need to reflect and position oneself in relation to recent turbulent experiences and ruptures, thus, becomes a driving force behind this rich art production (Blažević, interviewed by Traumane, 2009).

Artistic representations of the war or informed by its legacy are also wrapped in controversy as to whether this is a genuine reckoning with the past and its living legacy, or an attempt at capitalizing on the popular appeal of Bosnia's dark history. On the one hand, it could be argued that such a focus on the war feeds into stereotypes of Bosnia and the region as Europe's troubled periphery unable to move forward and leave the conflict behind. However, a productive and imaginative force infuses the insistence on re-telling a counter-history through local lenses and creativity. I view feminist and other critical artistic reflections on the spectre of war as creative interjections that struggle to find breathing space from the shackles of nationalism, conflict and the failures of international intervention. As my interviewees point out and the video installation illustrate, reckoning with war's after-effects and its experiential reverberations is both unavoidable, constraining and, yet, paradoxically productive. To borrow from Shapiro, thus, feminist and women's

art becomes the weapon that can radically change how the war will have been, as well as how a different peace ought to come.

The women I met at SCCA point precisely to this agentic force in feminist artistic interjections that visualize women's experiences of war and bring marginalized perspectives, reflections and sensations on the turbulent past to bear on the public sphere. As discussed earlier, this artistic strategy and political commitment are powerfully expressed in Jasmila Žbanić film *Grbavica*, a compelling example of the rich artistic production of a generation of women artists in post-Dayton Bosnia.[8] Other examples of creative counter-discourses exist such as Maja Bajevic's internationally acclaimed installation *Women at work,* a trilogy of public performances that begun in 1999.[9] The first instance, *Under Construction*, saw the artist working with other women who were displaced through the war while they applied embroidery on the scaffolding of the ruined National Gallery of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this five-day performance, negotiating spaces for citizenship assumed a powerful visual and symbolic effect, magnified through the visibility of women's work and the powerfully bright colours of the embroidered tapestry.

Paying attention to women's and feminist artistic counter-narratives reveals a continuum of interventions from the immediate aftermath of the war to the contemporary post-Dayton context. Bringing women's experiences, voices, skills and colours to the fore of public space, both symbolically and spatially, Bosnian women artists grapple with issues that play a central role in citizenship discourse post-agreement. These include identity and memory, the distinction between the public and the private, and the absence and presence of women in Bosnia's incomplete's peace. In so doing, they redirect our gaze to women and other *Others* whose narratives and knowledges have too often been dismissed and marginalized in dominant accounts about the war and in the architecture of peace. Such interventions enact critical visions of citizenship. These are inflected through personal and collective strategies of adjustment in the face of the legacy of conflict, the re-traditionalization of society and the paralysing effects of international resolution's failed promises.

Intricate negotiations of the personal and the political through artistic means appear in a conversation with the artist Sandra Dukić whom I met in Banja Luka in 2010. Sandra's work is also similarly concerned with the collective and personal pressures experienced by women and other *Others* living in a patriarchal and nationalist society, such as post-Dayton BiH.

These are themes she interweaves in her pieces, in some cases literally, as she deploys weaving and embroidery material, as powerfully symbolic techniques associated with women's work. Her installation *Bosnian House* illustrates this practice. Visitors are encouraged to walk around a kitchen space entirely made of fabric and cleaning clothes. Sentences on the relationship between men and women, all from a male perspective, are stitched on them. The piece plays with the absence and presence of women in Bosnian society, compelling the viewer to reflect on women's positioning and question whose voices and skills are valued, represented and heard. By spotlighting the everyday, the mundane and the private, the political nature of Sandra's art practice comes to the fore. Her work can, thus, be seen as disruptive of the patriarchal conventions upholding the public/private divide, not only in the home and society, but also in the artistic world that she insists on unsettling through women's work and techniques. Also politically important are her work's after-effects, as she recounts, the 2008 exhibition sparked interesting conversations in the town of Banja Luka, the administrative capital of the Republika Srpska:

> And it was also very interesting because then, I don't know, it was like lots of people came and *there was a good atmosphere in the city because we spoke about some problems here very directly and it's like NOT normal to speak about that here. So it was very good.* (Personal interview, September 2010)

Talking about her 2008 exhibition, Sandra narrates ambivalent feelings about the reactions received when showcasing her artwork. While she is happy that her art sparked productive discussion around gender issues and stereotypes, the process also laid bare very personal negotiations she grapples with. These are wound up with multiple layers of her identity as a feminist artist, a woman and a member of "the Others", the constitutional category encompassing those who not fit with the neat boundaries enshrined in Dayton's constitution and political life. As Sandra explains, her artwork is deeply rooted in her attempts to negotiate her positioning and belonging vis-à-vis the gendered tropes regulating women's role in Bosnian society.

> So it started when I was 27 and had identity problems like I think it's very typical for every woman if she didn't get married, had children. To live here and to have that kind of years sometimes is very difficult. So I was

> thinking about the typical advice that I usually got from my family, from my friends. And I wanted to make some joke about it and it really started. (Personal interview, September 2010)

As a way of giving expression to these personal dilemmas and struggles, she made a series of fabric collages, titled *Pieces of Advice* that explore in darkly humorous ways the pressures to comply with dominant norms of ideal femininity and gender roles. The result, however, is a piece with political resonance that reflects the position of women and women artists in BiH. Her choice of material and technique is very much rooted in the traditional Bosnian artefacts generally crafted by women (e.g. fabrics, embroidery and sewing). Bringing this kind of *hidden* women's work out in public galleries and exhibitions, the distinction public/private is also blurred (Fig. 6.1).

Grounded in her personal predicament, Sandra's work offers nuanced reflections on the expectations defining women's place within society and the family and sparks critical questions on stereotypes of masculinity and femininity. This is also illustrated in another series of collaborative pieces made with fellow artist Boris Glamocanin, where the boundaries of gender identity and heteronormativity are explored and challenged through photographs and video. Poignant is the video installation "Ona I Ono"/"She and It" in which the artists carried suitcases *decorated* with sexist and homophobic language, as Sandra explains documenting "every bad thing that we've ever heard about each other".[10] Offering a vehicle for expressing personal and collective dilemmas over gender norms, Sandra's art and our conversation reveal how she negotiates and re-imagines her relationship to the gendered tropes underpinning citizenship.

Resonating with experiences shared by other contributors to this project, the choice of addressing these issues publicly often comes with vulnerability. As Sandra recounts, after exhibiting her work she was also faced with criticism about her identity and unwillingness to conform to the accepted and traditional norms of femininity.

> So sometimes it's very difficult because … if you are so direct as I am, you open the door for everybody to say something to you. So, it's a problem. And if you also live in this small country, as Bosnia, and also small city, as in Banja Luka, that would be a problem. So I would get a lot of different reactions. So: I'm a lesbian, I am this, I am not a natural woman. So: I'm not normal, I'm saying things because I'm not married, because I don't

Fig. 6.1 "Pieces of Advice" Udaj se! Get Married! Sandra Dukić (2007)

have children I cannot say that stuff because I don't have it you know. So, it's not for me to say about it. (Personal interview, September 2010)

This extract echoes experiences shared by other contributors. As discussed in previous chapters, when the "Others", specifically women, feminist and LGBTQ allies, question and disturb predominant understandings of

Fig. 6.2 "Rađaj!" (Have Children!) from "Pieces of Advice" Sandra Dukić, 2007

gender roles encounter resistance and powerful social pressure precisely because their senses of belonging and interventions challenge patriarchal beliefs. In this respect, Sandra's experience foregrounds tensions between a feminist re-imagining of citizenship and belonging and the complex intersection of ethno-nationalism and gender. By addressing the relegation of women's role to the private domain, symbolized in her both techniques and themes, and by questioning through the means of humour the construction of women's identity exclusively as mother (see Fig. 6.2), her artwork challenges the very gendered logic propping up nationalist discourses through construction of women as vessels for the nation and its patriarchal reproduction.

As we know, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the process of Othering is not only gendered but also ethnicized as clearly illustrated in the following passage in which she reflects on her positioning vis-à-vis the dominant notion of ethnic citizenship:

> I think I am one of "The Others". Because I was born in Croatia, I think that Rijeka was my home town and when I came here I noticed that there is no "home town" like that. It's like …everything is split apart. I have two lives. So, I really like Bosnia. I feel that here you can find very interesting people and also it's very beautiful country but it is separated in that kind of fight. "I'm this. You are that" it doesn't look ok […] I want to live in country which is with some tradition from Serbs, and also from Muslim and Croats. It will be much more interesting because that is Bosnia-Herzegovina you know. It's not something that is apart. (Personal interview, September 2010)

This narrative offers a powerful illustration of the exclusionary processes produced by the dominant citizenship discourse wherein, as discussed earlier, the category of *The Others* becomes the only subject position for those who do not fit into the narrow and politicized ethno-national categories. Sandra's narrative reveals a multilayered account of identity that exceeds the boundaries of ethno-national affiliation, but it also pinned down by a sense of not-belonging. The extract conveys this tension by evoking multiple attachments that are now foreclosed in Dayton's architecture. In a way, a cartography runs through Sandra's story, from her upbringing in Croatia to her current life in the Republika Srpska, the Dayton-made Entity of Bosnia-Herzegovina ascribed to the majority of self-identified Bosnian Serbs, or so the story goes. It is precisely because of shifting and fluid attachments that not-belonging assumes a critical potential that also propels and defines Sandra's work as a feminist. Inflected through the gendered and ethnicized exclusions underlying dominant understandings of citizenship, her story and artistic interventions of not-belonging retain a productive force. The personal, the artistic and the public are all important dimensions in Sandra's re-imagining effort that continuously trouble the gendered and ethnicized borders of national(ist) citizenship.

Interviews and informal conversations with activists in Mostar's cultural centre Abrašević were similarly telling of their passion for cultural interventions as a way of addressing the paralysing effects of Dayton's citizenship. As one member recounts, organizing cultural event at the intersection between art and the public space traces back to the post-war years. In the immediate years after the war, she recalls, the activist group which later formed Abrašević was in search of collective spaces and initiatives that could bring people together across the spatial and symbolic divide created among the dominant Croat and Bosniak communities in the city of Mostar. This was not an easy context given the fraught political climate of the time. The deployment of art and music was an attempt to circumvent and respond to "a lot of fear, and hate and nationalism".

> So for us it was a way to make it subtle but to attract people and make them re-discover the city and move to follow, presumingly, their needs and to see what is going on. And then we like art ourselves and a lot of people here are artists so it was kind of natural for us. It was the most effective tool how to bring people together. But the main idea behind the programme was this is something which will attract people but through

> that we will expose them to different ideas because arts speaks for itself and a lot of art is engaged and has a story behind it and it's a way to treat non intrusively some issues which can be anything really in our experience from nationalism to capitalism to feminism … all the isms and non-isms. (Personal interview, August 2010)

This account highlights the significance played by the cultural programme developed throughout the years by OKC Abrašević's activists in the polarized and physically divided landscape of a town like Mostar and post-Dayton Bosnia more broadly. Through these efforts, Abrašević has emerged a site of civic resistance against the ethnic divisions reified through the peace agreement and scripted in the spatial segregation of the town. Gradually, the cultural centre has also offered a platform in which to discuss, critically and creatively different issues at stake in BiH post-conflict and post-agreement life, not only nationalism and its divisions, but also the legacy of Yugoslav belonging and politics, and the failed reconstruction of the city. Negotiated through cultural activism, these activities, and the bonds they establish, trouble the boundaries (spatial and ideological) of the dominant ethno-national logic. My contention is that interventions revolving around Abrašević are attempts that invent spaces of citizenship.

As the quote above illustrates, the centre also hosts activities and discussions around feminist issues. During my fieldwork trip in 2010, the centre was also the headquarters of ABART,[11] a women-led collective made of Abrašević activists-scholars who devise and implements projects focusing on artistic interventions. As stated in their website, a key aim for the group is to exploit art's creative potential in order to re-address the polarization of the city, its reverberations in the urban space and its everyday, and, as an extension, foster critical thinking on Bosnian society and politics:

> As politically active and engaged subjects, we take the situation of Mostar and its polarisation as the starting point to open up a discussion about *divisions* and *divides*. We are not only interested in religious and ethno-national separations, but rather in observing the ways in which the urban divide affects public spaces and the everyday.
>
> Considering the impossibility of adopting a singular strategy to approach and deal with the complexities of the urban reality we are embedded in, the nature of our platform is based on the idea of socio-political engagement through innovative cultural and artistic practices. We believe that

> art-based interventions hold the potential for a critical re-thinking of given values and to open up new perspectives in discussing forms, functions and values of public space.[12]

Using art and cultural interventions to spark new connections and creative dialogue within and beyond the bounds of Dayton's ethnic matrix, ABART enacts alternative visions of citizenship that gesture to international and regional connectivity through different interventions. Exploring the relationship between memory and the public space, the project "(Re)collecting Mostar" offers a poignant example of this re-imagining effort. The project involved local students and artists in residence in recollecting the recent story of the city, exploring and discussing the legacy and motives behind its division. It is in this context that feminist interventions ensued addressing the troubled relationship between gender and nationalism. In June 2011, the renowned Bosnian artist Gordana Anđelić-Galić, who was invited as the artist in residence for the project, staged a performance called *Pranje/Washing* in the river Neretva under Mostar's famous Old Bridge. The location has a powerful symbolic connotation in the politics of post-conflict/post-agreement Bosnia as the river represents the line between Mostar's two sides (Bosnjak and Catholic) of Mostar, divided as a result of the war. The old bridge, infamously destroyed during the war and rebuilt by UNESCO, has assumed an iconic connotation as symbol of the city and international tourist attraction. Heralded as a major example of international reconstruction, the bridge stands in stark contrast with many areas in the rest of the town, where the reconstruction of building and public places has been slow at best and highly contested[13] (Fig. 6.3).

The performance consists of a ritual wherein Anđelić-Galić carries a number of national(ist) flags associated historically with BiH. As she proceeds to wash the flags in the river, the water around gets tainted with blood. She then hangs them out to dry in the river banks facing the Old bridge. Anđelić-Galić's art practice focuses on the intersection between a thematic focus on trauma and memory of Bosnia's turbulent past and the symbols and techniques approach rooted in the skills and practices traditionally associated with women's experiences (e.g. sewing, washing).[14] Through layering key themes at stake in contentions around the notion of citizenship post-Dayton, such as violence, nationalist symbols, the heavy legacy of conflict, this performance is both critical and productive. Foregrounding neglected women's experiences and traditional roles,

Fig. 6.3 "Pranje/Washing", Gordana Anđelić-Galić (courtesy of ABART archive)

carrying the weight of national identity/community (flags) and dealing with the violence of Bosnia's turbulent past (blood), "Pranje" offers a powerful critique of women's relationship to the national(ist) rhetoric. At the same time, it enacts an alternative vision of citizenship by placing the woman/artist as a key agent who occupies the public space, displaying skills, strength and resilience that were, and still are, viewed as irrelevant in the making of post-Dayton compromised peace.

Inscribed within the interventions and objectives pursued by ABART, the performance can be seen as enacting alternative visions of citizenship that undermine the ethno-nationalist occupation of politics reified through the Dayton architecture and its reverberations in the public and urban space. We must also consider its participatory potential as an opportunity to forge collective bonds through the involvement of students, local citizens and visitors who bear witness to the series of artistic performances and participate in the (re)collection of Mostar contested history. Albeit perhaps only fleeting, the project and wider interventions

Fig. 6.4 “Pranje/Washing”, Gordana Anđelić-Galić (courtesy of ABART archive)

revolving around ABART forge an alternative sense of conviviality arising through a critical disposition towards dominant constructions and narratives of ethnicity/nationality, religion and gender, rather than through a common identity (Fig. 6.4).

A similar focus on art as a vehicle for activism and critical engagement emerges in an encounter with the directress and founder of the feminist cultural organization CRVENA. CRVENA’s strategies for activism focuses on the employment of feminist art and cultural interventions in the public space to raise questions such as the positioning of women in everyday life, politics and society, in the shift between socialism and capitalism, in the public/private divide. As stated by the director, this is a conscious decision that aims at circumventing the all-encompassing focus on ethnic divisions in the dominant political discourses, as well as challenge the technocratic nature of NGO feminism. CRVENA’s mission statement summarizes its commitment to creative/critical interventions wherein passion for art and commitment to social change sustain collective bonds among its members:

> **CRVENA** is a community of unique individuals gathered around the idea that art and culture provide an open platform for social change. Among ourselves we recognized the need to act as collectively to shift the spotlight from negative tendencies in our society to creative ways of addressing problems affecting citizens in BH, Europe and worldwide. Each of us has been taking initiatives and responsibilities in achieving better society and focusing on its enrichment.

Resonating with understandings of aesthetics and art as infused with dissensual politics, CRVENA's directress views artistic interventions as an instrument of radical politics. Art is the tool that can, even momentarily, lift artists, performers, participants and viewers out of the oppressive and ever-polarized logic of institutional politics of Bosnia-Herzegovina engaging multiple senses and emotions.

> the art projects and art perspective is very important and if you really want change something I think art is really a beautiful way because it has aesthetics, it appeals to people but also it affects people emotionally and intellectually and I think that with art you can you get to different people without aiming to get to them, especially if you do something in the public space. (Personal interview, April 2010)

In this narrative, art emerges as one of the strategies deployed by CRVENA's and other activists that negotiate new spaces and visions of citizenship. These visions disturb the ethnic and masculinist order by bringing feminist ideas and radical politics to the fore, both symbolically and physically as CRVENA's interventions enter the public spaces. Given BiH citizens' dissatisfaction and distrust with institutional politics, this strategy is viewed as an opening that could spark conversations, challenge existing ideas and bring citizens together in unexpected ways. Resonating with war and post-war experiences of cultural resistance, this narrative also reflects an understanding of feminist activism that re-invents itself in response to Bosnia's contextual post-war and post-agreement legacies, shifting to find breathing space despite Dayton's paralysing effects on citizens everyday life and political engagement.

In 2010, the group CRVENA was in its infancy. Since then, the collective has emerged as a significant feminist voice within Sarajevo's and the region's grassroots activism. Crucially, it has organized feminist activities that blur and contest the bounds of dominant understanding

of citizenship in multifaceted and creative ways. The Bring In Take Out—Living Archive (LA) project offers an interesting example of this re-imagining effort. Here, feminist belonging, activism and the creation of a LA as a counter-space intersect in ways that trouble the borders (gendered, material and ideological) of predominant nationalist narratives. As described in the organization's website, the project is an interactive platform, "consisting of exhibition, library, social space, laboratory, archive in which oral and other feminist histories are inscribed and displayed".[15] The project thus deploys a multiplicity of strategies at the intersection between art exhibition and public archive. With the aim of recovering the work and experiences of women artists, activists and scholars from the post-Yugoslav region, the experiment is a cooperation between feminists from Sarajevo, Belgrade, Ljubljana and Zagreb. It involved the organization of international/regional forums, such as a feminist conference in Zagreb organized by The Centre for Women's Studies, the feminist and queer festival in Ljubljana, and a curatorial school in Sarajevo.

The cooperation of feminists from Sarajevo, Belgrade, Ljubljana and Zagreb is a particularly important legacy that defies the divisive rhetoric of ethno-nationalist politics. By bringing feminist politics to the fore of citizenship practices in the region, it articulates alternative modes of collective engagement. As an effort that foregrounds women artists and the feminist politics of remembering, the project transcends and disturbs the patriarchal concept of nation/ethnic community underpinning predominant citizenship discourses. The LA is a creative example of efforts that expand, re-imagine and negotiate alternative spaces of citizenship grounded in a feminist politics of the commons. As a regional and transnational cooperation among feminists in the post-Yugoslav region, the project reflects an attachment to the legacy of Yugoslav women's counter-discourses, tracing back to women's participation in the anti-fascist movements, to the neofeminist movement of the former Yugoslavia and to the networks of women's activism which continued or were formed during the Yugoslav wars. In 2015, the collective completed a new art project on the women who participated and fought with the anti-fascist front that reiterates the centrality of this imaginary for CRVENA's activists/artists sense of identity and politics. The project emerged within wider initiatives developed in 2010 around the legacy of the 8 March, international women's day, as an opportunity to reflect and discuss on the position of women in the post-Yugoslav space. Building transnational

feminist connections in the digital and public space, mobilizing collective bonds through dislocation, critical memory and attachments to the cultural and political legacy of Yugoslavia, this intervention offers an interesting window into the bottom-up and agentic nature of feminist citizenship practices.

Over the years, CRVENA's interventions have grown to inscribe feminist concerns within other political demands such as negotiating a right to the city and new bonds against privatization of the public space, as well as the desire for a political alternative to post-Dayton "cannibal state" (Kurtović and Hromadžić 2017) enacted by collective movements of protest in 2014. As discussed earlier, the wave of protest emerged in 2014 out of frustration and discontent with the dysfunctional afterlives of the consociational agreement which has for decades legitimized local unaccountable elites. The protest also aimed to draw attention to the pernicious effect of international interventions, economic restructuring and unresolved post-war legacies on everyday life and security after two decades of so-called peace (Lai 2016; Murtagh 2016). In 2015, I had the opportunity to meet again with CRVENA activists. As other citizens involved in the Bosnian Spring, they expressed ambivalent feelings about the protests. On the one hand, a sense disappointment for the end of the mobilization was palpable. At the same time, important critical reflections were emerging from the plenums and protest movements.

As CRVENA activists explained during our conversation, the collective popular mobilization ushered in a new political language and opportunities for radical action beyond usual ethno-nationalist narratives and disputes.[16] They viewed the protest movement as an unprecedented opening to inscribe feminist activism within larger concerns over the structural inequality and multilayered violence epitomized in the Dayton's mode of governance, as well as the commodification of feminism supported by international donors. Even though its more ambitious objectives were curtailed by the end of the movement, the citizen-led experiment in radical politics provided an important opening wherein to challenge the Dayton's status quo, and re-imagine, albeit, momentarily, citizenship beyond its politics of division and despair.[17] While this collective energy materialized concretely throughout the 2014 events, its prelude could be traced in the ongoing productive labour of critical imagination of feminists, artists, their allies and other interested citizens of Bosnia's "empty nation" (Hromadžić 2009).

DIY Citizenship as Hopeful Political Praxis

Practices and reflections discussed in this chapter bring explicit feminist concerns to bear on lived experiences of citizenship and illustrate aspirations for political alternatives to the post-Dayton impasse. Brought into the analytical frame are heterogenous and shifting experiences of feminist activism enacted through a logic of collective mobilization for/in women's citizenship spaces, and/or situated in wider sense of collective action. These are infused by personal struggles on the meanings, legacies and strategies animating feminism and, more broadly, grassroots politics in the post-Dayton juncture. An underlying dimension of this re-imagining effort lies in instances of cultural activism that seek to challenge and subvert conventional gender roles. I view these as productive, yet fragile, interventions that undermine the totalitarian ethnicization of space, politics and belonging, through the articulation of marginalized narratives of the war, as well as the peace to come. Cynthia Symmons points out the political resonance of women artists in post-Dayton Bosnia through their personal/collective endeavours. This is art, she writes, that "engages the uncomfortable truths, and lies, of contemporary Bosnian society. It redirects the public gaze onto the issues and people who have been relegated to the margins. At the same time art provides a neutral ground for reconsideration" (Simmons 2010, 38). In a similar vein, I suggest that grounded in personal struggles and the collective ongoing negotiation of the legacy of conflict, the narratives and cultural interventions discussed here spotlight creative interventions that redirect the public gaze towards women's experiences, sensations and narratives of the war and, in doing so, contribute to enact alternative visions of citizenship.

The imaginaries of citizenship evoked by the Bosnian feminists and grassroots activists contributing here have wider resonances that reach beyond the (contested) borders of the Bosnian state. First and foremost, many of the narratives and experiences featured in this chapter evoke a fluid sense of belonging to the post-Yugoslav space. Mediated through local and personal histories, Bosnian feminists' experiences and interventions share similarities with the negotiation of feminist practices and politicized DYI cultural interventions enacted by feminist and queer collective in other contexts (Downes 2008; Chidgey 2013; Cochrane 2013; Guest 2016). As Julia Downes writes, rather than seeing these interventions as antithetical to *real* feminist politics, unconventional sites

of feminist activity such as DYI cultural interventions that occupy and politicize new spaces of activism illustrate the ever-expanding targets, mediums and trajectories of feminism as praxis. This description resonates with feminist understandings of citizenship as a lived practice articulated across multiple dimensions (Roseneil 2013). These shift from the personal, embodied and affective to the collective, symbolic and public. Not only do situated feminist stories collected for this project signal efforts to outlive the legacy conflict and the afterlives of conflict resolution. Through global resonances and historical inferences, post-Dayton feminist experiences enrich our understanding of the histories, contentions and re-orientations of contemporary feminisms. Articulations emerging at this intersection are fragile, yet productive interventions that continuously push against the boundaries, and borders, of institutionalized practices and discourses of citizenship.

Artistic interventions and the personal and collective negotiations of feminism discussed in this chapter inevitably entail some limitations in relation to reaching a wider audience and access (see also Helms 2013). Furthermore, these fragile interventions cannot, in themselves, challenge the multiple traumatic legacies, structural exclusions and dispossessions reproduced and institutionalized through decades of Dayton's uncomplete, neoliberal peace. Yet they reveal stubborn efforts to re-imagine the cultural and discursive terrain of citizenship in a context where ethnonationalism has sucked all the air of civic activism with the support of the *International Community*. These multiple feminist practices hold a fragile yet productive force. They are attempts to claim *new* spaces and forms of citizenship, while also complicating rigid notions of feminist activism as a unified social movement and its simplistic reduction to the technocratic world of NGOs.

It would be misleading to view these feminist interventions as distinct from the glimpses of new citizens' solidarities that challenged the divisionary effects of post-Dayton impasse. To the contrary, shifting across spaces of activism, the feminist constellations discussed in this book express a longing for re-imagining belonging, solidarity and politics. Experiences shared by the women I interviewed for this project and others who I encountered reflect heterogeneous interventions that involve feminists and other *Others*, women's and grassroots organizations and include small-scale projects, every-day activism, cultural initiatives, independent media and social networking. My impressions from successive fieldwork visits to post-Dayton Bosnia thus are that a sense of

"un-belonging" might propel fragile solidarities that push against the boundaries of institutionalized practices and discourses of citizenship.

As early as 2009, Jasmina Husanović wrote about "hopeful political practices" emerging in the midst of Bosnia's deeply fractured politics of dispossession as critical/creative attempts to deal with "deep injuries and violent boundaries yet avoiding the trap of identitarian politics" (Husanović 2009, 102).[18] Within this context, Husanović identified possibilities for emancipatory practices located within non-institutionalized women's and grassroots activism and in cultural interventions. Together with examples of a "politics of small steps" as enacted by certain women's groups, the fragile, yet hopeful, engagements discussed in this book spotlight sites wherein the gendered and ethnicized exclusions of dominant citizenship discourses, and the paralysing effects of Dayton's incomplete peace might be resisted. Inflected through Bosnia-Herzegovina's threefolded and intricate legacies of post-socialist, post-conflict, post-agreement transformation, these interventions enact alternative visions and practices of citizenship drawing upon feminist and radical politics. Sparked by decades of deepening inequalities and local/international ineptitude in the face of natural disaster, the tumultuous events of 2014 created the conditions for a collective exercise of dissent which was complex, challenging and yet productively incomplete. In many respects, those events were the visible culmination of ongoing critical labour sustained by tenuous, yet undefeated, attempts to re-imagine and re-invent spaces and meanings of citizenship in the midst of Dayton's complex and incomplete *peace*.

Notes

1. As mentioned in earlier chapters, these interconnections are particularly relevant this context where, given Bosnia's hard economic realities, resources for collective action are often available through international donors.
2. This title is inspired by a public artistic intervention by Bosnian artist Gordana Anđelić-Galić.
3. Feminist interventions have attempted to reconfigure cultural production as a crucial site for feminist agency and politics. This move has been highly contested. Traditionally inscribed in the context of 1990s third-wave feminism, the cultural turn is wound up with contestations about the real meaning of feminist activism and the death of feminism as a social movement. On the one hand, some feminists were wary of the commodification

of activism that flirting with popular culture of the 1990s might entail. At the same time, some feminist activists view popular culture and art as a site of expression wherein to interject and disrupt traditional expectations and representations of womanhood (see Downes 2008).

4. The Sarajevo Film Festival traced back to screenings held when Sarajevo was still under siege. It consisted of screenings of videos which arrived in the city through the humanitarian assistance planes. The crucial importance of this event for the citizens of a city under siege was recounted by Haris Pašović, theatre director and one of the founder of these initiatives, in the workshop "Theatre is conflict" held at Queen's University on 29 October 2009 within the project "The Belfast/Sarajevo Initiative for the Creative and Performing Arts: An Exchange between Queen's University, Belfast and the Academy of Performing Arts Sarajevo".
5. Grbavica is the name of a neighbourhood in downtown Sarajevo which during the war was a site of major fighting between Bosniak (Bosnian Muslim) and Serb forces. The film is set in this neighbourhood, hence the choice for the title. However, it was released in the UK as "Esma's secret" (2006).
6. Powerful portraits of women in post-war Bosnia emerge: not only Esma and Sara, but also Esma's friends and colleagues in the factory where she works and self-help group that she attends.
7. Analysis and images from this piece are available at https://adelajusic.wordpress.com/works/i-will-never-talk-about-the-war-again/ (last accessed 18 January 2018).
8. Information on other women artists from BiH can be accessed at http://www.scca.ba/index.php?lang=en (SCCA) or at http://crvenared.wordpress.com/crvena/ (Crvena Association).
9. For an overview of Bajevic's artistic production, see http://majabajevic.com.
10. The theme of the exhibition was then further explored in another piece of work titled "Put za New York/Travelling to New York" where the issue of marginalized/different/"abnormal" identities was addressed in relation to the centrality of ethnicity as defining category of identity in BiH. This piece is available at http://www.facetv.ba/rubrika/idemo-dalje/6403-boris-glamoanin-i-sandra-duki-autori-projekta-put-za-new-york.html (last accessed 1 September 2011).
11. I collected additional information on the ABART projects through a series of informal conversations with Giulia Carabelli (ABART research manager) and Mela Zuljievic (ABART and OKC Abrašević Creative Director). Information on ABART and its projects can be accessed at http://abartmain.blogspot.ie.
12. The project "Art in Divided Cities" is an interesting example which aimed bringing together experiences of everyday life in Mostar to that of other

divided cities such as Berlin, Hebron and Mitrovica. Ending with a creative Festival encounter between artists, architects, other academics, activists and citizens, the project worked to lift even momentarily the case of division and isolation and inscribing local experiences beyond nationalist borders reproduced in the city. http://abartmain.blogspot.ie (accessed 25 November 2017).

13. Other issues have emerged in post-conflict Mostar, not only its spatial division, segregated education and the lack of functional places (e.g. a cinema), but also wider social issues such as a high level of unemployment.
14. I gathered some information on Gordana Anđelić-Galić and her work through my conversation with Dunja Blažević, art historian and curator of SCCA. Additional information on Gordana Anđelić-Galić's artwork can also be accessed at http://gordanaandjelicgalic.com.
15. Information on CRVENA's mission, networks and projects can be accessed at http://www.crvena.ba (last accessed 18 January 2018).
16. Confidential personal interview Sarajevo, August 2015.
17. The Plenums are citizens' assemblies organized by activists during the protests to discuss political issues and make demands to the institutions For additional resources on the Protests and Plenum movement as examples of radical politics, see (Arsenijević 2015).
18. Jasmina Husanović' explores possibilities for agency and emancipatory political practices in the biopolitical landscape of post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina (Husanović 2009). She applies Giorgio Agamben's theory of a politics which begins precisely in the opaque "state of exception" (Agamben 1998) to the context of war and post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina, where the exclusionary enactments of ethno-national logic, the traumatic events of the conflict and the dynamic of humanitarian international intervention have reduced citizens to "bare life", as opposed to politically qualified life (Husanović 2009).

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CHAPTER 7

Conclusions

Since the signing of UN Security Council 1325, concerns and interests about women's experiences in conflict and post-conflict scenarios are increasingly framed around the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS). The emergence of the Agenda was infused with insights from women's perspectives and shaped by transnational women's activism and feminist research. Its consolidation and expansion into the international peacemaking and security architecture have inevitably shifted the focus to processes of implementation, while also raising questions about the risk of compromising its feminist transformative ethos (Otto 2009; Kirby and Shepherd 2016). Despite its diffusions across diverse institutional and political contexts, results in implementation have been discouraging and indicate that a resistance to see women as co-architects of peace still exists. Difficulties in implementation also point to the need for a more systematic analysis of WPS applicability to a variety of conflict and post-conflict scenario, as well as critically assessing its relevance to women's everyday experiences in those contexts. This book has foregrounded post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina as a scenario where some of these ambivalences come to the fore particularly in relation to WPS interaction with its post-conflict political scenario.

The deployment of a consociational formula in the Dayton peace settlement has entrenched ethno-nationalism as dominant political discourses. The exclusive focus on ethno-nationalism and territorial disputes has worked to sideline gender dynamics of conflict and conflict

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transformation in the text of the agreement and in the political structures. Despite the subsequent adoption of an impressive mechanism for gender equality and two consecutive WPS Action Plans, commitment has been rhetorical at best and success in the implementation minimal. This applies specifically to the most controversial gendered legacies of conflict, such as addressing the legacy of wartime rape, and the inclusions of women as co-architects of the peace processes, which remains male dominated and entirely focused on ethno-national contentions. While difficulties in the implementation of WPS have been experienced globally, I have argued that these challenges are wound up with the unintended consequences of Dayton's consociational formula in entrenching ethno-nationalism, and its attendant gender rhetoric, in political life. This principle is enshrined in the *Constitution* where Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs figure as *The Three Constituent People*, and the category of "the Others" is essentially disenfranchised from political representation. The agreement's provisions have worked to entrench ethnic divisions in the post-conflict structures, as well as in political, social and cultural life. While the peace settlement has been successful in creating shared institutions and mitigating violence, it has also laid the foundation for political paralysis and restricted the political space to ethno-national disputes. This has come at the price of marginalizing gender concerns in favour of dominant ethnic affiliation and nationalist politics as all-encompassing dimension of citizenship, peace and security. The context of Bosnia thus highlights a key site of tension between the aspirations for transformation and inclusion set out in WPS and the gender underpinnings of consociationalism. Echoing existing feminist research on this interaction, this book contends that the gendered tensions and after-effect of consociationalism must be taken seriously (Bell 2015). While existing feminist analyses have been concerned with the field of women's political representation and focused on the institutional level, I have argued that Dayton's gendered ramifications are further reaching. They infiltrate the social and discursive fabric of the post-war/post-Dayton order, restricting the parameters of belonging and the space for activism.

This book takes a different trajectory that, by drawing on feminist reformulations of citizenship, explores how women and feminists navigate the entrenchment of ethnic citizenship and its attendant patriarchal gender order, as well as negotiate opportunities for collective activism. This choice is also a political move: it populates the analysis with women as key protagonists in the assessment of Dayton's promises of peace, in

ways that complicate or complement the abstract nature of research that focuses on institutions, as well as WPS implementation mechanisms. The material presented in this book draws on interviews and personal conversations with women of different walks of life, based in Sarajevo, Mostar and Banja Luka. The contributors are feminist and grassroots activists, journalists, academics, artists, women working in international institutions and gender machineries, and women in political parties. Understanding citizenship as lived experience and a practice allowed me to explore the meanings citizenship assumes for the Bosnian women who contributed to this project and their relation to so-called peace. In this book, thus, I attend to their personal stories, perspectives, visions and concerns for the future. Throughout this project, I was interested in the following questions:

If the so-called peace has reduced citizenship to an essentialist focus on ethnic belonging, and implicitly reproduced elements of the gendered order embedded in the nationalism that led to the war, how do the women featured in this book negotiate their positioning vis-à-vis dominant understandings?

How do (can?) they negotiate, enact and re-imagine citizenship beyond institutionalized practices and discourses?

What scope is open to them to mobilize collectively across their multiple positionings and in allegiance with other groups?

My analysis revolves around three key dimensions of citizenship: overlapping senses of belonging and attachment (Roseneil 2013); women's political action in a variety of locales, and possibilities for collective action and transversal politics.

(Un)Belonging and (Re)Imagined Communities

Centred around experiences of belonging (Roseneil 2013, 3), feminist critical theory highlights the affective nature of citizenship. Zooming into the lived experiences, memories and attachment expressed by the interviewees offers powerful illustrations of the complex and diverse meanings belonging assumes in the context of post-Dayton as a *thick* present of permanent crisis. In most narratives, rather than a relic of the past, the conflict, its violence, its traumatic memories, the divisions it produced, the relations of sociability it shattered continue to reverberate and intimately shape personal and collective lived experience. Refracted through post-Dayton lived experiences are also political and affective

contingencies engendered by the failed promises of peace as well as by the dissolution of socialism as political alternative and site of belonging.

Several women I interviewed refer to the cultural landscape and political values embedded in the socialist system of the former Yugoslavia. The evocation of Yugoslavia in the narrative interviews revolves around two key tropes: the (perceived) equal positioning of women in socialist times and an inclusive sense of belonging where ethno-nationalist cleavages are seen as irrelevant, or so the story goes. By evoking a history of women's equality, interviewees' reflections and memories work to re-imagine/remake a community of belonging for women that seems shattered, absent, if not even impossible in current-day Bosnia-Herzegovina. They refuse to define themselves along the three ethnic lines and remain attached to a Yugoslav identity. This belonging positions them critically towards nationalism and its conservative gendered underpinning.

While these narratives paint a rather idealist picture of socialist time, one interviewee who was involved in the Yugoslav feminist movement complicates this image. This narrative reveals a different disposition towards socialist Yugoslavia. While still expressing an attachment to *Tito's Time*, it articulates a more critical perspective on the legacy of state socialism by drawing on the experiences and political commitment initiated with the *Neofeminizam*. Here memories of feminist political engagement complicate attachments to socialist time through self-positioning within a critical community of belonging. What is particularly interesting in this story is how it maps continuities across generations of feminists in the region evoking a sense of collectivity that undermines neat categorizations of ethno-national identity, blurring and re-imagining the boundaries of belonging, both affectively and geopolitically. I have argued that the legacy of Yugoslav feminism represents an important political identity that continues to forge bonds across generations and post-Yugoslav borders, as expressed by other contributors. This sense of belonging thus is the foundation for articulating alternative visions of citizenship which are foreclosed in the post-Dayton narrow-tripartite regime.

Other women's reflections convey frustrations with the notion of ethnic belonging as the all-encompassing dimension of identity. A sense of exclusion infuses these narratives, which bring into sharp relief the deeply personal implications of ethnicized exclusions perversely enabled by the politics of consociationalism. These narratives suggest attempts at negotiating this tension in favour of a more fluid Bosnian-Herzegovinian

identity which is relegated to the residual category of the Others. "Not belonging" positions these interviewees critically towards ethno-nationalism but gender issues are sidelined in these stories. I have suggested that this position might also be paradoxically productive because in its disruption of institutionalized and neat categories of ethnic identity as all-encompassing dimension of citizenship, it upholds a wider sense of belonging with those who have been marginalized through the politics of nationalism and the implementation of the peace agreement. The frustration with the system of ethno-politics discussed here presents interesting similarities with the demands and themes that resulted in the wave of citizens' protests which emerged across BiH in 2014. I see these experiences as demonstrating, albeit briefly, the political potential of not-belonging.

Several women I interviewed referred to the conflict both as a rupture and as a defining moment for a renewed sense of feminist belonging. Interweaving personal experiences as well as reflections on the tensions between the conflict, the entrenchment of nationalism and women's experiences, the gendered implications of post-conflict/post-agreement citizenship take centre stage in these narratives. Here, a critique of the dominant citizenship discourse in Bosnia-Herzegovina is undertaken unequivocally through a feminist gaze: it challenges its ethnicized and gendered foundations. Diverse personal experiences and political inclination shape their understanding of and aspirations for citizenship. Some contributors express a concern with women's political representation and gender equality, thus denoting a proximity to liberal understandings of citizenship. As mentioned, others situate their visions of citizenship more explicitly within the history of Yugoslav feminism centred around anti-nationalist politics. These express a refusal of the patriarchal and divisive logic of ethnic differentiation, as evoked through Virginia Woolf's phrase "As a woman I have no country" famously associated with the dissident feminism of the 1990s (Zaharijević 2015). Among these narratives, a specific experience that of motherhood emerges as an interesting theme shaping these contributors positioning, identity and agency. For these women, the connections between motherhood and a feminist sense of identity take centre stage. I have argued that while this narrative might resonate with gendered tropes of women as caring and nurturing, the feminist mother fundamentally challenges the construction of motherhood within dominant ethno-national discourses and thus entails a creative and critical potential.

While the majority of contributors would not identify as members of the three constituent groups, references to ethnicity and national identity emerged in two interviews which I conducted with an elected representative of a nationalist-oriented party and the president of an association of women survivors. Ethnicity emerged in both interviews, even though in ways that are differently shaped by the protagonists' respective biographies and current positioning in the politics of post-Dayton Bosnia. In the case of the interview with the political representative, references to ethnicity and the commitment to gender equality highlight a site of tension between the endorsement of ethno-national discourse and the development of a critical perspective on its gendered nature. This narrative complicates the tapestry of stories presented in book by adding interesting layers to our understanding of women's positioning in the politics of Dayton. In another interview, narratives of ethnicity in proximity to nationalism emerged as the protagonist recounts the complex personal and political impact of the traumatic personal experience of wartime sexual violence. Given these personal vicissitudes, endorsing an ethnic narrative might be inevitable. However, I have argued that the proximity of this narrative to the politicization of ethno-national affiliations pursued by the nationalist elites stands in tension with survivors' concrete needs. It delimits opportunities to voice their own experiences and collective demands for citizenship in ways that might challenge the nationalist gendered and ethnicized rhetoric.

Evoking a broad repertoire of cultural, geopolitical and historical references (socialist, liberal, Yugoslavian, Bosnian, feminist) and to personal experiences (motherhood, artist, intellectual, politician, survivors), the narratives provide a powerful illustration of the multi-layered and complex nature of the interviewees' identities and senses of belonging. Attending to the complexity of intimate, affective and lived experiences bring into sharp focus a tension. On the one hand, interviews reveal rich, multidimensional and at times also incompatible narratives of citizenship and belonging. On the other hand, the technocratic, reductive and exclusionary institutional solutions continue to rely on neat categories of identity as the all-encompassing dimension and operating technology of Dayton's citizenship. A key argument I make in the book is that the experiential, the affective, the intimate, as well the incongruent, in the diversity of women's narratives and senses of identity should remain at the core of our feminist engagements with the complexities of war/peace.

Revisiting the Legacy of War: Women as Complex Political Subjects

Another crucial element in feminist theories of citizenship is its agentic and participatory nature. While citizenship rights enable people to become agents, citizenship as participation represents a claiming of that agency and the subject position of citizen. As feminist security scholars point out, a focus on agency is crucial to foreground women's manifold experiences in war and responses to political violence, acknowledging them as key political agents and co-architects in the construction of peace (Cockburn and Zarkov 2002; Hudson 2009; Cohn 2013). In the context of the Bosnian war, dominant narratives have revolved mainly around women's victimization, obscuring the complexity of active roles they had to or chose to take on. In the book, I revisit the ambivalent impact of the Bosnian conflict in affecting women's lives and sense of security, as well opening up opportunities and spaces for women's political action (post)conflict.

A key contribution of feminist scholarship shows that while war deeply affects women through various forms of violence and victimization, it can also open opportunities for women's political engagement as a result of those very experiences. The stories shared by the women who contributed to this project resonate with this argument, but also further complicate our understanding of activism *born out of war*. The majority of interviewees felt compelled to act in response of the circumstances brought about by conflict. They recounted how they took on new roles during and in the aftermath of war. They learnt how to deal with their personal/collective plight caused by violence, trauma and the extreme politicization of ethno-national identities. While all the women I interviewed spoke about being affected in different ways by the war, there are clearly important differences mediated by personal circumstances, as well as by one's entanglement in the ethno-national legacy of war. The story of an activist survivor is illustrative of the complexities in grappling with the collective legacy of wartime violence and negotiating own personal experiences. I have argued that the proximity of survivors' activism to dominant ethno-national narratives exists in tension with claims for gender justice. This contributor's story offers a powerful account of activism propelled by the experience of gendered violence during the war. In the aftermath, the transformative potential of this site of agency

for addressing survivors' clams for justices and remaking citizenship for women is inevitably constrained by the dominance of collective nationalist narratives.

Another important finding emerging from contributors' stories is that while the conflict created conditions for women's political action through a variety of roles, there can be no presumption that this will necessarily translate into opportunities and/or choices to organize for women or remake citizenship through feminist lenses. Those who had been involved in feminism before the war recall how they had to re-invent activism in response to the new challenges posed by the patriarchal foundations of violent nationalism. Some who had left as refugees or had worked with survivors came back in the immediate aftermath of the war with a newly found commitment for feminist activism and working with women. Others, however, decided to get involved against nationalism through youth activism and did not see the need to mobilize as women or around women's issues. Some became activists for social justice after being injured. Others became involved in formal politics with multi-ethnic, as well as nationalist parties. Some arrived in Bosnia through humanitarian work; others became involved in the work of international institutions. Attending to these women's narratives thus counteracts simplistic and homogenizing accounts of war and post-war women's activism. It forces us to pay attention to resonances in their vicissitudes and choices, as well as to their diverse entanglement in the politics of war and so-called peace.

The Challenges of Transversal Politics in Practice

Feminist reformulations of citizenship entail the possibilities to develop instances of transversal politics as defined by Yuval-Davis (2006) or moments of "solidarity in difference" (Lister 2003, 199). These concepts identify a commitment to building allegiances among diversity, without losing the attachment to one's own identity and values.

The notion of transversal politics offers a seductive idea for feminist analysis and politics in that it captures opportunities to building alliances across women's multiple positions, as well with other marginalized groups. However, I have argued that in the restrictive and disempowering terrain of Dayton's politics this process of alliance building is fraught

with challenges. These are produced by the sedimentation of ethno-national power, a by-product of the consociational agreement, and the multiple material and societal legacies of post-conflict transformation.

Echoing perspectives and feelings highlighted in other studies (Helms 2013; Jansen 2015), a number of interviewees expressed distrust with the realm of formal politics and/or disgust at the political machinations of local nationalist elites. While lamenting citizens' disenchantment with radical politics and civic activism, these narratives also uphold a yearning for citizens' collective action. A fluid notion of community essentially made up of all those "Others" who do not fit into the dominant citizenship order underpins these narratives. It was not by chance that some contributors were later actively involved in the 2014 protest and plenum movement where these concerns were mobilized. I suggest that glimpses for a transversal politics to come could be read between the lines of these narratives.

Focusing more specifically on women's and feminist activism, interviewees' reflections also indicated a number of challenges they were facing. Questions about NGOs' and grassroots organizations' sustainability emerged as a key concern. During informal conversations and interviews alike, activists often spoke of growing competition among civil society organizations. In 2015 and 2016, some activists identified the lack of resources and the increasingly more complex funding application process as key concerns for their sustainability. Others who had been involved in the recent citizens' protest and plenums seemed to be more focused on reflecting and taking stock of both the challenges and openings that those experiences of collective mobilization produced. Contrasting viewpoints also emerge between those contributors who continue to envisage feminist activism in a wider collective anti-nationalist sense and those who see a value in upholding a logic of women's interests.

Interviewees' reflections are illustrative of the range of different strategies for mobilization developed and imagined by activists to navigate the uneven and complex terrain of collective action. Some interviewees seem to privilege small-scale and localized informal interventions. They talked about following a more careful engagement with international donors that would allow them to hold on to a set of principles and to work on a specific set of themes, for example interventions in the public space and the use of art. Some felt that the ripples of the citizen's protest

had inevitably strengthened the links between their feminist activism and larger questions of everyday politics. Other interviewees denote a less critical approach to the neoliberal funding paradigm. Thus, while acknowledging pressures to continuously tailor their projects to fit funding requirements, they felt nonetheless compelled to apply for the widest opportunities in order to sustain their feminist activism.

Other activists spoke about working strategically and in cooperation with institutions in order to pursue specific goals, even though that would prevent a more radical critique of ethno-nationalist elites. This proximity with institutional ethno-national politics highlights another site of tension for developing collective women's citizenship claims. Interviews and my observations also resonate, highlighting strong social pressure to silence, discredit and often intimidate women and feminists who dare to openly critique the interest of nationalist elites and their gender implications. Evidence suggests that the development of common feminist citizenship claims often clashes with the highly divisive nature of ethno-nationalism and women's own complex relation to the question of ethnic affiliations. As insights from fieldwork suggest, confronting issues of ethno-national affiliation often becomes controversial for wider women's citizenship discourses in BiH. This is far from surprising if we acknowledge the diversity of women's positioning and political relations to the dominant nationalist projects. The entrenchment of ethno-nationalism holds ambivalent implications also in relation to the horizontal dimension of citizenship practices, that is the relationships between women and women's groups.

Paying attention to the participants' perspectives and lived experiences highlights complex challenges in creating and sustaining solidarities in difference across women's multiple positions in the complex scenario of post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina. Turning to the more fluid idea of "solidarity as not-belonging" might offer opportunities to forge bonds with *the Others* as political subjects and articulate fragile, yet hopeful, collective political practices that counter Dayton's politics of despair. However, interviews indicate that these interventions might also run the risk of downplaying gendered exclusions. I have suggested that visions of collective action that merge anti-nationalist stances with feminist analysis entail the critical potential to confront the gendered exclusions Dayton's citizenship relies upon and produce.

Is Another Citizenship Possible?

Taking seriously, narratives and reflections collected for this project reveal the complexities surrounding attempts to remake citizenship for women and, more broadly, to organize collectively beyond the boundaries of institutionalized discourses in post-Dayton incomplete's peace. Against all odds, however, women, feminist activists and their "other" allies continue to re-imagine citizenship in their everyday life through individual creative practices as well as through instances of collective mobilization. I have argued that, in compromised conditions of the political, such as those emerged in Bosnia throughout decades of complex and violent transitions, alternative visions of citizenship are potentially articulated through a multiplicity of interventions, shifting from the *micropolitics* of ordinary life to the realm of cultural activities to more overt and conventional forms of individual and collective mobilization.

In the final part of the book, I discuss the creative and critical potential in feminist interventions enacted through a logic of collective mobilization for/in women's citizenship spaces and/or situated in wider sense of collective action. I have tracked aspirations for political alternatives to the post-Dayton impasse that these experiences articulate. These are infused by personal struggles on the meanings, legacies and strategies animating feminism and, more broadly, grassroots politics in the post-Dayton juncture. An underlying dimension of this re-imagining effort lies in instances of cultural activism and production that seek to challenge and subvert conventional gender roles.

These fragile interventions cannot in themselves challenge the multiple violent legacies, structural exclusions and dispossessions reproduced and institutionalized through decades of Dayton's uncomplete, neoliberal peace. I view these as productive, yet fragile, interventions that undermine the totalitarian ethnicization of space, politics and belonging, through the articulation of marginalized narratives of the war, as well as the peace to come. I see resonances with the glimpses of new citizens' solidarities that in 2014 challenged the divisionary effects of post-Dayton impasse. The feminist constellations discussed in this book express a longing for re-imagining belonging, solidarity and politics. Experiences shared by those I interviewed for this project and others

whom I encountered reflect heterogeneous interventions that involve feminists and other *Others*, women's and grassroots organizations and include small-scale projects and activism, cultural initiatives, independent media and social networking. My impressions from successive fieldwork visits to post-Dayton Bosnia thus are that a sense of "un-belonging" might propel fragile, yet stubborn, solidarities that push against the boundaries of institutionalized practices and discourses of citizenship.

Overall, this book offers some insight into how the women and feminists who contributed to this project navigate the complex terrain of Dayton's politics and attempt to negotiate spaces for citizenship. It brings to the fore complexities, contradictions, as well as opportunities for activism, that might be overlooked by focusing on the power-sharing institutions. Attending to these stories reveals that the intersection between conflict, nationalism and consociationalism is but one process at play post-Dayton. The broader effects and failed promises of (post)socialism and liberal peacebuilding are also crucial dynamics at stake in shaping interviewees' senses of belonging, agency and opportunities for collective action.

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