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Taking a stand in times of violent societal changes: Belgrade and Zagreb feminists' positionings on the (post-)Yugoslav wars and each other (1991-2000)

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CHAPTER TWO

Review of relevant scholarship

In the first part of this chapter I address the biases and silent places present in the scholarship on the war-related positionings of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists in the 1990s: the domination of the designations used by the self-declared antinationalist feminists, the political components of the scholarly texts, the lack of analyses of the post-1995 developments, the limited to non-existent presence of certain conflicts in the literature, the insufficient attention for the feminists' biographies, and the geographical or homogenising bias in much of the scholarship.

In the second part I elaborate upon the diverse and sometimes contradictory ways in which these positionings and the feminist activists who held them are (implicitly) classified and named. After some general observations, I move to analysing the contributions in which the Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists are jointly treated as one entity. However, I do not include an analogous section on the so-called nationalist feminists later. As I will explain prior to my analysis of the scholarship on these feminists, there are no works which factually – and not only at first glance – attend to them in such a way. I proceed by addressing the works on the Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists. The choice to begin with Zagreb – and thereby disrespect the alphabetical order – serves to increase the comprehensibility of my account given that the war-related tensions have been more pronounced in that city. After the subsequent exploration of the contributions on the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists, I move to the so-called nationalist feminists and analyse the writings about them in the same order.

Biases and silent places

The scholarship on Yugoslavia's (violent) disintegration in the 1990s has predominantly concentrated on male politicians, military and religious leaders and intellectuals, or the mainstream media, while the discourses and activities of the (post-)Yugoslav feminists have received only minimal – if any – scholarly attention (Dragović-Soso, 2002; Đerić, 2008; Gagnon, 2004; Glenny, 1993; Hall B., 1995; Ingrao and Emmert, 2009; Iveković I., 2000; Jović, 2009; MacDonald, 2002; Malcolm, 1996, 1999; Popov, 1996; Ramet S., 2002, 2005; Thomas, 1999; Thompson M., 1999; Udovički and Torov, 2000; Zwaan and De Graaff, 2005).

Since this 'general' scholarship on Yugoslavia's disintegration generally and generously ignored the feminist activists – Jansen (2005) is a welcome exception – in order to find academic analyses of the work of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists in this time period, I had to search for a 'specific' scholarship. Those contributions either focused specifically on the feminist or women's groups or, in the much more common case, mentioned them within a broader elaboration of the war rapes, the interaction between gender and ethnicity, or gender and nationalism on those temporal and spatial coordinates (Allen, 1996; Batinić, 2001; Barilar, 2000; Benderly, 1997a, 1997b; Bilić, 2011a; Blagojević, 1998a; Borić, 1997; Cockburn, 2007; Dević, 1997b; Duhaček, 1998; Đurić-Kuzmanović et al., 2008; Fischer E., 1993; Helms, 1998, 2003a; Kašić, 1994a, 2006; Kesić, 2002a; Knežević, 1994, 2004; Korać, 1998, 2003; Licht and Drakulić Slo., 1996; Lindsey, 2002; MacKinnon, 2006; Milić, 2002; Mladenović and Litričin, 1993; Mostov, 1995; Nenadic, 1996, 2010; Nikolić-Ristanović, 2000; Obradović-Dragišić, 2004; Ramet S., 1999; Slapšak, 2000a; Stojšavljević, 1995; Zaharijević, 2007; Žarkov, 2002, 2007).

Most of the scholarship which I analyse in this chapter – some of which is listed above – has been produced by local scholars from the post-Yugoslav region. This does not mean that I have bypassed the foreign (mostly Western and English-language) scholarship, but that I have chosen to go to the source and use the works which the foreign scholars have built their arguments upon. I have done this for two reasons. First, I wanted to avoid as much as possible the potential inaccuracies and losses of meaning which could occur when interpretations are interpreted. Second, I wanted to draw attention to the existence of local knowledge. Some of it has remained thus far underexposed because of being published only in the local languages and/or in publications which are not easily available. Due to my extensive literature search, I am confident that I have included the overwhelming majority of relevant works – both those which are regularly referred to (the usual suspects) and those which have remained largely unknown.

Domination of the designations used by the self-declared antinationalist feminists

The designations used by the Belgrade and Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists have not entered the Western academic publications like the ones used by the Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists – some of whom often appear as authors of those contributions. Although a more extensive exploration of this discrepancy in prevalence of some terms (a phenomenon which is also worth exploring from the point of view of epistemology) is beyond the scope of this research, I find it, nevertheless,

important to briefly point to it and suggest four factors which are very likely to have contributed to it.

The first factor is the degree of correspondence between the names used by the self-declared antinationalist feminists and the factual positionings, which I mentioned in Chapter 1. This correspondence is greater than that concerning the designations 'abstract', 'communist', 'genocide revisionists', 'neutral' and '(pro-)Yugoslav' which were implied or explicitly employed by the Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists and their supporters (*Danas*, 29.01.1993; *Ms.*, July/August 1993; *Northwest Ethnic News*, November 1994; *off our backs*, November 1991; *Reaction to the MADRE tour*, 18.03.1993; Vranić, 1996; *Ženska pomoć sada izvještaj za 1993*, n.d.; see Chapter 4). In the words of Bourdieu (1990:140, italics in the original),

symbolic effectiveness depends on the degree to which the vision proposed is based on reality. Evidently, the construction of groups cannot be a construction *ex nihilo*. It has all the more chance of succeeding the more it is founded in reality: that is, as I have said, in the objective affinities between people who have to be brought together.

The second factor is the clarity of these designations at face value. Although the terms 'antinationalist', 'non-nationalist', 'nationalist' and 'patriotic' can be conceptualised differently, they appear to be sufficiently intelligible in indicating one's (supposed) distance or proximity vis-à-vis a nation-building ideology, one's country and/or ethnic group. Such a presumed semantic universality which enhances a widespread usage is not inherent to the designations 'abstract' and 'neutral'. The latter do not make it directly clear what the abstractness or neutrality refers to. The terms '(pro-)Yugoslav' and 'communist' seem to be situated somewhere between the previous two sets of designations. At first glance, they do inform about one's (presumed) positioning – in this case, adherence to the Yugoslav state and communist ideology – but they are less lucid classification tools for an analysis of the war-related positionings.

The positioning of the Western (academic) feminists constitutes the third factor contributing to the dominance of the designations used by the self-declared antinationalist feminists. As has also been observed by Rose Lindsey (2002), there seem to have been more Western feminists whose positioning on the (post-)Yugoslav wars resembled that of the Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists than there were feminists who agreed with the so-called nationalist positioning. This phenomenon has also been already spotted by authors writing on political

mobilisation in other geographic areas (Edelman Ma., 2001; Heumann, 2010; Polletta, 2006; Seidman, 2001).

To better understand the impact of this preponderance of the self-declared antinationalist positioning, one should keep in mind the intertwinement of the local and foreign scholarship and scholars. Foreign (foremostly Western) and local (Belgrade and Zagreb) authors based their elaborations also on each other's published and oral analyses, and established personal relationships and direct cooperation: eg invited one another to speak at conferences and submit texts for publishing. The influence of this phenomenon on the production of knowledge is not only visible in the prevalence of the designations used by the Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists, but also in the virtual absence of more extensive research on the so-called nationalist feminists.⁴⁴ The latter also counts as one of the biases in scholarship and particularly concerns the Belgrade cluster.

The fourth and last factor are characteristics of the Belgrade and Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists themselves, although different characteristics played a role in each city. Similarly to the previous factor, this one also partially explains both the scholarly domination of one part of the designations and the much more limited body of analyses on the so-called nationalist feminists. The Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists have a very modest publishing record in general. It has been foremostly due to the work of the American scholars Catharine MacKinnon and Natalie Nenadic, who worked closely with them, that some details of their positionings have been presented – and in a more complimentary manner – in the Western scholarship.

The Belgrade so-called nationalist feminists, as I explained in Chapter 1, differ from the feminists from the other three clusters by not really being a cluster. They have never produced any joint statements, including any which would elaborate and name their positionings. In addition to this, the otherwise extensive textual production of the three scholars among them did not specifically address the war-related dynamics among the Belgrade feminists. This issue was only occasionally and sporadically touched upon in their works on other topics. After 2000 two of these feminists have referred to the positionings of the other Belgrade cluster as 'antinational radicalism'

44 I have traced many works where the positionings of these feminists had been mentioned – sometimes only implicitly – or briefly analysed, but the limited and at times repeating information was sufficient only for showing me the directions my further exploration should head for (Batinić, 2001; Benderly, 1997a, 1997b; Duhaček, 1998; Fischer E., 1993; Helms, 1998, 2003a; Irvine, 2007; Kašić, 1994a; Knežević, 1994, 1995, 1997, 2004; Korać, 1998, 2003; MacKinnon, 2006; Mladenović and Litričin, 1993; Nenadic, 1996, 2010; Nikolić-Ristanović, 2000; Obradović-Dragišić, 2004; Pavlović, 1999; Stojavljević, 1995; Zaharijević, 2007; Žarkov, 1999, 2002, 2007).

(Belgrade2N, 2002) or ‘extreme antinationalism’ (Belgrade12N, 2008). Even though these designations could be rightly used for the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists, ie sufficiently correspond to their positionings, and are clear enough at face value, they have not been widely used in the later scholarship. I explain this, on the one hand, by the previously mentioned dominance of scholars supportive of the self-declared antinationalist feminists. On the other hand, these terms have appeared quite late – when the academic interest in this topic had significantly decreased – and, moreover, in non-English publications.

Political components of the scholarly texts

In addition to their scholarly value, the contributions which also addressed the war-related Belgrade and/or Zagreb feminism in the 1990s were sometimes used in the efforts to stop the wars, halt the war rapes, put the perpetrators of (sexual) war crimes on trial, secure (financial) support for the raped women and other refugees, introduce international legislative changes regarding war rape, impose what one deemed the correct conceptualisation of the (sexual) war violence and its perpetrators and victims, and last but not least – obtain (financial) support for like-minded feminists to be able to do all that work. This is especially, but not exclusively, true for the texts written in the periods of war violence: 1991–1995 and 1998–1999.

To begin with, I consider this political component as a source of bias because it manifests in the use of laden terms and formulations. For example: ‘The Zagreb informants of the journalist Alexandra Stiglmayer are feminists who, during the Serbian war of aggression against Croatia in the summer of 1991, *mutated into* Croatian nationalists’ (Fischer E., 1997:14, emphasis added).⁴⁵ Or:

Many of these women [the Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists] were seen bitterly as sell-outs to a party that was brutally and bloodily silencing women. Unfortunately, some of these women are still considered Yugoslavia’s representative feminists (*off our backs*, November 1991).

This political component is additionally visible in the manner in which authors have described the feminist field, such as the choice to mention only certain groups or activists in a favourable light (or others in an unfavourable one), as well as the usage of the designation ‘feminist’ only for the like-minded feminists or the

45 The same biased term has been used by Papić (1999a) in the title of one of her essays: ‘Women in Serbia: Post-communism, War, and Nationalist Mutations’.

CHAPTER TWO

endorsed positionings – an issue which I already mentioned in Chapter 1 (Borić, 1997; Jansen, 2005; Kesić, 2002a; MacKinnon, 1993; Mostov, 1995; *Ms.*, July/August 1993; Nenadic, 1996; Renne, 1997a; Slapšak, 2008).

Finally, my analysis of the scholarly classifications of the war-related positionings, which I present in the second part of this chapter, has also shown the existence of this political bias. The disagreements between the different scholars – some of whom are the directly involved Belgrade and Zagreb feminists – mirror the classification and naming conflicts which occurred in Belgrade and Zagreb in the 1990s. This correspondence also makes evident the abovementioned intertwining of the local and foreign scholarship and scholars. However, those ‘ideological influences’, as Lindsey (2002:68) has called them, have remained unreported and unaddressed, just like the meaning and the origin of the used designations. This absence of transparency on the political biases in activist writing and scholarship actually represents an important component of the same bias. It is a clear instance of misrecognition which has serious consequences on both theory and activist practice. Therefore, Lindsey’s (2002:68) critical observation about the debate on the war rapes in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia deserves attention:

[T]he ideological influences behind the theorizing of the debate went largely unnoticed or, perhaps, largely unattributed, particularly by academic theorists. This lack of referencing seems inexplicable and dangerous. By not exploring the ideological roots of a theory, does an academic collude with the elisions that are taking place within the various theoretical camps? If this is the case, then, by default, is the academic colluding with the violence itself? (see also Bonfiglioli, forthcoming; Bos, 2006).

Lack of analyses of the post-1995 developments

The scholarship is also biased due to the shortage of analyses of the war-related positionings of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists in the aftermath of the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, ie from the second half of the 1990s onward. This is also true for research which would address these feminists’ *post factum* recapitulation of the events taking place in the 1991–1995 time period. I explain this time bias primarily through the overwhelming and mobilising effect which the war rapes in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia have had on gender scholars (Allen, 1996; Benard, 1994; Bos, 2006; Copelon, 2000; Engle, 2005; Fischer E., 1993; Hansen, 2001; Helms, 1998; Kesić, 1994, 2005; Korać, 1994; MacKinnon, 2006; Mostov, 1995; Nenadic, 1996, 2010;

Niarchos, 1995; Olujić, 1998; *off our backs*, March 1993 [1992]; Salzman, 1998; Seifert, 1996; Snyder et al. 2006; Stiglmayer, 1994a; Vranić, 1996; Žarkov, 1997).

The end of the wars (and war rapes) in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia by the end of 1995, as well as the progression of time and the occurrence of crises and wars in other regions further decreased the interest in and funding for doing and publishing research on the (post-)Yugoslav region in general and (post-)Yugoslav feminism in particular. Especially interesting is that the silent places on the Belgrade and Zagreb post-1995 war-related positionings can be also observed in texts written after 1999, ie after the intensive ground war in Kosovo and the NATO bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia – events about which it is reasonable to presume that they have had an impact at least on the Belgrade feminists, if not on the Zagreb ones.⁴⁶

In addition to the general factors mentioned above, I would suggest four additional ones for explaining this scholarly lacuna: the rather short duration of the intensive military violence (between 24 March 1999 and 10 June 1999), the absence of information on such large scale mass war rapes as in the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, saturation of this specific research interest for the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists, and the great silence which surrounds the war-related divisions among the Belgrade feminists. As I elaborate more extensively in Chapters 4 and 6, this silence does not only apply to the fissures concerning the 1991–1995 war violence, but also – and even more so – to the disagreements related to the war violence between 1998 and 1999.

The diminishing attention for the (post-)Yugoslav feminism in the 1990s has also resulted in lack of research which would evaluate the veracity of the information and the claims which are (repeatedly) found in the existing scholarship. The article of Mladenović and Litričin (1993) – or one of its somewhat altered versions: Hughes and Mladenović (1995), Hughes, Mladenović and Mršević (1995), Mladenović and Hughes (2000) and Mladenović and Litričin (1998) – is a good example of the importance of such evaluations. It is regularly used for illustrating the dynamics among the Belgrade feminists after the beginning of the (post-)Yugoslav wars (Batinić, 2001; Benderly, 1997a, 1997b; Bilić, 2011a; Cockburn, 1998; Helms, 1998; Jansen, 2005; *On the Issues*, Summer 1993; Pettman, 1996; Zaharijević, 2007; Žarkov, 1999, 2002, 2007).

This prevalence is probably due first to the fact that the article in question had been the first to provide some – albeit incomplete and insufficiently precise – information on the war-related dilemmas and divisions among the Belgrade feminists.

46 Some of the scarce exceptions which address the war-related positionings of the Belgrade feminists in this period are Cockburn (2007), Fridman (2006a, 2006b) and Mladenović (2001, 2003).

Second, it has remained one of the very scarce works which address this segment of the Belgrade feminist field. Finally, it was published in an English-language Western academic journal. The perpetual use of this article in the last 20 years does not mean, however, that its contents have been critically analysed. That such reassessments are needed is best visible from the claim of Mladenović and Litričin (1993:117) that the Women's Party could not continue with its work due to 'conflicts over nationalism'. Despite the extended attention which I have dedicated to checking this statement, I did not find a confirmation for it either in the written sources or in the interviews – including those with the two authors.⁴⁷

Limited to non-existent presence of certain conflicts

The war-related conflicts among the feminists which have received at least miniscule scholarly attention are conflicts between the clusters: between the two Zagreb clusters, between the two Belgrade clusters, between the two self-declared antinationalist clusters and between the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist and the Zagreb so-called nationalist cluster. There are no reports of frictions between the two so-called nationalist clusters, but this does not seem surprising. These feminists do not appear to have had any communication or exchange whatsoever during the 1990s. It is much more intriguing, however, that there are no reports of war-related tensions within each of the clusters (besides the very limited records on the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist one during the NATO bombing).

In view of the already mentioned myth of sisterhood and metaphor of transgression of boundaries, the limited attention for the conflicts between the two self-declared antinationalist clusters is particularly interesting. While that myth and metaphor have been recurrently recorded not only by the affected feminists themselves, but also by the outside authors who have written about their work (see the second part of this chapter), the conflicts and misunderstandings between these feminists have received very limited attention. Even the texts which address them often do so in an implicit and/or summarised manner (Bilić, 2011a; Ćetković, 2000; Knežević, 1994; Mladenović, 1997, 1998; Mladenović and Kesić, 1996; Mladenović and Miličević, 1996; Radović, 2002; Savić Sv., 1995; Žarkov, 1999, 2002). To my knowledge, next to these post-Yugoslav authors, Jill Benderly is the only foreign scholar who has mentioned these issues, albeit only by hinting at them: 'Non-nationalist politics have made it possible for a working relationship to be re-established – delicately – between Croatian and Serbian feminists' (*On the Issues*, Summer 1993).

⁴⁷ See in Chapter 3 in the portrayal of the Women's Party.

I propose four explanations for this particular silent place, the first being the absence of these conflicts and differences in the published accounts of the direct actors – the self-declared antinationalist feminists (the scarce exceptions are Knežević, 1994; Mladenović, 1997, 1998; Mladenović and Kesić, 1996; Mladenović and Miličević, 1996; Radović, 2002 and Savić Sv., 1995). In my view, these feminists have refrained from addressing the anyway already painful conflicts among them because such a move would challenge their myth of sisterhood. In other words, it would question their legitimacy as agents who crossed boundaries and cooperated with each other, thereby potentially devaluing the risky efforts which they had put in crossing some of those boundaries. Second, for an outsider scholar, to learn about and access the silenced disagreements between the Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists extensive fieldwork and interview sessions are required. That is not always feasible in view of the time, money, language and access constraints these scholars often encounter.

Third, the published accounts of local feminists sometimes suffer from parochialism, ie contain much implied knowledge, even when these accounts are (re) published abroad. Their understanding often requires a lot of background information which might not be necessarily available to those who have not been the direct actors of the event in question, even if they come from the post-Yugoslav region. A good example is the contribution of Mladenović and Kesić (1996) on the meeting of Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists in Medulin (Croatia) in March 1995.⁴⁸ The information which I extracted from this text before the fieldwork was insufficient for me to realise the importance of the event for those who had attended it. I started seeing its great significance only after several interviews. The newly obtained knowledge enabled me to read the text in a different key and find information which had initially remained invisible to me. Additionally beneficial were the insights in the contributions of Mladenović and Miličević (1996) and Mladenović (1998) which I only discovered after the fieldwork.

Fourth and final, given the difficulties which the Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists encountered in their respective countries, as well as the personal connections between them and the scholars of (post-)Yugoslav feminism, it is possible that the latter were hesitant about probing into sensitive topics and/or wanted to support the former by addressing only the sisterhood-building and boundary-transgressing aspects of their work. In my view, Benderly's exceptional hint should be seen in light of these issues. She has been aware of the tensions and silences because of her ability to converse in Croatian/Serbian and extensive communication

48 This is one of the historical episodes I analyse in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER TWO

with the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists. Nevertheless, she has not been able to extensively elaborate on this delicate issue either and has, therefore, chosen only to give a tiny indication of its existence.

Insufficient attention for the feminists' biographies

The biographical characteristics of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists are hardly attended to in the scholarship. There is a lack of elaborated and systematic insight into the differences and similarities among and between the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists in eg age, ethnic origin, education and parents' profession, ie in their cultural, economic and social capital. In my view, this gap is to be explained by the foremost scholarly interest in the war rapes and the feminists' conceptualisations of them, as well as the concomitant (academic) struggles over their legitimate definition. Due to this focus, the backgrounds of the local feminist actors have remained unaddressed.

The few exceptions from which some first-hand biographical information can be extracted include the compilation of interviews with Zagreb (feminist) activists (Barilar, 2000), the collection of oral history accounts which features, inter alia, those of one Zagreb and two Belgrade feminists (Savić Sv. et al., 2008), as well as the autobiographical book of the Belgrade feminist Nadežda Radović (2002) and the biographies of the late Belgrade feminist Neda Božinović (Liversage and Shou, 2001; Stojaković, 2002). In addition to this, several authors indicate in passing some biographical markers. Bilić (2011a) and Fridman (2006b) state that a great number of Belgrade (feminist) activists had parents who were active and prominent members of the League of Communists, while Duhaček (1998) mentions that there were insufficiently recognised differences in educational level among the members of the Belgrade Women's Studies Center. Lastly, the loyalty and proximity of the prominent Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists to the communist elite and their subsequent privileged position in Yugoslavia have been also suggested (*Ms.*, July/August 1993; Nenadic, 2010; *Northwest Ethnic News*, November 1994; *off our backs*, November 1991).

Geographical (homogenising) bias

Finally, there is also a geographical or homogenising bias in the literature. Some authors construct their argument as if it concerned the so-called nationalist feminists in the whole (post-)Yugoslav region, but only give examples from Zagreb (Benderly, 1997a, 1997b; *Forum*, 1995; Lindsey, 2002; Stojasvljević, 1995) or from Belgrade and

Zagreb (Batinić, 2001; Borić, 1997; Korać, 1998, 2003; Žarkov, 2002). Such a *pars pro toto* approach gives the false impression of the absence of significant differences between the post-Yugoslav countries in the development of feminism and in their respective economic, political and social contexts. It imposes, in other words, artificial homogeneity on a heterogeneous terrain.

This bias is particularly problematic for the period starting from mid-1991, when Yugoslavia as one federal state gradually started dissolving into several separate states, each with a different direct exposure to and participation in the war violence (in addition to the other dissimilarities, such as the economic and legislative ones). Some authors – and I speak now about the scholarship on the (post-)Yugoslav region in general – embark on even more sweeping homogenisation. They present their discussion on the (post-)Yugoslav wars as being valid for the whole of the Balkans (Albanese, 2001; Glenny, 1993; Kurspahić, 2003; MacDonald, 2002; Mostov, 1995; Nation, 2003; Woodward, 1995). This represents an even greater homogenisation fallacy. Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and the European part of Turkey are also part of the Balkan Peninsula, while the (post-)Yugoslav wars have only been waged on the territory of Yugoslavia.

I propose four reasons for resorting to such homogenisations. First, due to the output pressure in the academic world, the presentation of one's argument as being valid for a broader region than the one the author actually has data on potentially increases the geopolitical relevance of one's work and the chances of having it published and cited. Second, authors may face uncertainty about the prevalence of the issue in question and wish to bypass critical remarks about the exclusion of a certain region. It is safer to say eg that 'there were peace protests in the (post-)Yugoslav region' instead of 'there were peace protests in Croatia and Serbia', even if one only knows about the existence of such protests in these two republics/states. Such a broad formulation safeguards one from the criticism of ignoring the peace protests in eg Slovenia or Macedonia. Third, scholars may be unfamiliar with the region under study and, for example, perceive Yugoslavia as one uniform entity without major legislative, political, socio-economic and linguistic differences on its territory. Fourth and final, the use of 'Balkan(s)' in this context might be a manifestation of the wish to avoid the often politically and emotionally laden reference to Yugoslavia and the dilemma on whether something should be better referred to as 'Yugoslav' or 'post-Yugoslav' ('former Yugoslav').

Classifying and naming the feminists and their war-related positionings

The scholarship contains a plurality of perceptions of the war-related restructuring in the feminist fields in Belgrade and Zagreb in the 1990s, even though the existence of a dichotomy – usually one between antinationalist and nationalist feminists – is often reported or hinted at. Whereas this plurality of perceptions is commonly inspired by the authors' greater affiliation with one of the clusters and is, thereby, also a part of the local struggle for legitimacy, it is sometimes (also) due to the authors' insufficient familiarity with the analysed groups. For example, Pavlović (1999:138) states the following:

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

Pavlović is correct that Bedem ljubavi (Rampart of Love) shared Karetá's view on the war rapes and that the two groups have cooperated on this issue and in attacking those with a different positioning (eg Nenadic, 1996; *Public Hearing*, 1993; *Reaction to the MADRE tour*, 18.03.1993; *Witness Protection Program leaflet*, 1994). However, unlike what she suggests, Rampart of Love has never declared itself feminist and none of my Zagreb respondents considered this group to be a feminist one. In addition to this, the so-called nationalist feminist groups did not cooperate with the conservative pro-life groups, state institutions and individuals which Pavlović lists.⁴⁹ Quite to the contrary, one of the Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists from Women's Help Now was a particularly fervent pro-choice advocate who often – also during the war years – debated with the pro-life supporters, including those mentioned by Pavlović (*Nedjeljna Dalmacija*, 03.03.1993; *Obzor*, 22.05.1995; *Slobodna Dalmacija*, 29.03.1995; *Večernji list*, 16.01.1993; *Vjesnik*, 28.02.1990).

Another problem in the scholarship is that the meanings and the origins of the diverse names which are used to designate a positioning or a feminist group/activist are generally not discussed. Neither is the scholar's preference for one term

49 Croatian Population Movement, Croatian Woman, Institute for the Protection of Motherhood, Family and Children, Marija Bajt, Don Anto Baković, Ružica Čavar and Petar Žilnik (Pavlović, 1999).

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

One way of explicitly referring to the feminists is by using an adjective, such as ‘patriotic’ (Benderly, 1997a). Another explicit description is made by stating the feminists’ affiliation to the government or an ideology, eg ‘feminists with antiwar belonging’ (Kašić, 2006). The same two means of designation can be also used implicitly. For example, by explicitly creating a category of ‘neutral feminists’, Vranić (1996) implicitly names the opposing category ‘non-neutral’ or ‘partisan’. Or, by declaring that to choose patriotism means, among other things, to ‘renounce the right of self-determination and autonomy’ (Zajović, 1995:51), the author implies that the feminists who have chosen patriotism are not autonomous.

The use of an adverb or adverbial phrase instead of an adjective – eg ‘feminists with antiwar belonging’ instead of ‘antiwar feminists’ – enables the author to avoid a direct naming of the feminists in question and refocuses the reader’s attention from the people to their positioning or deeds. Becker (1998) calls this approach ‘turning people into activities’. By concentrating on the actually expressed positioning, it allows for the possibility that people or groups might not always act in the same manner. Consequently, although this tactic has as downsides an increased amount of words and a possible reduced readability of the text, it makes space for the creation of less essentialising categories. Therefore, and considering the anyway laden character of the war-related designations, it is possible that some authors have used this approach on purpose. Unfortunately, as none of them has elaborated upon their choices – which is also true for the authors who use both adjectives and adverbs – this issue cannot be further explored here.

Next to the classification into adjectival and adverbial designations, the explicitly stated designations which I have come across in the scholarship can be separated into those which contain the word ‘nation’ and those which do not. Besides the obvious and oft-used ‘antinationalist’, ‘nationalist’ and ‘non-nationalist’,

the first category further includes eg ‘antinational’, ‘[with] antinational radicalism’, ‘internationally oriented’, ‘[with] nationalist feelings’, ‘pro-nationalist’, ‘with international belonging’, ‘who adopt the official ethno-national line’ and ‘who try to resist the ruling nationalist politics.’ The other category incorporates eg ‘academic’, ‘autonomous’, ‘antiwar’, ‘[those] claiming rape as genocide’, ‘critical’, ‘disloyal’, ‘independent’, ‘indigenous’, ‘less concerned’, ‘loyal’, ‘neutral’, ‘opposition(al)’, ‘pacifist’, ‘patriotic’, ‘radical’, ‘[with] radical insensitivity’, ‘revisionists of rape and genocide’, ‘[with] the sexism approach [to war rapes]’⁵⁰ and ‘with a genocidal rape approach’⁵¹ (Aarts and Mulders, 2005; Batinić, 2001; Benderly, 1997a, 1997b; Bilić, 2011a, 2011b; Borić, 1997; Bos, 2006; Duhaček, 1998; Fischer E., 1993; *Forum*, 1995; Helms, 1998, 2003a; Irvine, 2007; Jansen, 2005; Kašić, 2006; Knežević, 1994, 2004; Korać, 1998, 2003; Lindsey, 2002; MacKinnon, 2006; Milić, 2002; Mladenović, 2003; Mladenović and Litričin, 1993; Nenadic, 1996, 2010; *Northwest Ethnic News*, November 1994; Obradović-Dragišić, 2004; *On the issues*, Summer 1993; Pollmann et al., 1993; Vranić, 1996; *Vrouw & Gezondheidszorg*, March/April 1993; *War Report*, September 1995; Zaharijević, 2007; Zajović, 1995; Žarkov, 2002, 2007) .

Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists

When the positioning of the Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists is jointly addressed, the positioning and/or the feminists are (sometimes interchangeably) named eg ‘antinationalist’ (Batinić, 2001; Benderly, 1997a; Fischer E., 1993; Helms, 1998, 2003a; Jansen, 2005; Žarkov, 2002, 2007), ‘autonomous’ (Korać, 2003), ‘disloyal’ (Korać, 1998, 2003), ‘independent’ (Borić, 1997), ‘internationally oriented’ (*Forum*, 1995), ‘neutral’ (Vranić, 2006), ‘non-nationalist’ (Batinić, 2001; *On the issues*, Summer 1993) and ‘oppositional’ (Jansen, 2005).

The contents of their positioning is described as criticism of the nationalist politics of their states and the use of (exaggerated) war rape figures for inciting hate, rejection of the analogy between the suffering of the raped women and the suffering of the whole ethnic group or state, and accentuation of their transgression of the post-

50 The classification on feminists with ‘the sexism approach’ and those with ‘the genocide approach’ to war rapes has been made by Bos (2006). She speaks of ‘the international feminist response’ without providing a more precise geographical indication, which could mean that she also refers to the Belgrade and/or Zagreb feminists. Nonetheless, given this absence of an explicit reference to them, I have chosen not to analyse this classification further. I do state, however, her designation ‘[with] the sexism approach’ on the list of examples in order to show the great diversity of the terms which are used in the scholarship.

51 I have mentioned here only the explicitly stated designations.

Yugoslav ethnic and state boundaries both regarding the assistance to women and cooperation with feminists (Batinić, 2001; Borić, 1997; Borić and Mladineo Desnica, 1996; Dobnikar, 2000; *Forum*, 1995; Helms, 1998, 2003a; Jansen, 2005; Korać, 1998, 2003; Žarkov, 1999, 2002, 2007). The conceptualisation of the war rapes is stated to be one whereby rape is seen as being committed by all warring sides and a continuation of the peacetime male violence against women (Batinić, 2001; Borić, 1997; *Forum*, 1995; Jansen, 2005; Korać, 1998, 2003).

As the only one among the authors who jointly speak of the Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists, Seada Vranić (1996) rebukes their 'neutral' or 'equidistant' gender-based positioning on the war rapes in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In her view, the insistence of 'the feminist groups from Serbia and some activists from Zagreb' (1996:165) on the gender component of the war rapes is a political manipulation. By implying equal guilt and equal victimisation of all warring sides, this positioning denies the genocidal character of those rapes and thereby creates a distortion of the factual situation.⁵²

Unlike the above authors who report a strict gender-based, or an ethnicity-free, positioning on the war rapes among the Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists, Borić and Mladineo Desnica (1996), Helms (1998, 2003a) and Žarkov (1999, 2002, 2007) note a nuanced gender-based positioning. Despite still being gender-based, this positioning entails the acknowledgement that the Serb militaries were the foremost perpetrators. As I will show in Chapter 4, both the authors who observe the strict and those who observe the nuanced gender-based positioning on war rape are partially right. The two positionings have indeed been assumed by the Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists, albeit at different moments in time: the strict gender-based positioning preceded the nuanced one.

Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists

The contents of the positioning of the Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists and/or these feminists themselves are separately – and at times interchangeably – named eg 'antinationalist' (Obradović-Dragišić, 2004), 'critical' (Knežević, 1994), 'genocide revisionists' (Nenadic, 1996), 'neutral' (Irvine, 2007), 'non-nationalist' (Benderly, 1997b; Irvine, 2007; Knežević, 1995), 'pacifist' (Obradović-Dragišić, 2004) and 'with antinationalist belonging' (Kašić, 2006).

52 In an interview for the Croatian pro-state tabloid *Globus*, Vranić repeats the same criticism, but does not give any geographical indications about the feminists whose positioning she condemns (*Globus*, 15.11.1996).

Some authors present these feminists' positioning as almost identical to the joint one above: criticism towards the regime and its nationalist and women-unfriendly politics, a conceptualisation of war rape which is based on gender and disentangled from the discourse of national victimisation, solidarity with women regardless of ethnicity, and cooperation with the Belgrade feminists (Benderly, 1997a, 1997b; Bilić, 2011a; Fischer E., 1993; Irvine, 2007; Mikula, 2005; Pavlović, 1999; Knežević, 1994, 2004; *Vrouw & Gezondheidszorg*, March/April 1993; Zajović, 1995). Once more, there are authors who report the nuanced gender-based positioning on the war rapes (Obradović-Dragišić, 2004; Pollmann et al., 1993).

However, in some contributions the members of this Zagreb cluster are named and portrayed in a fundamentally different manner: as rape and genocide revisionists who deny or silence the genocidal character of the war rapes committed by Serbs. These portrayals do not limit themselves to the early 1990s. They go back to Yugoslavia's past and present these Zagreb feminists as privileged representatives of the regime and the extended hand of the League of Communists and the Yugoslav People's Army – a covert way to suggest their allegiance to Serbia, ie Serb politics.⁵³ The questioning of these feminists' legitimacy additionally, albeit indirectly, takes place by the (implicit) portrayal of the Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists and the women's groups they cooperated with as authentic and indigenous (MacKinnon, 2006; Nenadic, 1996, 2010; *Northwest Ethnic News*, November 1994; *off our backs*, November 1991).

Partially overlapping with this criticism is the already mentioned one of Vranić (1996). She rebukes the Zagreb (and Belgrade) feminists with a neutral positioning for denying the genocidal purpose of the Serb war rapes. This and similar⁵⁴ use of 'neutral' as a derogatory designation for the Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists stands in direct contrast with Irvine's (2007) approving use of 'neutral' to refer to these feminists' positioning on the war guilt and war rapes.

53 As I explain in Chapter 4, the portrayal of the Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists – and the other female public figures who used a gender-based positioning on the war rapes – as being privately and/or professionally linked to and privileged by the League of Communists and/or the Yugoslav People's Army, overlapped to a great extent with the one which the pro-state Croatian media used for denouncing these women.

54 In two documents of the Zagreb so-called nationalist feminist group Women's Help Now, the terms 'abstract' and 'neutral' were used to disapprovingly describe the positioning of the other Zagreb feminist cluster: '[W]e were particularly concerned to maintain and apply...the basic feminist principles such as identification of the aggressor (the perpetrator) and solidarity with the victim (the woman or the war victim). Those principles have determined the feminist approach which grew out of the experience of exactly this war and the differentiation between Women's Help Now and some other women's groups whose starting point is abstract internationalism and lack of understanding of the specific war circumstances of the imperialist or conquering war' (*Ženska pomoć sada izvještaj za 1993*, n.d.; see also *Pomoć ženama žrtvama ratnog nasilja*, 12.07.1993).

Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists

The positioning of the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminist groups or activists is separately depicted as a protest against the use of war rape for war propaganda and an accusation of the politicians of all warring sides of fascism (Fischer E., 1993), or presented as having the form of a – not further elaborated – clear non-nationalist statement (Mladenović and Litričin, 1993). Zajović (*War Report*, September 1995) portrays their positioning as entailing autonomy both from the League of Communists and the Yugoslav People's Army, promotion of pacifism and self-determination, and a protest against the misuse of women for women-unfriendly nationalist and militarist aims. Zaharijević (2007) speaks of feminist pacifists who maintained the gender-based solidarity with women regardless of ethnicity and persisted in criticising the war violence of the Serb militaries (the latter is stated only implicitly).

Particularly significant is the direct link which is made between these feminists' positioning and the famous adage of the English writer Virginia Woolf (1938:109): '[A]s a woman I have no country. As a woman I want no country. As a woman, my country is the whole world'. Such a reference to Woolf, ie to the (self-chosen) absence of affiliation with one's country or ethnic group, is present only among the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists (Duhaček, 1998; Korać, 1996; Stojanović S. in: Mladenović and Hughes, 2000; Zaharijević, 2007; Zajović, 1993a [1991], 1997). These authors do not mention, however, that this distancing from Serbia and the Serbs was not clear-cut: it entailed the paradoxical situation of having first to acknowledge one's belonging to Serbia and the Serb ethnic collective – even if only by virtue of citizenship and/or ascribed-to ethnicity – before being able to renounce it.

Although the Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists were also critical towards the Croatian state and 'saw Croatia as a national state manipulative and dangerous to its women citizens' (Benderly, 1997a:71), I have never come across any statement in which they referred to Woolf. I would argue that the absence of such a self-designation as country-free or ethnicity-free women among these Zagreb feminists and its explicit presence among their Belgrade counterparts are due to the constitutive power of violence and the different roles of Croatia and Serbia. For the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists the distancing from the attacking country they lived in was a moral imperative and the only possible antinationalist positioning. Moreover, such an expression of opposition to the regime was welcomed, if not expected from them, at the international forums. That applied less to their Zagreb counterparts for whom it was more difficult to distance themselves from the attacked country they lived in (*Arkzin*, 20.12.1996; *Deklaracija žena iz Beograda*, 04.02.1993; Duhaček, 2010; Gjurgjan, 1992; Kašić, 2002; *The ACTivist*, May 1993; *Vreme*, 02.12.1991; Žarkov,

CHAPTER TWO

2002). This difference between the two self-declared antinationalist clusters in their affiliation with Woolf's adage is comparable, thus, to the differences between white and non-white women which Gloria Wekker (1995:67–68) has observed in the context of the antiracist struggles in the United States:

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

In relation to the NATO bombing of the Bosnian Serb positions in the late summer of 1995, Mladenović (2003:162) speaks of two positionings which existed among the Belgrade 'feminists with antinationalist sentiments'. The first was opposition to all use of arms, including the NATO intervention, while the second entailed support of the intervention because of the level of suffering which the Bosnian Serb militaries had inflicted on Bosniaks. In 1999 these feminists – suddenly and without any clarification Mladenović names them 'antifascist feminists' – were similarly divided on the NATO bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. This time, even some otherwise pacifist feminists supported the bombing because they 'were disgusted with ten years of constant Serbian fascism and regarded the international military intervention as the only way to stop this' (Mladenović, 2003:163). They all agreed that Milošević was responsible both for the NATO intervention and the simultaneously happening ethnic cleansing of the Kosovar Albanians.

It is significant that concerning these two instances of military action, Mladenović (2003) names 'antinationalist' ('antifascist') even the feminists with a militarist or non-pacifist positioning. In other words, she does not consider approval of the use of arms in these cases as 'nationalist' or 'pro-nationalist', while she (implicitly) does so in describing the discussion among the Belgrade feminists on how justified it is to shoot in self-defence (Mladenović, 1995, 2003; Mladenović and Litričin, 1993).⁵⁵ Apparently, what makes a difference for her is that the NATO bombardments entailed a use of arms against Serbs, whereas the shooting in self-defence meant a use of arms by Serbs. In the latter situation Mladenović seems to see the disapproval of the use of arms as the only legitimate antinationalist positioning a Belgrade feminist could take.

55 I look into this discussion in Chapter 4 in the analysis of the Belgrade Women's Studies Center.

However, when arms are used against Serbs Mladenović (2003) allows the possibility of having two different positionings which can be considered equally 'antinationalist'. She names a Belgrade feminist 'antinationalist' ('antifascist') if she foremostly speaks of Serbs as perpetrators and regardless of whether she is for or against the use of arms against them. Those who oppose the bombing and foremostly speak of Serbs as victims are classified as 'pro-nationalist'. This means that in order to name somebody's positioning on the NATO bombings one way or another, Mladenović looks at another positioning: the conceptualisation of the Serb role in the wars of the 1990s.

There are also authors who are critical of (some segments of) the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists' positioning. While Knežević (1994) acknowledges their avowed criticism of Serb nationalism and Milošević, she reproves them for three things. First, she considers their criticism of Serbia's politics on Bosnia and Herzegovina 'very vague and seldom precise' (1994:4)⁵⁶ and hardly existing regarding Serbia's politics on Kosovo. Second, she disapproves of these feminists' failure to accept that Yugoslavia as a single space does not exist anymore. Third, Knežević is displeased that these feminists do not realise that their attachment to and idealisation of the former country is the same as that which eg the Croat or Slovene nationalists show towards their respective new states. In other words, she suggests here that the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists are, in fact, Yugoslav nationalists.⁵⁷

A different type of criticism of the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists employs the designations 'radical' and 'extreme'. These feminists' positioning on (sexual) perpetrators and victims in the (post-)Yugoslav wars – the conceptualisation of Serbs as the only perpetrators and non-Serbs as the only victims – is described as 'antinational radicalism', 'extreme antinationalism', 'radical antinationalist' or as containing 'radical insensitivity'. The feminists with such a positioning are seen as insensitive to the suffering of Serbs, as failing to comprehend the complexity of Yugoslavia's disintegration, ie the perpetrator's roles shared by other warring sides, or as demonising the Serbs (Bilić, 2011a, 2011b; Milić, 2002; Nikolić-Ristanović, 2008;

56 Knežević (1994:4) explains this as follows: '[I]t is not enough to say that Milošević's regime is fascist, undemocratic, that what is going on in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a shameful crime etc'. Thus, a less vague and more precise formulation would be one which would explicitly state Serbia's role in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. See also footnote 210.

57 Nevertheless, Knežević (1994) also recognises that it is easy to overlook the nationalist components of such an attitude towards the former country, given that Yugoslavia has fallen apart because of the nationalism of its constitutive units. See in Chapter 4 my elaboration of the irritation which the nostalgia for Yugoslavia – and in particular for the Adriatic Sea (the maritime nostalgia, as I call it) – of the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists caused in their Zagreb counterparts.

Žarkov, 1999, 2002, 2007). A comparable criticism, but less harshly expressed, is the one in Nikolić-Ristanović (2000:31), where the author speaks of the women's groups which were 'less concerned about the problems of Serbian women, as opposed to those of non-Serbian women'.

Unlike the use of 'radical' by other authors, when Žarkov (1999, 2002, 2007) refers to the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists as 'radical' she does it for two reasons. The first is these feminists' positioning on ethnicity: 'In a radical agenda, ethnicity and anti-nationalist feminism came to be regarded as incompatible' (Žarkov, 2002:64). Therefore, the 'women who did not refuse to acknowledge their own ethnic identities were simply declared nationalists' (ibid). Hereby, she also attends, as the only author to do so, to one segment of the process of naming among the Belgrade feminists. The second reason is the self-declared antinationalist feminists' pre-war radical feminism wherein gender had the single utmost primacy for looking at societal problems. Žarkov seems to suggest a continuity in these feminists' adherence to radical positionings, despite the factual difference in contents. That could be inferred from her statement that although the radical feminists had initially refused to see any link between war rape and ethnicity, they added ethnicity to the definition later only to 'declare the Serb government, Serb people and especially Serb men, as the ultimate war villains' (Žarkov, 2002:64). Lastly, her choice for the word 'radical' appears also to be related to her claim that in Serbia, unlike in Croatia, there were 'only anti-nationalist feminists' (Žarkov, 2002:62, emphasis in the original). More precisely, given that she designates all Belgrade feminists as antinationalists, while being aware of their different war-related positionings, she uses 'radical' to distinguish between the two groupings. As I will show in Chapter 6, this depiction of all – or virtually all – Belgrade feminists as antinationalists was also to be found among some of my Belgrade respondents, including self-declared antinationalist ones.

Belgrade or Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists

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

There are few contributions which address the Belgrade so-called nationalist feminists or – more often – (implicitly) point to the existence of war-related tensions among the Belgrade feminists (Duhaček, 1998; Milić, 2002; Mladenović, 1995, 2003; Mladenović and Litričin, 1993;⁵⁸ Nikolić-Ristanović, 2000, 2008; Zaharijević, 2007; Žarkov, 1999, 2002, 2007).⁵⁹ They are much fewer compared to the texts which explicitly or actually attend to the divisions in Zagreb (Batinić, 2001; Benderly, 1997a, 1997b; Bilić, 2011a; Fischer E., 1993; *Forum*, 1995; Helms, 1998; Irvine, 2007; Jansen, 2005; Kašić, 1994a, 2006; Knežević, 1994, 1995, 2004; Korać, 1998, 2003; Lindsey, 2002; Mikula, 2005; Obradović-Dragišić, 2004; *On the Issues*, Summer 1993; Pavlović, 1999; Stojsavljević, 1995; Zajović, 1995; Žarkov, 1999, 2002, 2007). This obvious discrepancy in quantity of scholarship indicates that the creation of hasty analogies between the Belgrade and Zagreb so-called nationalist feminist cluster and between the dynamics among the feminists in each city should be avoided.

Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists

The most frequently assigned explicit designations for the Zagreb so-called nationalist feminist cluster are ‘nationalist’ (Bilić, 2011a; Fischer E., 1993, 1997; *Forum*, 1995; Irvine, 2007; *On the Issues*, Summer 1993; Pavlović, 1999; Stojsavljević, 1995; Žarkov, 1999, 2002, 2007) and, less often, ‘patriotic’ (Batinić, 2001; Korać, 1998, 2003). In one place, Batinić (2001) also uses ‘pro-nationalist’. Some authors employ both ‘nationalist’ and ‘patriotic’ (Benderly, 1997a, 1997b; Helms, 1998; Knežević, 1995; Korać, 1998; Obradović-Dragišić, 2004; Pavlović, 1999; Zajović, 1995). Also regarding these feminists, there are scholars who do the naming by using adverbial constructions instead of adjectives: ‘[reacted in a spirit] related to clear national identification and, frequently, to nationalism’ (Dobnikar, 2000), ‘with national (patriotic) belonging’ (Kašić, 2006), ‘who adopt the official ethno-national line’ (Mikula, 2005) and ‘who agree with the ruling nationalist politics’ (Knežević, 2004).

Pavlović (1999) uses ‘nationalist’ and ‘patriotic’ as synonyms, unlike Benderly (1997a), who states, without elaborating further, that ‘patriotic’ might be a more accurate term than ‘nationalist’ for this Zagreb cluster. This usage is questioned by

58 The relevant claims made in this article are reused in Hughes and Mladenović (1995), Hughes, Mladenović and Mršević (1995), Mladenović and Hughes (2000) and Mladenović and Litričin (1998), but as these later texts do not add new information on this concrete issue, I do not include them in the list above.

59 I do not list here the texts which, besides quoting from Mladenović and Litričin (1993), do not provide any additional information on the war-related tensions among the Belgrade feminists.

Žarkov (1999:431, n 12), who asks why the other Zagreb cluster should not be called ‘patriotic’ as well: ‘[I]f patriotism is (naively) defined only as one’s love for one’s country, than [sic] why should a love expressed in criticizing one’s government’s nationalist policies be excluded?’⁶⁰ Batinić (2001:21, n 12), on the other hand, approvingly refers to Benderly’s choice and justifies her own preference for ‘patriotic’ by saying that the Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists ‘developed articulate critiques of nationalism in general, and of nationalism of their state’s enemy in particular’. It seems, therefore, that Batinić suggests that to be patriotic means to turn a blind eye to the nationalism of one’s state, ie not criticise it explicitly.

Some authors mention – without providing references – that ‘patriotic’ was a complimentary name which this Zagreb cluster received from the Croatian media (Knežević, 1995, 1997; Žarkov, 2007) or from the media and politicians alike (Obradović-Dragišić, 2004). Obradović-Dragišić (2004) and Žarkov (2007) also state that ‘patriotic’ was this cluster’s self-designation. I could not confirm these claims during the fieldwork. I found only one article – in the Croatian pro-state political weekly *Danas* – which corroborated the claim about the media.⁶¹ ‘Patriotic’ was used there to approvingly describe the women’s groups which, according to the journalist, had not remained apolitical and abstract, but had named the aggressors and victims of the (sexual) war violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia (*Danas*, 29.01.1993).

As to the claim that ‘patriotic’ had been a self-designation, I could not find any media record or organisational document in support of it. The so-called nationalist feminists might, however, have implied this self-designation by eg referring to the positionings of the other feminists as ‘unpatriotic’ or ‘insufficiently patriotic’. Some Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists spoke of such an instance of naming concerning their decision to remain active in the Antiwar Campaign Croatia (*Arkzin*, 01.11.1993a; *Danas*, 18.06.1993; *die tageszeitung*, 05.11.1992; respondent F1 in Obradović-Dragišić, 2004).

60 The Croatian philosopher Igor Primorac conceptualises what he calls ethical patriotism in exactly this manner: ‘I ought to be concerned about immoral practices of my society, immoral laws and policies of my polity, since they tend to impose collective moral responsibility I, too, have to shoulder. I ought to be concerned that they be identified, acknowledged, and dismantled, and that their harmful effects be redressed’ (Primorac, 2004a:95; see also Primorac, 2004b). If this understanding of patriotism is used, the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists – especially one part of them – could be designated as ‘patriotic’ with regard to Serbia, even though none of them has ever named herself and/or her fellow feminists from the same Belgrade cluster in this way or expressed her love for Serbia or the Serbs.

61 I have to note that my media search did not include TV and radio items.

In any case, the choice for 'nationalist' and/or 'patriotic' – or 'loyal' (Jansen, 2005; Zajović, 1995) – does not seem to affect the manner in which the positioning of this Zagreb cluster is presented: identification with and support to the victimised Croatia and its regime's nationalist politics, use of an ethnicity-based conceptualisation of war rape in which Serb men are the exclusive perpetrators and Bosniak and Croat women the exclusive victims, perception of the rape of Bosniak and Croat women as a metaphor for the rape of the Bosniak and Croat nation, abandonment of the discourse of solidarity among women in general, and rejection of the cooperation with the Belgrade feminists due to their assumed ethnicity-based complicity with the Serbian regime. In addition to this, some Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists' conceptualisation of war rape as a tool of genocide has led to designations such as '[those] claiming rape as genocide' (Lindsey, 2002) or 'feminists with a genocidal rape approach' (Helms, 1998, 2003a), whereas the scholars who have cooperated with these feminists implicitly name them 'genocide and rape acknowledgers' (MacKinnon, 2006; Nenadic, 1996, 2010; *Northwest Ethnic News*, November 1994).

The contributions of MacKinnon and Nenadic differ from those by the other aforementioned scholars also in the (implicit) portrayal of the Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists as autonomous by virtue of being underprivileged outsiders during socialism. This difference in the distance from the Yugoslav state and its ideology remains unaddressed by the other authors. When the latter implicitly name the Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists 'not autonomous' or 'uncritical', it is because of these feminists' proximity to the Croatian state and its politics in the warring first half of the 1990s. It is exactly this position in the new state and the positioning vis-à-vis its politics that MacKinnon and Nenadic do not mention. Both groupings of authors accentuate, thus, some positions and positionings, while being silent about others.

The final discrepancy between the designations which are ascribed to this cluster concerns the term 'antiwar'. Whereas Batinić (2001) and Benderly (1997a) explicitly state – but without any references or examples – that both Zagreb clusters had an antiwar positioning, in Kašić (2006), Kesić (2002a), Obradović-Dragišić (2004) and Zajović (1995) one finds implicit indications of the pro-war positioning of the Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists. Such a positioning is also implied in the contributions wherein these feminists are presented as supportive of the Croatian state and its nationalist politics, but it is clearer in the four above works.

The allusion to the pro-war positioning in Kašić (2006) can be inferred from the explicit designation 'antiwar' which she assigns to the other Zagreb cluster (no further clarifications are given). In Kesić's (2002a:314) contribution it is implied from her statement that 'the simple divisions of "aggressors and victims," "our rights" and

“their wrongs,” the differences constructed as insurmountable’ are ‘reductions needed for waging wars’. Obradović-Dragišić (2004:40) suggests it by saying that the ‘feminists were holding two different positions on the issue of war and pacifism’ and that some of the Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists spoke about the right to self-defence. Lastly, Zajović (1995:50) implicitly speaks of the pro-war positioning of these feminists by stressing that the identification ‘with male militaristic states means to assume the role of an accomplice in war and war propaganda’.

Belgrade so-called nationalist feminists

The Belgrade so-called nationalist feminists is not only the least addressed cluster in the scholarship, but it is also the only cluster whose descriptions are more often than not only quite implicit indications which require much reading between the lines. As I explained in Chapter 1, unlike its Zagreb counterpart, the Belgrade so-called nationalist feminist cluster did not consist of feminist groups, but of individuals who did not organise themselves jointly nor publish common statements. The demarcation of this cluster is further aggravated by the fact that the very few authors who address these feminists give only quite implicit indications on who they are.

In the most often referred to article on the divisions among the Belgrade feminists in the early 1990s (Mladenović and Litričin, 1993),⁶² no feminist activists or groups are explicitly named ‘nationalist’. The closest these two authors come to such an explicit designation is when they speak of the activists who ‘were unable to keep their nationalist feelings out of their SOS [Hotline] work’ (1993:117). A more implicit indication of the existence of nationalism among some feminists can be read from the description that besides the groups ‘where the non-nationalist statement is clear’, there were those which ‘had many problems’ (ibid) and whose members were divided. Still, what exactly those ‘nationalist feelings’ and ‘many problems’ were, as well as what exactly a clear ‘non-nationalist statement’ entailed, does not get elaborated. It is also unclear in which ways the not kept under control nationalist feelings of some feminists prevented the creation of a clear non-nationalist statement in one part of the groups.

By listing the questions – but not the answers – which have caused divisions among the Belgrade feminists up to October 1992, Mladenović and Litričin (1993:117) give only a slight indication of the issues at stake:

62 The comment on the several later versions of this article which I made in footnote 58 is also valid here.

Can a feminist be a nationalist chauvinist? Can a pacifist be a nationalist? Is a weapon an instrument of defence? Should the groups take clear attitudes toward nationalist questions (and therefore the war) and in that way lose some women? Should the groups avoid the issue of nationalism altogether? Should the women merely sit down and confront their beliefs about it and see what happens?

In a later text Mladenović (1995) clarifies somewhat more the points of contestation. This time she situates the different positionings in the second half of 1991 not among the Belgrade feminists in general, but only among the members of the SOS Hotline. It seems that Mladenović (1995:36–37) uses ‘nationalist’ to designate an expression of close belonging to the Serb ethnic group which entails a distance from and a discriminative attitude towards the allegedly inimical non-Serbs, a justification for the Serbs’ use of arms in self-defence, and a disagreement with the idea that the Serbian government is a fascist regime:

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

The closer belonging of some Belgrade feminists to their ethnic group or state, and their concomitant lesser criticism of it, is also implicitly suggested by Duhaček (1998). She speaks of ‘unresolvable differences in the critiques of nationalism’ and rhetorically asks whether ‘contrary to what Virginia Woolf tried to teach us –...women, in fact, have a country, or a nation’ (Duhaček, 1998:492).

In her description of the discussion among Belgrade feminists on how justified shooting in self-defence is, Mladenović (2003) names the feminists who would approve of it ‘pro-nationalist feminists’ or those ‘with pro-nationalist feelings and interests’. A few sentences further, it turns out that they would defend such a use of arms by Serbs only some of the time. However, since the author does not specify in which situations

CHAPTER TWO

exactly these feminists would not approve of shooting, I cannot explore this example further, but only point to it as an instance of confusing incoherence.

Concerning the NATO bombing of the Bosnian Serb positions in 1995, Mladenović (2003:162) says that the feminists with pro-nationalist feelings were against the 'big power shooting at "their soldiers"' and did not address those soldiers' acts against non-Serbs. As to the NATO bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1999, the same author explains that the pro-nationalist feminists blamed NATO (instead of Milošević) for the bombing, unanimously opposed it and were silent about the then ongoing ethnic cleansing of the Kosovar Albanians by the Serb forces. In conclusion, and as I already indicated in the section on the other Belgrade feminist cluster, it appears that, according to Mladenović (2003), a (pro-)nationalist positioning of a Belgrade feminist always entails a primary conceptualisation of Serbs as victims, and silence about their perpetrators' role in the (post-)Yugoslav wars.

The distance from the allegedly inimical non-Serbs, which Mladenović (1995) seems to see as part of a nationalist positioning, is also observed by Zaharijević (2007). She does not speak, however, of a fixed distance towards non-Serbs in general, but specifically indicates that this distance varied based on whether those non-Serbs were Croat, Bosniak or Kosovar Albanian women:

[A]lthough the majority of [Belgrade] feminists was able during the first vigil of Women in Black to stand behind the banner stating 'The Croat women are our sisters' (the message on sisterhood is particularly feminist since it conveys the insistence that we as women cross national and ethnic markers, and that women's solidarity is more important to us than the national belonging and the loyalty to the nation/state), when the banner 'The Bosnian [read: Bosniak] women are our sisters' was to be held there were already those who were not all that easily convinced. The most controversial banner...'The Albanian women are our sisters' repulsed many feminists despite its unchanged feminist message (Zaharijević, 2007:243).

Zaharijević sees this gradual reduction of the number of Belgrade feminists who maintained a gender-based conceptualisation of solidarity among women as illustrating the progressive divergence of the initially intertwined feminism and pacifism of the Belgrade feminists. In other words, according to this author, there were fewer and fewer feminists who would second both the idea that all wars were by definition wrong and the one that all women were sisters. Those who refrained from expressing these two positionings jointly had, in fact, chosen patriotism, which entailed loyalty to their ethnic group and state.

Obviously, this conceptualisation of pacifism differs somewhat from the already addressed one of Mladenović (2003). Zaharijević conceptualises pacifism as opposed to patriotism: the abandonment of pacifism leads to choosing patriotism and putting an end to the solidarity with specific non-Serb women. For Mladenović, such an abandonment does not necessarily mean a choice for patriotism. It could be just another type of an antinationalist positioning driven by the wish to preserve exactly this solidarity with the specific ethnic Other.

Although Zaharijević does not formulate this explicitly, by stating that some feminists abandoned ‘the message on sisterhood [which] is particularly feminist’ (2007:243), she actually suggests that the feminists who chose patriotism not only abandoned pacifism but also feminism – at least partially. Another not explicitly articulated suggestion is that the feminists who refrained from expressing their solidarity with Bosniak or Kosovar Albanian women did so because of not considering these ethnic groups free from responsibility for the war violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, respectively. Put differently, the feminists who chose patriotism did not want to speak publicly about Serbs only as perpetrators, and about Bosniaks and Kosovar Albanians only as victims.

The kinds of classification and naming employed by Mladenović and Zaharijević are those which Žarkov (1999, 2002, 2007) disagrees with by saying that in Belgrade there were only antinationalist feminists, albeit with indeed two different positionings regarding the Serb ethnic group. The ‘academic feminists’ – the term she uses for those whom I name Belgrade so-called nationalist feminists – ‘were wary of the demonization of “the Serbs” as much as of Serbian nationalism and...disagreed strongly with radical feminist views’ (Žarkov, 2002:64).

Based on Žarkov’s criticism of the radicalism or extremism of the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists, as well as the rebuke by Bilić (2011a, 2011b), Milić (2002) and Nikolić-Ristanović (2000, 2008), I suggest that these authors implicitly portray the Belgrade so-called nationalist feminists⁶³ as being sensitive to both the suffering of Serbs and the not black-and-white power dynamics between the warring sides. Bilić, Milić, Nikolić-Ristanović and Žarkov, unlike Mladenović, do not see the explicit articulation of the victimhood of Serbs as an intrinsically (pro-)nationalist positioning, even when it is not followed by an explicit acknowledgement of their role of perpetrators. In a similar vein, contrary to Zaharijević, the same four authors deem that to refrain from publicly speaking of Serbs only as perpetrators and non-Serbs only as victims does not necessarily indicate one’s patriotism.

63 I say ‘implicitly portray’ because Bilić, Milić and Nikolić-Ristanović, unlike Žarkov, do not explicitly mention the existence of Belgrade feminists whose positioning differs from that of the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist ones.

Conclusion

The already scarce scholarship on the war-related Belgrade and/or Zagreb feminist activism in the 1990s becomes additionally limited when information is sought regarding these feminists' war-related positionings and the divisions which they have caused. Not only are many lacunae and repeating information ('repeating' not in the sense of new confirmations of previous research findings, but in the sense of re-referencing of the same few scholarly works), but this scholarship is also in many ways biased. All these problematic places urge the readers to maintain a critical approach even when examining texts of authors whose political views largely correspond to their own ones. Such a reading attitude is essential also when the works in question have been inspired by and are a part of progressive emancipatory ideologies, such as feminism. The scholarship on the war-related activism of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists in the 1990s is a case in point. It contains overgeneralisations and oversimplifications, instances of misrecognition, uncritical portrayals of the assenting voices and delegitimisation and silencing of the dissenting ones, and has not remained immune to the larger academic 'fashion trends' which dictate which topics are worth of researching and publishing and which are not.

To begin with, the first scholarly bias concerns the disparity in the designations which are used to describe the different positionings and/or the feminists who have employed them. There is an overwhelmingly greater presence of the terms which have been used by the Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists compared to those which have been used by the so-called nationalist feminists. That is due to the greater correspondence between the former's designations and the actual positionings observed, the greater comprehensibility of these terms at face value, the larger number of scholars (Western and local) who have endorsed the positionings of the self-declared antinationalist feminists, and the much more extensive appearance of these feminists as authors of relevant scholarly contributions.

The second source of bias is the political role of this scholarship, ie its interaction with and participation in the efforts to stop the wars and war rapes, secure assistance for the victims and bring the perpetrators to justice, as well as obtain resources for the local feminists (the ones whose work the author endorses) to continue with their activities. This type of bias manifests first in the positive depictions of the like-minded feminists, the use of loaded terms in referring to the not like-minded ones and in an avoidance of calling the latter 'feminists' or mentioning them when describing the feminist field. Second, it is visible in the virtually total absence of attention for this political component, as well as for the process of naming, including

the self-ascribed and ascribed-to designations, and the consequences thereof. The interests which are contained in these practices are thereby misrecognised and the scholarship is incorrectly implicitly portrayed as disinterested and objective.

The third bias is formed by the lack of analysis of the war-related dynamics and positionings among and between the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists after the end of the wars and war rapes in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. This concerns the explorations of these feminists' post-1995 interactions and positionings on the same war-related issues, their post-1995 analyses of their previous positionings, collaborations and splits, as well as the evaluation of the relevant scholarly information which was produced earlier, especially during the period of war violence.

I explain this absence first by the decreased political, media and academic interest for the post-Yugoslav region after the end of the wars, ie after the displacement of this interest to the parts of the world with ongoing (sexual) war violence. Second, the fact that the NATO bombing of Serbia in 1999 and the war in Kosovo 1998–1999 did not restore this interest is probably due to their shorter duration, the seemingly smaller incidence of war rapes, the saturation of the research interest for the region (including the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists), the lack of indications of related conflicts between these feminists, and the largely silenced tensions among the Belgrade feminists. This means that even the post-2000 works which touch upon the war-related divisions among and between the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists only refer to the 1991–1995 wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia.

The fourth bias refers to the limited to non-existent attention for some of the divisions among the feminists. Depictions of conflicts within each of the four clusters are as good as absent. At the same time, there are minimal records of the tensions between the Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists, which is quite different from the well-registered accentuation of the courageous boundary transgressing aspect of their cooperation. That might be due to these feminists' avoidance of reporting on the frictions in order not to saw off the legitimacy branch they were sitting on. Furthermore, these issues might have remained unnoticed to outside scholars. Due to eg time and language constrains and insufficient background knowledge, they might have been unable to decipher the written and oral allusions to the conflicts. Finally, considering that the outside scholars – most of whom were supportive of these feminists – were also a part of the struggle for legitimacy, it is very likely that the former did not want to delegitimise the latter.

The fifth bias is the lack of attention for the biographies of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists and the absence of analyses which would compare the differences and similarities between and among them in terms of eg age, ethnicity and education,

CHAPTER TWO

and explore them in connection to the war-related positionings. I explain this bias by the great mobilising force of the war rapes on the gender scholars. While rightly resulting in many analyses of these atrocities and their conceptualisations, it has left no space for attending to the lives of those who assisted the rape survivors locally and struggled both locally and internationally for the, in their view, true definition of the phenomenon.

The sixth and final bias is the geographical one which entails that the analyses more often than not claim to address an area which is larger than the one the scholars have obtained data for. The arguments are eg presented as valid for post-Yugoslav feminism in general, while only Belgrade and Zagreb feminists have been interviewed. This homogenisation fallacy is especially problematic for the studies which explore the region after Yugoslavia's disintegration. Not only have the successor states developed differently, but they have also been exposed to dissimilar war violence – in terms of both form and duration. Additionally problematic are the studies which claim to address an even more heterogeneous terrain, the Balkans, while being only grounded in data on (one part of) the post-Yugoslav region. I suggest that this bias is due to the output pressure in academia which drives scholars to present their work as more broadly relevant, the wish to evade possible criticism because of leaving out some areas, lack of familiarity with the heterogeneity of the area under study, and – concerning the use of 'Balkans' – the choice to avoid the politically and emotionally laden direct reference to Yugoslavia.

When the scholarship is explored with regard to the ways in which the feminists (feminist groups) and their war-related positionings have been classified and named, the presence of a dichotomy between these feminists (positionings) is usually revealed. This dichotomy is commonly referred to as being one between antinationalist (non-nationalist) and nationalist (patriotic) feminists. In addition to these terms, a great variety of other adjectival and adverbial designations are employed or only implicitly suggested. One's choice for the used and alluded to terms is, however, left unattended. Moreover, the same names can mean different things. For example, depending on the author, 'autonomous' can refer either to the Zagreb self-declared antinationalist or to the Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists, and a 'neutral' positioning on the war rapes can be either used approvingly because of not spreading hate or disapprovingly because of denying genocide. Finally, 'antinationalist' can denote both the Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists, but also the Belgrade so-called nationalist ones.

The analysis of the scholarship also shows that some authors jointly address the Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists, whereas no truly joint

analyses exist of the two so-called nationalist clusters. Some authors present their argument as also including this Belgrade cluster, but actually present information only on the Zagreb one. The joint descriptions of the Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist clusters and the separate portrayals of the Zagreb one show many resemblances, which indicates that also these joint descriptions have been foremostly based on data from Zagreb and the splits induced by the 1991–1995 wars. This becomes even more obvious when the separate depictions of the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist cluster are included in the comparison. First, it is revealed that the presence of tensions in Belgrade and the absence of tensions in Zagreb regarding the NATO bombing and the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo are glaringly absent from the joint portrayals. Second, one can notice the absence of some other specific issues which have played a role among the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists, but not among the Zagreb ones. This concerns the rejection of the affiliation with one's ethnic group and new state, the continuity of the affiliation with the old state (Yugoslavia) despite its disintegration, and the NATO bombing of the Bosnian Serb forces in 1995.

There is a predominance of authors who approvingly look at the positionings of the Belgrade and Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists (some of these authors themselves belong to one of the clusters). They stress these feminists' critical distance from the nationalist and warmongering ideologies of their states, their disapproval of the manipulation of the war rape stories and figures for inciting further violence, the primary perception of the war rapes as gender-based (some scholars note the later less strictly gender-based positioning which included the ethnic component of the rapes) and the firm choice to continue the cooperation across the state and ethnic boundaries. The scholars who are critical of the positioning of the Zagreb (and Belgrade) self-declared antinationalist feminists – some of whom have worked with the Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists – rebuke them sharply for denying the genocidal component of the war rapes and thereby distorting the reality. A number of these scholars specifically decry the Zagreb self-declared antinationalist feminists because of their alleged connections to the Yugoslav state and politics, ie advocacy of Serb interests.

The separate favourable portrayals of the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists indicate their identification with Virginia Woolf's adage about not having and not wanting to have a country (and an ethnic group). They attend hereby to these feminists' distancing from Serbia's politics and the Serb-induced victimisation of non-Serbs, but omit to say that this rejection presupposes a previous acceptance of one's (administrative) bonds with Serbia and ascribed-to belonging to the Serb ethnic collective. These Belgrade feminists are further depicted as having either approved

CHAPTER TWO

or disapproved of the NATO bombings in 1995 and 1999, but both positionings are considered to be antinationalist because these feminists acknowledged the Serbs' foremost perpetrating role in the wars of the 1990s.

There are also scholars who are critical of the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists. In one case, the criticism concerns these feminists' Yugoslav nationalism, ie continuous adherence to Yugoslavia, and their insufficiently precise rebuke of Serbia's perpetrating politics. Others – part of whom are Belgrade so-called nationalist feminists – rebuke the former feminists' radical insistence on the rejection of the affiliation with the Serbs and/or Serbia because of their perception of this ethnic group and country as the exclusive perpetrators in the (post-)Yugoslav wars. According to these authors, this insistence of the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists has not only led to their smaller interest in the non-Serb-induced suffering of Serbs (Serb women, in particular) but also to the portrayal of the Belgrade feminists who do not reject their affiliation and/or are (also) concerned about the Serb victimisation as nationalists.

When the positionings of the Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists are approvingly elaborated, these feminists are presented as being autonomous from Yugoslavia and its Serb-dominated politics because of being underprivileged outsiders. This argument is used to increase the legitimacy of these feminists' ethnicity-based conceptualisation of the war rapes. Furthermore, the Zagreb so-called nationalist feminists are praised for being able to look beyond the distorted views and discern the real, ie genocidal, nature of the Serb war rapes. The scholars who disapprovingly look at these Zagreb feminists differ in their perceptions of them as being pro-war or antiwar, but agree in criticising their proximity to Croatia's state politics and its exclusively ethnicity-based conceptualisation of (sexual) perpetrators and victims, their participation in the use of exaggerated war rape figures and accounts, and their rejection of the cooperation and solidarity with the Belgrade feminists.

The scarce scholarship on the Belgrade so-called nationalist feminists is most difficult to grasp because of the virtual absence of explicit and unambiguous references and information. The critics disapprove of their affiliation with the Serb ethnic group and Serbia, and subsequent absence of sharp reproof of the extensive perpetrator's role of this country and ethnic group in the (post-)Yugoslav wars. Furthermore, they criticise their insufficient acknowledgement of and solidarity with the (female) victims of the Serb politics. One part of these victims – the Kosovar Albanians – are noted as a particularly strong point of contestation. The absence of acknowledgement of the Serb ethnic cleansing against them is seen as a clear indicator of these feminists' nationalism (patriotism). Their opposition to the NATO bombing – in 1995 and/or

1999 – is presented as testifying to their nationalism because it is accompanied by the denial of the Serb role of foremost perpetrators.

The authors who are less critical of the Belgrade so-called nationalist feminists – either by explicitly mentioning them or only alluding to their existence when disapproving of the Belgrade self-declared antinationalist feminists – present them as being sensitive to the victimisation of Serbs and aware of the complexity of the (post-)Yugoslav wars. Attending to the suffering of Serbs and the perpetrating deeds of the other ethnic groups is not, according to these authors, a sign of one's nationalism or patriotism. Neither is that necessarily the case when the Serb-induced victimisation of the other ethnic groups is left unattended.

Having addressed the biases and silent places in the scholarship on the war-related positionings of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminists in the 1990s, as well as the diverse scholarly designations which are used to name and classify these positionings and/or feminists, I turn to Chapter 3. I begin with a short overview of the post-1945 historical context of Yugoslavia which led to the establishment of the Belgrade and Zagreb feminist groups. Afterwards, I portray the (predecessors of the) feminist groups which are important for this research.