

Women's Court - Feminist Approach to Justice

Report January to August 2016

Here's a quick report on the activities of Women in Black in connection with organizing the Women's Court-feminist approach to justice in this period. If you are interested in more information, you can find them on our web-sites www.zeneucnom.org and www.zenskisud.org or contact us by mail: zeneucnombeograd@gmail.com

The first Women's Court on the territory of Europe, was held in Sarajevo from May 7th to 10th 2015, organized by 10 women's groups from the former Yugoslavia (Movement Mothers of Srebrenica and Zepa; Cure Foundation, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina; Centar for women victims of War; Centre for women's studies, Zagreb, Croatia; Center for women and peace education Anima, Kotor, Montenegro; The Council for Gender Equality, Skopje, Macedonia; Women's Lobby, Ljubljana, Slovenia; Center for women's studies and Women in Black, Belgrade, Serbia. Women's Court was attended by over 500 people from all the countries of the former Yugoslavia, but also from Argentina, Algeria, Palestine, Israel, USA, Spain, Italy, Sweden, Austria, Belgium, Great Britain, etc.

Women in Black, during the five years, are the leaders of program activities of the Women's Court.

The final event in Sarajevo is not the end of the process, but rather an incentive to creating new models of justice out of the feminist perspective. It is the responsibility primarily to the witness, but also an expression of our responsibility to the enormous burden of the recent past.

In continuation of the Women's Court, Women in Black, Belgrade coordinate the program and other activities, with the support of organizations: Anima, Kotor (Montenegro), Center for Women War Victims, Zagreb (Croatia), the Foundation 'Cure', Sarajevo, some members of the former Organizing Committee of the Women's Court continue to participate sporadically (Council for Equality, Skopje, Macedonia), while the other members support without active participation.

In this reporting period, we are reporting activities of Women in Black and other organizations participating in the continuation of the process of Women's Court:

I Feminist ethic of care - support lady witnesses

Regional meetings of the witness - after the final event held in Sarajevo. In this period we held the following regional meetings:

1. **The feminist discussion circle - About Feminism Then and Now:** April 1st to 3rd 2016 at, Kotor, Montenegro, organized by the Center for Women and Peace Education Anima, Kotor and Women in Black, Belgrade, a feminist discussion circle was held. 26 women participated: 10 from Serbia and 16 from Montenegro. Some of witnesses participated in the Women's Court from Serbia and Montenegro, as well as activists of "Anima" and the Network of Women in Black from Serbia.

The program consisted of the following units:

- The skills of nonviolent communication - workshop which was facilitated by Ljupka Kovačević
- "Suffragettes" - an American film from 2015, directed by Sarah Gavron and discussion after the film.
- A feminist activism in Yugoslavia - lecture Ervine Dabižinović
- "Drug-ca" the first feminist conference in Eastern Europe, 1978 - recording of the show on the first feminist conference in Eastern Europe (1978). After this documentary film there was a discussion on: the status of women today, especially in rural areas; the gap between academics and activists, but also on their cooperation, the importance of education, especially in the present circumstances, devaluation of education; the challenges of solidarity among women; on volunteer work now and then, and so on.
- What is feminism today? Where feminism is going here and in the world? - The introductory speaker, Paula Petricevic and Stasa Zajović discussed the complex situation in which the feminist movement in today's world, especially the obstacles and challenges (NGO-ization, gender mainstreaming / gender equality policies, neoliberal economic globalization, strengthening of conservative and fundamentalist tendencies , etc.)
- "Obrani berači" - (47 minutes) documentary film by Milica Lupšor, Zrenjanin about the difficult situation of seasonal agricultural workers in Vojvodina, ruthless exploitation, fear and poverty of women, and the fight for women's labor rights.
- A recent judgments of the ICTY - about how the verdict of the Hague Tribunal in March 2016 (R. Karadzic and V. Seselj) affect our work and our struggle against impunity for war crimes. All participants stated that they were distressed by the verdict, and brought doubts in the possibility of justice and equity at the international level; All participants expressed their concerns because they feel that this judgment will lead to an increase in nationalist tensions; participants have expressed heightened motivation to get involved in this situation (joint action, more frequent meetings and joint reflections).

- Evaluation (What have I got of this meeting?): Found that participants received encouragement for further joint work, new friends, new knowledge, but also great anxiety and even fear because of the situation in the entire region.

2. Banja Koviljača (Serbia), 27, 28 and 29 May 2016

This meeting was attended by 32 women from 19 cities. The meeting was organized by Women in Black from Belgrade in cooperation with: Anima, Kotor, Foundation CURE from Sarajevo and the Center for Women War Victims, Zagreb. In the meeting took part the following witnesses:

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Edina Karic, Nura Mustafic, Refija Hadžibulić, Šehida Abdurahmanović, Reiha Avdic, Zumra Šehomerović, Kadefa Rizvanović, Suvad Selimovic and Saha Hrustić

Montenegro: Anka Vukicevic, Roksanda Pekovic, Zagorka Matovic and Sabina Talović

Croatia: Jovanka Carevic, Ljubica Anđelković-Đukić, Marica Šeatović

Slovenia: Mirjana Učakar

Serbia: Binasa Džigal, Kovačev Marija, Mirjana Mijailovic, Nadezda Kostić i Lidija Kostic Radičević

The organizers: Ljupka Kovacevic (Anima, Kotor), Ljiljana Radovanovic, Violeta Đikanović, Stasa Zajović and Zorica Trifunovic (Women in Black, Belgrade), Nela Pamuković (Center for Women War Victims, Zagreb) and Jadranka Milicevic (CURE Foundation, Sarajevo) Mira Vilušić (feminist therapist SC, Tuzla). In addition, participants were also the guests: Rada Žarković (Sarajevo, WIB activist) and Marta Drury (Foundation Heart and Hand Fund, USA).

The program includes the following segments:

Friday, May 27th

Feminist ethics of care - in the first session led by Ljupka Kovačević participants exchanged their personal, family experiences; the common thread that links the witness of WC are:

- sense of belonging to a community of WC ("You guys are like my family ...");
- a safe space for sharing ("I love when I'm with you because we share what is happening to us");
- mutual support, the necessity of working together ("We will not stop, we must continue ...")

- Women's Solidarity ("I still streaming female solidarity, our desire and willingness to be each other's support is recognized ..."), and so on.

My symbol - dynamic exercise in which women talked about the symbols that they brought (meaning, emotional values, associations ...).

Women brought symbols related to war trauma, which testify to the personal brave struggle to overcome the trauma, reconstruction of destroyed houses, creating a new home for children; Some women have revived memories of a time of peace as a source of strength to continue; other items were brought from loved ones, mostly friends as a symbol of a strong emotional presence despite the physical absence; there was also a symbol of resistance activist - women's peace activism as inspiration for further fight ...

The activities related to the process of the Women's Court of the previous period (from December 2016 to date) were reported by Stasa Zajović, Ljupka Kovačević, Nela Pamuković, Jadranka Milicevic.

The projection of the working version of the documentary film about the final event in Sarajevo, May 2015.

Professional art team is taking into account the opinions and suggestions of the witness, produced a working version of about 50 minutes. In the meeting, the witness said that "the film is very well done, because: witness expresses emotions, their pain, but also the power", I also assess that the film has "a high professional level" and represents an important contribution to transitional justice and understanding the context of the evidence ". The witnesses put forward some suggestions, which will be accepted in the preparation of the definitive version of this documentary scheduled for September 2016.

Saturday, May 28th

The feminist ethics of responsibility: A continuation of the Women's Court: problems, difficulties, challenges in the continuation of the process ...

In this session we discussed about: the legal protection of testimony (documents of Conformity / Approvals for audio and video testimonies, archives of WC, the publication of testimonies, the use of material for feminist research ...). During long-term work with the witness, as in regional meetings and in meetings at national level (authorization testimony texts, revision of the text, etc.). 34 women who testified in Sarajevo (from a total of 36 witness) signed those documents. The entire work was conducted in accordance with the Code of feminist WC, but still a member of the International Judicial Council sent a few questions that are unclear at this meeting.

A legal procedures leading witness: misdemeanor and criminal proceedings, war crimes trials before national courts, appeal proceedings before the International Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, and so on. Some witness legal procedures relating to the elements testimony before the County Court (war crime of rape, forced disappearances, murders ...), violations of labor rights; property disputes, etc. Some witnesses have launched legal proceedings against them or have initiated actions that are not directly related to the testimony at WC. In this session, as well as later during the meeting, agreed at the concrete measures of psychological and legal support to women witnesses that link various legal proceedings.

Financial problems: there was a talk about the lack of funds to continue the process of project applications, the rejection of projects, in particular on the policy of international aid (victim-paternalistic approach, reduced interest of "donors" in for the former Yugoslavia and for activities related with dealing with the past in general, etc.).

Marta Drury - Passionate activist, a good friend, coordinator of the Feminist Foundation Hand and Heart, took part in our meeting and spoke about her anti-war engagement, about her experience of being a mother, about feminist activism. She also commented the campaign for the next presidential elections in the United States, the brutal xenophobic, populist campaign of D. Trump; the misogyny, racism, xenophobia.

The feminist ethics of responsibility - a joint reflection on the current political situation in the region –

Saturday afternoon

About the impact of the recent judgment of the ICTY (Radovan Karadzic, who was sentenced to 40 years in prison and Vojislav Seselj, freed of charges), the participants shown that verdict led to a number of negative consequences:

- Strengthening of nationalism throughout the region ("After the judgment, people from my environment who have not declared themselves as nationalists, now declare loudly, it's a shame not to be nationalists ..." "In my surroundings (Vojvodina)it affects the proliferation of nationalism and fascism on all sides ";" it's worse than the nineties. Every where nationalism swells ... ";" After these verdicts I am afraid. Patriotism does not mean how much you love and care it is how much you hate the other ").
- Celebrating as the heroes of war criminals, at the state and society level, especially among young people ("They become national heroes and on matches and concerts youth wearing T-shirts with their faces. In every game can be heard" Knife, wire, Srebrenica "instead of enjoying in sports, is revived everything that is ugly and it is worrisome "); "War criminals are celebrated in all former Yugoslav republics. And for society and for the country criminals are idols ").

- Fully distrust of institutional justice - both internationally and at the national level: ("All judges and all courts do not meet justice. The greatest punishment is in this world victims waiting for justice. My desire for justice"; "the courts reward criminals and humiliate the victims"; "I shudder to all vessels, whether national or international. I have gone through all the courts, they are unjust and terrifying").
- a deep disappointment in Hague tribunal ("the International Tribunal in The Hague is a farce, a partner in crime"; "The Hague Tribunal is a political court because it did not achieve what he had founded for. Instead of condemning criminals, criminals winning "" nor do I believe the international community nor I believed that through the Hague Tribunal we can reach justice";"I was a big supporter of Hague Tribunal, since its founding. For me it is sad that this court is a big disappointment ");
- Resentment because Radovan Karadzic has not been convicted of genocide not only in Srebrenica than in seven other municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina ("I'm sorry, that has not been convicted of genocide in other municipalities. No one was convicted for Zvornik").
- Peace is not related to justice and criminality: ("This soulless world of such judgments would like to make "peace". If criminals were properly condemned, faster and better would come coexistence and reconciliation in the region"), and so on.

In second part of talks were discussed other aspects of the crisis: strengthening the nationalist forces, the persecution of activists, economic misery, coupled crime and political elite. The participants testified about:

- atmosphere of fear and panic after the recent elections in Serbia (April 2016)
- the strengthening of Catholic fundamentalism, ultra-nationalist forces in Croatia, but also in the whole of Europe;
- ethnic and political tensions in Montenegro, in the context of accession to NATO;
- deepening ethnic, economic tensions throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the risk of growth of Islamist tendencies, etc.

Sunday, May 29th

In the session on future activities were arranged various forms of support within the framework of feminist ethics of care and responsibility of WC: support the prosecution of war crimes; psychological support to the witness (individual and group); Regional meeting of witness of WC (proposed theme); joint activities in the field of dealing with the past; street actions - the anniversaries of the crimes and the important international dates; continued work on a documentary film about WC and the book Female Paper testimony; promotion of

documentary about the events in Sarajevo; witness participation in the activities of Women in Black, etc.

During the final session, participants expressed their emotional, moral, political significance of regional meetings (solidarity, trust, friendship, mutual learning, political maturation ...).

II Promotion of Women's Court - Feminist Approach to Justice

Novi Sad, March 5th 2016 - Public presentation of the Women's Court was held at the University of Novi Sad - Center for Gender Studies, Novi Sad, in the presence of twenty people (20), mostly female students of gender studies, Journalists from Independent Association of Journalists of Vojvodina and the activists.

After a short introductory section and presentations (Svenka Savić, Profesor at University Novi Sad and Stasa Zajović, Women in Black, Belgrade), spoke the witness on the Women's Court, held in May 2015 in Sarajevo.

Part I: The witnesses speak about their experience testifying in the Women's Court in Sarajevo

Suvada Selimovic, Đulići, Bosnia and Herzegovina testified to WC about the massacre of Bosniak civilians in 1992.

Nadezda Kostic, Kruševac testified to WC about the forced mobilization of men for the war in Kosovo in 1999, during the military intervention of NATO.

Vesna Đorđević, Zrenjanin testified about the brutal violation of labor rights of women.

Part II: The importance of the testimony of the WC, the witness experience can be summarized as follows:

- A common area of the struggle for justice of women victims of war and other injustices;
- The possibility that women are telling the truth about what happened on the basis of their experience and not through falsified information, the media and politicians;
- Cohesion, unity and mutual support to witness above and beyond national boundaries and national origin;
- Construction of an ethic of responsibility by disclosing the witness manipulation by political elites;
- Collective experience resistance to forced mobilization of women and through personal experience, the ability to know the truth about the resistance to forced mobilization during the war in Serbia, because of "media blackout".

- Information about the consequences of war violence, especially crimes of forced mobilization, health of relatives of mobilized

- Creating space for women victims of campaign of violations of labor law, etc.

Part III - Questions and comments of the audience were related to: the current ethnic relations in BiH, indifference and silence among students about what happened during wars, and so on.

Documentary films about the final event - the Women's Court in Sarajevo (May 2015)

The feminist approach to justice - by Noa Pintarić, duration 9:40 minutes

Women's Court, Sarajevo - author Berin Džamailović, duration 5:26 minutes

Tanja Djuric Kuzmanovic, prof. PhD University of Novi Sad, spoke about her experience as a WC collaborator regarding the socio-economic violence, and above all the forms of economic violence against women in war and post-war period, the brutal violation of labor rights of women in the process of privatization theft, but also resistance of women.

Svenka Savić talked about the common interaction and connectivity of feminist activism and theory and about the importance of WC for the academic community.

Finally, we discussed the future plans of the Women's Court.

May 20th, New York - at New York University (New York University) Indira Kajošević-Skoric (during 90s was activists of Women in Black in Belgrade) had a presentation of the WC and gender justice in the Western Balkans. The session was attended by a large number of prominent feminist, scholar and activist (Ann Snitow, Nanette Funk, Sonia Robbins, Pamela Spees), and colleagues from NYU.

May 28th, Udine (Italy) - Women in Black Italy organized a public presentation of the Women's Court in the former Yugoslavia, where they spoke to the participants of events in Sarajevo (May 2015): Marianita D'Ambrogio (WIB Padova) and Melita Richter, researcher at the University of Trieste. The interview was moderated by Annalisa Comuzzi, Women in Black activists from Udine.

On this occasion, also was announced the publication of a translation of the book "Women's Court-the process of organizing" in the Italian language. The book was issued in May 2015, by Women in Black and Women's Studies in Belgrade, in Serbian and English language (Women's Court: About The Process).

II Working meetings with the witness at the national level

Zagreb, January 17th - The meeting was held at the Centre for Women Victims of War, and in the organization of Center for Women War Victims - Rosa, Zagreb and Women in Black, Belgrade.

The meeting was attended by the following witnesses:

Marica Šeatović, Novska

Jovanka Carevic, Zagreb

Ljubica Anđelković, Novigrad

Mirjana Učakar, Ptuj, Slovenia

and organizers: Nela Pamuković and Stasa Zajović

Part I: Work on the texts of the testimonies - the witnesses, with the support of the organizers reviewed the texts of their testimony, made some changes (ie. A slight shortening, where the facts are repeated ...), commented footnotes brought by the working group of Women in Black, and authorized the text of testimony. After this phase, the working group has incorporated all the amendments and joined the editorial staff of texts testimony. This process takes place in accordance with horizontal and democratic character of the entire process of organizing WC.

Part II: Joint reflection on current social and political situation, arrangements for activities in the future.

Part III: Joint working consultative meetings - in this period maintained the operational organization of working meetings, expert, activist participating in a continuing process of WC:

- **Zagreb, January 16th** - Working meeting in which participated Stasa Zajović and Nadezda Čačinović philosopher, on the book Women's testimonies and Nadezda has agreed to write a review for a book on WC.

- **Zagreb, January 19th and 24th** - Working meetings in which participated Rada Boric, Stasa Zajović, Nela Pamuković, Marijana Senjak, Milica Miladinovic, Jovanka Carevic; During the meetings they discussed the support to the witness, the international panel of judges, financial problems, joint activities.

III Joint working consultative meetings - in this period maintained the operational organization of working meetings, expert, activist participating in the continuation of the process of WC: the regional meeting in Banja Koviljaca (end of May), with the participation

of organizations that actively participate in the continuation of the process of WC and numerous other bilateral working meetings.

Part IV: Working meetings of Women in Black: As leaders of program activities in continuation of the process of WC, held working meetings (reporting activities, preparation of publications, documents and archives of WC, prepares regional meetings of witness, prepares Women book of testimonies, the coordination of the working group for making a documentary film about WC, etc.

Part V: Video Activism

Video activism which includes the implementation of video material related to feminist approach to justice; includes the translation and subtitling of documentaries about the experiences of non-violent movement against the impunity of crimes, neoliberal economic globalization, etc. In this reporting period following documentaries were made:

- Production of individual testimonies: includes 30 individual testimonies at the Women's Court in Sarajevo in May 2015 in total of 12 hours and 15 minutes.
- Work on the documentary Women's Court - in this period, there were 10 working meetings in Belgrade, in the premises of Women in Black (Audio materials, shared vision, design, drafting working version of the film, etc.).

Part VI: Women's book of testimonies: work on the book in coordination of Women in Black includes the following segments:

- Editing of testimonies: the testimonies for which the witness gave consent were examined, changes were made in accordance with the suggestions of the witness, footnotes are reviewed by associate of the Women's Court Masa Malesevic, etc.
- Documents from the Women's Court: decisions and recommendations of the International panel of judges were gathered.
- Texts of associates of WC: reviewed, followed by an English translation.
- Other elements: analysis of continuing of the process, and the text on the work of the feminist therapeutic team of WC is under work, etc.

Part VII: Participation of the witness and the organizers of WC in the activities of the Women in Black (street actions, visiting the crime scenes, the educational programs ...)

1. Meeting of the Network of Women in Black: February 5th-7th: The witness from Serbia, Croatia (Milica Miladinović, Marica Šeatović), Bosnia and Herzegovina (Kadefa Rizvanović, Reiha Avdic, Suvada Selimovic, Saha Hrustić), Slovenia (Mirjana Učakar) participated, as well as the organizers of WC (Violca Krasniqi, Kosovo, Nela Pamuković, Zagreb).

2. Women's Peace Meetings:

- *Vrnjačka banja, March 18th-20th*: Milica Miladinović i Jovanka Carevic from Croatian and witnesses from Serbia
- *Pašina Česma, near Leskovac, April 15th-17th*: Jasminka Bogdanovska, Marionka Atanasovka and Savka Todorovska from Macedonia
- *Bečej, May 13th-15th*: Kadefa Rizvanović, Edina Karic, Jadranka Milicevic from Bosnia and Herzegovina and witness from Vojvodina
- *Bečej (Vojvodina), 13, 14 and 15 May*: Kadefa Rizvanović, Edina Karic, Jadranka Milicevic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as witness from Vojvodina.
- *Prizren (Kosovo) 24, 25 and 26 June*: witness participated in the WC from Kosovo, as well as witness Marijonka Anastasovska from Veles, Macedonia

3. Women build peace together - support of Women in Black

- *Đulići, February 19th* - (Suvada Selimovic, Saha Hrustić, Reiha Avdic, Šehida Abdurahmanović)
- *Đulići, May 2nd* - (Suvada Selimovic, Saha Hrustić, Reiha Avdic, Šehida Abdurahmanović, witness at the WC from BiH).

4. Street actions

- *Belgrade, February 8th - protest against the rehabilitation of Milan Nedića* (Marica Šeatović, Milica Miladinović, Nela Pamuković)
- *Belgrade, March 21st - "We want open borders, not a fortress Europe"*, on the occasion of the International Day against Racism, Women in Black organized a peace action, dedicated to the refugees from the Middle East, Croatian witness Milica Miladinović i Jovanka Carevic, as well as the organizer of WC Nela Pamuković took part
- *Krusevac, May 16th* - participation of witnesses and activists from Krusevac on peace action "We remember the brave resistance of women"

o Leskovac, May 24th - witness participation from Leskovac and Krusevac on feminist-militarist march "Everything for Peace, Health and Knowledge - Nothing for Arms"

Belgrade, Krusevac, Leskovac, May 18th - witness of WC took part in feminist action against femicide.

o Belgrade, July 10th - "We will never forget the genocide in Srebrenica.

(For all the above actions can be found details in chapter "Street actions" of this report).

5. Visiting places of crimes

- *February 8th* – *Vranic, Marica Š., Milica M., Nela P.* and other information already listed in the category "Street actions"

- *April 11th* - *Srebrenica, Bajramovići*, other information already listed in the category "Women's solidarity against the impunity of war crimes"

On 11 Julyth, Potocari / Srebrenica - witness of the WC from Serbia together with other activists from Women in Black Network Serbia attended the celebration of 21st anniversary of the genocide in Srebrenica.

Part VIII: Publishing

In this reporting period, we have arranged the following publications:

- Transcript of the regional meeting of the witness in Vrdnik - 16 pages
- Transcript of a discussion circle "A feminist feminist movement then and now" - 12 pages
- Transcript of promotion of Women's Court in Novi Sad - 7 pages
 - The report on the activities within the continuation of the process of WC in English (from May 2015 to February 2016, 16 pages)
 - Regional Meeting on Women's Court witness, Banja Koviljača, May 2016 - report (35 pages).

Belgrade, October 7th, Centre for Cultural Decontamination – for the Belgrade Women in Black (WiB) 25 year anniversary, a documentary film screening was organized for the "Women's Court – Feminist Approach to Justice" (52 minutes), directed by Filip Markovinovic, and produced by WiB (2016). The film is about the Women's Court (WC) that was held in Sarajevo from May 7th to 10th in 2015. After the screening, there was a discussion in which witnesses from WC participated:

List of Witnesses...

WC Experts – Tanja Djuric Kuzmanovic, Novi Sad, Masa Malesevic, Belgrade

Members of the Organizing Committee of WC:

Bosnia & Herzegovina (Jadranka Milicevic)

Montenegro (Ljupka Kovacevic)

Croatia (Nela Pamukovic)

Serbia (Dasa Duhacek, Stasa Zajovic)

Activists from the entire region participated, and there were about one hundred people in the audience for this event.

The discussion was moderated by: Dasa Duhacek, Belgrade, and Ljupka Kovacevic, Kotor, Montenegro

Ljubljana/Slovenia, October 16th 2016

The public screening of Women's Court – Feminist Approach to Justice was held in the Social Centre "Rog". The film (52 minutes) was screened, followed by a discussion in which the following WC witnesses participated: Mirjana Ucakar (Slovenia), Milica Miladinovic, Marica Seatovic, and Jovanka Carevic from Croatia, organizers of WC from Croatia (Nela Pamukovic and Marijana Senjak), and Stasa Zajovic from Serbia. There were approximately fifty (50) people in attendance at this event.

Pljevlja, Montenegro, October 22nd 2016

The public screening of Women's Court – Feminist Approach to Justice was held in the NGO "Bonafide" space. The film (52 minutes) was screened, followed by a discussion in which the following WC witnesses participated: Sabina Talovic, Pljevlja, and Bonasa Dzigal, Priboj, Serbia, organizers and WiB activists from Belgrade: Senka Knezevic, Stasa Zajovic, and Violeta Djikanovic, and activists from Pljevalja, Bijelog Polja. There were approximately (25) people in attendance at this event.

Women in Black, October 2016