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Citizenship as (Not)Belonging? Contesting the Replication of Gendered and Ethnicised Exclusions in Post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina

Maria-Adriana Deiana

Introduction

In recent years scholars have sought to rethink, expand and reshape the idea of citizenship, challenging its exclusionary impasse and reigniting its relevance in the contemporary global moment.[1] Feminist theorists have striven to reformulate citizenship through the lens of gender and to mobilise the language of citizenship to produce a more nuanced and inclusive concept, which is shaped by different axes of identity and multiple senses of belonging (Pateman, 1988; Young, 1989, 2000; Siim, 2000; Siim and Squires, 2008). In this they have succeeded in producing multidimensional understandings that transcend the strictly institutional domain of formal politics to include the broader historical, cultural, social and personal contexts which shape notions and practices of citizenship (Halsaa, Roseneil and Sumer, 2012). These theoretical endeavours identify citizenship as a dialogical and heterogeneous process (Mouffe, 2005) that encompasses multilayered identities and multiple senses of belonging (Yuval-Davis, 1999). Importantly, they also envisage instances of emancipatory politics, participation and political agency in a broad variety of locales (Lister, 2003).

Feminist interrogations of citizenship also suggest framing feminist politics and theory outside the boundaries of the nation-state. Operating in the global arena through the paradigm of human rights, feminists have critically engaged with cosmopolitan ideals of citizenship

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embodying promises of equality, peace and justice in responses to challenges posed by globalisation (e.g. Spike Peterson, 1990; Grewal, 1999; Hilsdon et al., 2000; Stivens, 2000; Zalewsky, 2004; Reilly, 2007). In the context of post-conflict transformation, feminist concerns about women's citizenship have been at the core of a transnational feminist campaign that was instrumental in obtaining the UN's commitment to addressing issues such as gender mainstreaming in all peace-keeping and peace-building operations, women's empowerment and participation in peace processes, and women's security and protection from violence in post-conflict environment (Cockburn, 2007; Tryggestad, 2009).[2] Post-war settings therefore become important sites in which to examine the local and international dynamics that frame women's status and that construct possibilities for achieving an inclusive and equitable form of citizenship in the transition to peace.

In this endeavour we must take into consideration the ambivalent and gendered forces at play in the shift from war to peace. Firstly, not only do post-conflict environments inherit wounds and trauma produced by the war, but often once there is official "peace" there is a continuation of, or even an increase in, violence against women (Cockburn, 2000; Cockburn and Zarcov, 2002; Enloe, 2002; Handrahan, 2004). Secondly, there is the persistence of demands placed upon men and women to conform to specific heteronormative roles developed during the war (for example, as defenders and symbols of the nation), alongside the dramatic shift in identities required by the end of the war, as combatants are trained to adjust to civilian life, and women are expected to go back to fulfil their traditional roles (Handrahan, 2004). Thirdly, like conflict, the post-war phase also affects women and men in different ways, so that while women become more susceptible to poverty, prostitution and human trafficking, men may consolidate their power during this phase (Cockburn, 2000: 40).

Addressing these ambivalent dynamics should be central to a re-conceptualisation of citizenship in the transition to peace. However, despite feminist hopes, post-conflict political transformation is often a story of missed opportunities (Cockburn, 2002; Rees, 2002). In fact, in failing to address the centrality of gender in the discourse that justifies the disposition to war in contemporary societies, post-conflict political frameworks simply reproduce the same logic underpinning the interlinked phenomena of nationalism, militarisation and conflict (Cockburn, 2010). In doing so the creation of the so-called peace often reifies the very gender order, which, relying on notions of masculinity (associated with aggression, authority, violence) and

femininity (associated with the idea of the inferiorised/passive Other, victim and mother of the nation), underpins notions of citizenship during times of ethno-nationalism and conflict.

Post-conflict transformation also raises questions about the validity and desirability of framing citizenship discourses and practices exclusively within the logic of international human rights. Although the transition to peace entails the institutionalisation of gender equality mechanisms and women's human rights, these often remain "cosmetic" changes, confined to the constitutional and institutional framework and/or they encounter obstacles at the implementation level (Cockburn, 2002; Rees, 2002). It follows that, despite the democratic intentions that characterise their legal and institutional provisions, post-conflict settlements retain the processes of exclusion perpetrated in the broader political, cultural and social contexts that determine the nature and understanding of citizenship. Secondly, given that the implementation of human rights standards and international law is dependent on the nation-state, the mobilisation of human rights discourse is not sufficient to resolve the exclusionary processes embedded in ethno-nationalist politics.

The case of Bosnia-Herzegovina (Bosnia-Herzegovina) is particularly significant precisely because it provides an illustration of the contradictory dynamics shaping women's citizenship in the transition from conflict to peace. In fact, the political settlement achieved through the internationally sponsored Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA) has retained, reproduced and institutionalised elements of the gender order embedded in the radical ethno-nationalist discourses that led to the war in 1992. By entrenching ethno-nationalism(s) as dominant political narratives, the post-conflict transformation has failed to address the centrality of gender in the process that saw the emergence of nationalist politics and the consequent escalation of war. Therefore, despite the democratic outlook and the commitment to internationally binding gender equality mechanisms for the protection of women's human rights, the Dayton political framework retains a notion of citizenship that is not only explicitly ethnicised but also implicitly gendered. The peace has both reduced citizenship to a logic of ethno-national belonging that relies on the construction of women as passive subjects and victims, and the mobilisation of human rights has not been successful in resolving the inescapable exclusions embedded in nationalist politics and addressing the gendered legacy of conflict.

Does this mean, then, that we should declare Dayton's peace a story of missed opportunities for (our) feminist hopes to mobilise citizenship as

a language for political action and belonging? I start form the premise that even in the context of nationalism, war and violence, it is possible to identify dynamics of women's agency and belonging that resist hegemonic notions of citizenship. Drawing on evidence gathered in Bosnia-Herzegovina,[3] I argue that precisely at this juncture of the so-called peace we can identify instances of women's and feminist activism that destabilise and challenge dominant understanding and practices of citizenship. But this is only possible if we adopt a vision of citizenship that transcends institutionalised discourses and practices and pays attention to the significance of broader social, cultural and personal contexts in determining citizens' multiple and shifting identities and belonging. We must also envision citizenship as a lived experience that entails instances of agency, empowerment and participation. Only such a multidimensional understanding will allow us to critically assess the exclusionary, ethnicised and gendered processes embedded in the transition from ethno-national conflict to peace, and to identify practices that disturb and challenge hegemonic citizenship discourses and practices.

This chapter is divided into three sections. I first provide a context to the Bosnian war and discuss the nature of the citizenship regime achieved with the DPA. In doing so I draw on the literature that problematises the replication of ethno-nationalism as a dominant political narrative and discuss the exclusionary implications associated with the notion of ethnic citizenship. I then go on to argue that these elements of continuity between war and peace are complicated if we take into consideration the gender order underpinning the rise of ethno-national rhetoric and the consequent explosion of ethnic conflict. I discuss the shortcomings of Dayton's citizenship regime in addressing the ambivalent gendered dynamics of the transition to peace. Finally, I discuss instances of women's and feminist mobilisation that challenge and resist Dayton's citizenship regime.

Citizenship as ethno-National belonging: the continuities between war and peace

Often incorrectly and problematically described through the trope of resurgent ancient hatreds, the Bosnian war must be understood as a result of complex economic, political and social dynamics that led to emergence of nationalist parties and the implosion of the Former Yugoslavia, in the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall. There is a considerable literature that analyses the political and economic vicissitudes surrounding the rise of nationalist parties in the Republics of the Former

Yugoslavia and leading to the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina (e.g. Silber and Little, 1996; Campbell, 1998; Kaldor, 2001). The Bosnian war can be described, albeit somewhat simplistically, as a result of competing ethno-national projects developed by political parties, initially in neighbouring Serbia and Croatia, and which later gained power in Bosnia-Herzegovina at the first multiparty election in 1990. These political parties relied on the language and sentiments of self-determination in the name of the Bosnian Serbs, the Bosnian Croats and the Bosnian Muslim (Bosniaks), in a process which led to a "totalitarian nationalist occupation of citizens' identity" (Papić, 1994). Julie Mostov provides a useful description of the politics of national identity in the former Yugoslavia as ethnocracy – "a particular type of rule in which power is concentrated in the hands of leaders successful in promoting themselves as uniquely qualified to define and defend the (ethno)national interests, and in which the ruled are collective bodies defined by common culture, history religion, myths and presumed descent" (Mostov, 1999: 89). It could be argued that Bosnian nationalism developed in reaction to nationalist projects of partitioning ethnically mixed Bosnia-Herzegovina into homogeneous parts to be annexed to a Serbia-dominated rump Yugoslavia and Croatia. In an attempt to preserve Bosnia's integrity, the European Community supported the process of obtaining independence. Despite Serbian opposition, independence was agreed after a referendum thanks to an unstable alliance between Bosniaks and Croats. Sadly, the declaration of independence resulted in Bosnia's descent into war. The conflict, which lasted from 6 April 1992 to 12 October 1995, had enormous human costs, killing hundreds of civilians, displacing around two-thirds of the population and seeing the perpetration of widespread violations of human rights, such as forced detention, rape and torture (Kaldor, 2001).

In 1995 a peace accord put an end to the Bosnian war. Reached under the auspices of the United States, the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA) established a post-conflict political settlement and new institutions for Bosnia-Herzegovina. The underlying principle of the agreement is consociationalism, which identifies techniques to deal with ethnic conflict and severely divided societies by building a consensus democracy and giving primacy to collectivities rather than individual citizens (e.g. Lijphart, 1977). On the basis of a consociational settlement, with power-sharing provisions for the three main ethnic groups (Bosnian Serbs, the Bosnian Croats and the Bosnian Muslim or Bosniaks), the Dayton settlement established a single multi-ethnic state with a second tier of local government.[4] It devises an executive made of a grand

coalition in which representatives of the dominant ethnic groups hold a mutual veto for decisions which may run counter their (perceived) "national interest". It ensures ethnic proportionality in the allocation of office in all institutions, and grants ethnic autonomy on certain issues, such as language, culture and education.[5]

Drawing on the western principles of liberalism, the DPA aimed at creating the unified state of Bosnia and Herzegovina and a common identity based on liberal democratic values (Paris, 2004; Guzina, 2007). However, the very understanding of the Bosnian war as an intractable ethno-national conflict has produced a specific post-conflict solution, which, achieved under the auspices of the international community, worked to reproduce and reify the same logic underpinning the escalation of conflict and furthered the very nationalist projects which the international community aimed to contest (Campbell, 1998). The replication of ethno-nationalism as dominant political discourse in the transition from conflict to peace has exclusionary implications for non-nationalist identities and belonging.

The constitutional arrangements constructed through Dayton produced a notion of citizenship that is mainly understood in ethnic terms, with important implications (Bieber, 2006; Belloni, 2007; Guzina, 2007; Mujkić, 2007; Sarajlić, 2010a, b). Despite references to the protection of human rights, ethno-nationalism has circumscribed what citizenship is de facto. In ensuring ethnic proportionality in all institutions and in the voting system, the Dayton framework has worked to entrench ethnicity as the primary dimension of citizens' identity. For instance, the Constitution defines the Serbs, the Croats and the Bosniaks, together with "The Others", as the constituent peoples of the multiethnic state of Bosnia and Herzegovina. As a result citizens are encouraged, and in some instances required, to identify themselves as either Bosniaks, Croats or Serbs or alternatively to be included in the category of "The Others", which was officially designed to identify ethnic minorities such as the Roma, the Jewish and the Turkish communities. According to the law, the key state institutions are composed exclusively of members of the three dominant groups; it follows that "individuals of Jewish, Roma, or any other origin, or simply individuals who do not want to state their ethnicity are disenfranchised to elect their group representatives in the country's political institutions" (Sarajlić, 2010a: 24).[6] The exclusionary enactments embedded in the Dayton citizenship regime emerge in the broader political, social and cultural context defining citizens' identity and participation, which, as Sarajlić argues, remain circumscribed by ethnic allegiances (Sarajlić, 2010a,b). The primacy of ethnicity is in fact

visible in many aspects of political life in Bosnia-Herzegovina – not only in housing segregation and voting, but also in culture, written and spoken language and education.[7] Furthermore, this approach has resulted in the reinforcement of the power of nationalist oligarchies and the preservation of ethno-national discourses within the politics of Bosnia-Herzegovina. This has produced a highly divisive political life, in which dominant nationalist parties continue to mobilise the legacy of conflict and negative constructions of "the Ethnic Other" in order to ensure support for nationalist politics. For instance, examples of this rhetoric were clearly visible during the 2010 general election campaign, which saw the nationalist parties engaged in continuously stirring hurtful memories of Bosnia-Herzegovina's turbulent past and creating a politics of fear to secure votes. After the election results, disputes over the ethnic composition of the executive in the Federation led to a continued political deadlock which was only recently resolved with an accord that, once again, reinforces the power base of nationalist parties.

So, despite deploying inclusive and democratic traits which emphasise the liberal values of democracy, individuality and human rights, the Dayton citizenship regime has reproduced in times of peace the same exclusivist definition of citizenship rooted in ethno-nationalism with exclusionary implications for citizenship rights, identity and participation. In the section that follows I argue that these elements of continuity are further complicated if we take into consideration the gender order underpinning the emergence of nationalist politics in the 1990s, the explosion of conflict and the establishment of the so-called peace.

Rethinking citizenship in war and peace: Dayton and the (neglected) centrality of gender

The development of ethno-national discourses and the escalation of conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina highlights the highly gendered political and cultural context that shapes understandings of citizenship as ethno-national belonging. It is possible to trace elements of continuity between the emergence of nationalist rhetoric, the explosion of conflict and the transition to relative "peace". In fact I argue that, having entrenched the nationalists' grip on power and institutionalised a notion of citizenship understood mainly in ethno-national terms, the DPA has also implicitly replicated elements of that gender order and has failed to address gender as a salient category in the interrelated phenomena of ethno-nationalism and armed conflict.

Within ethno-national narratives, citizenship becomes associated with notions of national essence and powerful constructions of ethnic and national identities that rely on specific ideas of femininity and masculinity. Research suggests that ethno-national discourses are inherently problematic when we utilise gender as analytical prism (e.g. Jawardena, 1986; Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1989; Enloe, 1989; Kandiyoti, 1996; Yuval-Davis, 1997). In the 1990s, with the emergence of nationalist discourses in the Former Yugoslavia, particular notions of femininity and masculinity were crucial to the production of ethnic identity that took place through a concerted media campaign orchestrated by nationalist elites, and this continued in the subsequent phase of conflict (Kesić, 1999; Zarcov, 2007). For instance, political posters, slogans and articles mainly featuring representations of the nation as a woman and exalting motherhood as a national duty burgeoned in the main media outlets (Zarcov, 2007). In the lead up to the Bosnian war, gender played an integral part in the nation-building process whereby women and women's bodies became abstract symbols for the nation, vessels for its reproduction and markers of national honour and identity (Milić, 1993; Mostov, 1999). By contrast men were defined through heroic metaphors, such as guardians, warriors and saviours of the nation, which produced manliness and virility as the canon for the "proper" male citizen (Mostov, 1999). This had implications not only for defining parameters of belonging but also for the silencing of dissident and non-nationalist voices. In fact, women were among the main targets of ferocious media campaigns, which were orchestrated by the nationalist elites to discredit dissidents who dared to reject and openly challenge nationalist rhetoric (Kesić, 1999). This sort of criticism was received with hostility precisely because it was voiced by women, i.e. by those who were constructed mainly as symbols of the nation and vessels for its reproduction within nationalist logic (Lukić, 2006). Feminists, women anti-war activists and anti-nationalists were therefore accused of being traitors of the homeland, identified as "suspect" citizens and portrayed as witches, an image that in the media, popular culture and political debates became the epitome of the "trouble-making", outspoken and anti-nationalist woman and stood in opposition to the trope of the "good national(ist)" woman (Kesić, 1999). Specific norms of masculinity and femininity were therefore crucial in determining the broader political and cultural context shaping notions of ethno-national identity and in defining the parameters of belonging to the ethno-national collectivity, reducing the space of citizens' agency and concentrating the power in the hands of a few selected ethnocrats (Mostov, 1999). Through nationalist rhetoric the

rights and sense of belonging of individual citizens were subsumed under ideas of collective (ethno-national) interest.

With the explosion of conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina nationalist rhetoric retained the notions of masculinity (associated with aggression, authority, violence,) and femininity, (associated with the idea of inferiorised/passive Other, symbol, mother and victim of the nation), which then became a key foundation for violence and war against opposing ethnic groups. Accordingly, the war enacted an escalation from the discursive construction of women as markers of collective identity and honour, to the physical targeting of women through violence, which included the use of rape, a war strategy employed to annihilate "the other ethnic/nation".

However, women's stake in nationalism and ethnic-conflict is more complex than just being objects in the ideological manipulation of ethno-national belonging, both in general and in the case of the Yugoslav wars. There women's experiences of ethno-nationalism included active involvement, so that with the entrenchment of nationalist ideologies and the escalation of conflict, women's stake took different forms. As discussed, some women were involved in dissident circles (Devic, 2010), while feminists and peace activists started to organise against the rising nationalist propaganda (Milić, 1993; Slapşak, 1997, 2002; Korac, 2003, 2006). During the Bosnian war, women's groups provided humanitarian aid, in some instances working across the ethnic divide, while some women also participated in the conflict as soldiers and fighters (Zarcov, 2007). Women's experiences of war in Bosnia-Herzegovina therefore should not be inscribed exclusively within the trope of victimhood and passive acceptance. These in fact also include dynamics of agency whereby women began to disturb the nationalist logic, which re-inscribed notions of femininity in the private sphere, reducing their identities to that of mothers and victims of the Nation, and reclaim an active role as citizens in response to the state of emergency caused by the conflict.

Despite the complex gender dynamics highlighted in the emergence of nationalism and the explosion of ethnic conflict, the peace negotiations did not include gender as key dimension for addressing the legacy of the Bosnian war and building sustainable peace (Kvinna til Kvinna, 2000). This is far from surprising given that, from the onset of negotiations, the Dayton peace process was a politico-military settlement that mainly aimed to put an end to the war. Accordingly the final document of the DPA failed to address the varied impact of conflict on

men and women, include specific measures to tackle the gender dynamics embedded in the transition from war to peace and ensure women's participation in the peace process (Chinkin and Paradine, 2001).

For instance, as an analysis commissioned by the feminist NGO Kvinna til Kvinna illustrates (Kvinna til Kvinna, 2000), despite reference to key human rights documents such as The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the accord was characterised by a gender-neutral language. As such there was a lack of specific provisions for the inclusion of women in the key institutions. Additionally, no specific measures were included to address the impact of conflict in women's lives, for instance in relation to legal processes in cases of women victims-survivors of acts of violence during conflict. Despite the evidence of rape being overtly employed as a war strategy, which led to its declaration as a crime against humanity in the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), there was no specific reference to the complex legacies of rape during the conflict. Despite the fact that women (often widowed and/or primary carers for the elderly and children) were the majority among refugees and displaced persons, the provisions for the right to return and to property did not include specific gender-sensitive measures in order to address possible challenges arising from their vulnerability to violence, exploitation and social stigma. Finally the agreement gave little attention to the role of civil society in ensuring sustainable peace and therefore overlooked the evidence of women's active involvement in anti-nationalist protests and humanitarian activism, in some cases also across the ethnic divide (Kivinna til Kvinna, 2000)

Chinkin and Paradine's (2001) work supports this critique of the gendered exclusions of the notion of citizenship embedded in the DPA, and contend that the reliance on human rights in addressing particular aspects women's citizenship in the aftermath of conflict raises a major problem regarding the lack of accountability of international institutions and the enforceability of international mechanisms which, ultimately, lays on the nation-state. This suggests that changes in the legal and institutional framework in compliance with human rights standards, however important they may be, are not sufficient for resolving the broader gender inequality of nationalist politics and the perpetration of gender stereotypes in political and cultural life. And the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina provides a clear example of these dynamics, which are further exacerbated by the contested and politicised legacy of conflict.

In fact, since the signing of the agreement, lobbying from local and international women's groups led to the creation of a Gender Co-ordination Group (1999) which, in liaison with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), took upon the task of addressing Dayton's gender shortcomings in the implementation of the agreement (Kvinna til Kvinna, 2000: 29). Inclusion within the EU enlargement process and membership of the Council of Europe meant that Bosnia-Herzegovina was required conform to the EU strategy for gender equality (2000). This led to the creation of a multi-level institutional gender mechanism, the adoption of the Law on Gender Equality by the Bosnia-Herzegovina parliament (2003) and the development of a national Gender Action Plan (2006) informed by CEDAW, The Beijing Platform for Action and to an extent by UN Security Council Resolution 1325 – Women, Peace and Security (Žene Ženama, 2007).

The creation of institutionalised strategies and legal gender mechanisms has certainly contributed to enhancing women's human rights, making women and gender concerns visible in the public and institutional sphere. However, these important changes in the legal understanding of citizenship have not resulted in fully transforming the exclusionary nature of citizenship. This is because, although on legal and constitutional levels gender equality is well regulated through CEDAW and the Gender Action Plan, broader changes outside the strictly legal domain are difficult to achieve. While difficulties in the full implementation of gender mechanisms and women's human rights standards are experienced everywhere, in the context of Bosnia-Herzegovina, these challenges are exacerbated by the entrenchment of ethno-nationalism and the complex legacy of conflict which remains politicised and contested. For instance, research reports that successive governments have failed to appropriately address important issues which are a direct legacy of war, such as the status of survivors of war-time sexual violence and the protection of women from human trafficking networks; it highlights discrepancies in the law and identifies women survivors as one of the most marginalised group in today's Bosnia-Herzegovina (e.g. Amnesty International, 2009; Žene Ženama, 2011).

Also, by entrenching ethno-national discourses, the transition to peace has implicitly encouraged the persistence of the construction of gender that underpins ethno-nationalist politics. For instance, a local gender expert whom I interviewed reported that nationalist parties continue to pursue different strategies and policies that relegate women's role to motherhood and that narrowly define the acceptable parameters of women's behaviour:

> The nationalist parties are trying to do their best to mask their misogyny and male chauvinism by supporting some programmes which are going to give some financial support to women who give birth to children. These are social welfare programmes, you know, and are constantly around the role of women as a mother. These ideological projects are also a huge pressure on women on how they should behave in order to respond to the role of a good Bosnian woman, good Croatian woman or good Serbian woman. There is a list of things that you have to do to be a good Serbian, Croatian, Bosniak woman and I think that this is making huge pressure on women, and huge expectations on how they should behave.

Another interviewee, an international activist with a long-standing professional and personal involvement in the civil society of Bosnia-Herzegovina, suggests that the transition to peace has entailed a backlash in terms of women's visibility and roles, confirming the ambivalent dynamics of post-conflict transformation discussed earlier:

> I think this applies everywhere, but perhaps here you can see it more clearly. This is certainly a very patriarchal country with strong sexism which in some ways is worse than during the war. Well this is because war creates some extraordinary situations: men are at war and women stay at home, in this way women become more visible and exposed. When I was working in Croatia I worked mainly with women. When I moved here, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, to work with local people I must say that the majority of them were men because the war was over and they had all come back. Therefore, unless you work in a predominantly female environment or on women's projects and issues, you immediately realise that peace has had a backlash on women in terms of visibility, representation and presence in public space.

Furthermore, my research suggests that strong social pressure is in place to silence and discredit women and feminists who dare to openly critique the correlations between the current status quo, the nationalist grip on power and the gender inequalities underlying nationalist politics. For instance, in an account which recalls the ostracising tactics of the years preceding the war, one interviewee working in the media described how she became the target of a personal attack, directed by the media supportive of nationalist positions, for her outspoken critique of the power of nationalist leaders and episodes of corruption.

On a previous occasion, the 2008 Sarajevo Queer Festival had to be cancelled because of the controversial and threatening atmosphere surrounding the event, which led to threats and physical attacks against festival organiser and individuals who attended the opening night by hooligans and Islamic extremists (Wahhabi groups). While official statements linked the controversy to the perceived incompatibility (both in terms of timing and ideologically) of the festival with religious events, the incident suggests strong links between religious conservatism and nationalist politics in a "hunt of the Other" (Ferrara, 2008).

This evidence supports the argument that, despite the democratic outlook, the citizenship regime of post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina retains powerful constructions of femininity and masculinity and operates exclusions not only on the grounds of ethnicity but also of gender. But this also suggests that focusing exclusively on the legal dimension does not illuminate the broader political, cultural and social context which determines the nature and understanding of citizenship. Particularly it does not take into consideration the cultural and social assumptions which define citizenship in terms of identity and belonging, and it does not illuminate citizenship as a set of lived practices that might also develop outside institutionalised locales. The following section will discuss these dimensions of women's lived citizenship in the context of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Subverting the national(ist) ideal?: citizenship as pluralist and emancipatory practices

The case of Bosnia-Herzegovina shows that the legacy of war can reinforce traditional gender inequalities and produce profound societal division, where conflict may challenge traditional gender orders and force new roles and capabilities on women (Cockburn, 2000: 69). In this way there can be no presumption that "peace" is "better" than conflict. We know that during the war, women were not mere victims but were called upon to fulfil different roles; such as breadwinners, combatants, peace activists, humanitarian assistance, support groups, etc. (Kumar, 2001; Afshar, 2003). While there is a tendency to revert to traditional roles and to compel women to retreat from public life, the post-war moment also offers women possibilities for engagement in response to devastation and humanitarian emergency, and in other civil society groups. These facets exemplify the ambivalent dynamics of women's experiences of war (of both victimhood and agency) and suggest that even in the context of victimhood, such as it is created by war and

ethno-nationalism, it is possible to identify instances whereby women retain political agency. I argue that this mobilisation, developed "outside" the boundaries of dominant discourses and practices, constitutes an empowering enactment of citizenship.

Within this logic a focus on agency, even if/when constrained by a situation of violence and victimhood, is crucial if we are to recast women as political agents and understand citizenship as an empowering and lived practice (Lister, 2003). However, our search for agency should not be limited to instances of "women organising as women, for women, and on women's issues" (Cockburn, 2002: 71). In fact I contend that women's and feminist citizenship claims can also be framed in a wider context of political agency and struggle. In this critical framework solidarities can be crafted through a multiplicity of subject positions and political perspectives. Thus citizenship also includes heterogeneous practices which attempt to continuously resist the inescapable exclusionary processes embedded in the nation-state and ethno-nationalism.

Lister's participatory model of citizenship provides a sound framework for analysing women's experiences of post-conflict transformation, particularly because we know that women were not exclusively victims of the Bosnian conflict (Milić, 1993; Helms, 2003; Korac, 2003, 2006). As argued earlier, women's organising during and in the aftermath of the Bosnian war was clearly the site where women challenged the very nationalist logics which cast them as victims and passive subjects, becoming activists around gender issues. Women's political agency in the immediate aftermath of the Bosnian war occurred mainly through the creation of informal groups, initially to deal with the humanitarian emergency arising from the conflict (Walsh, 2001). This mobilisation can be traced back to the anti-war demonstrations in the wake of Yugoslavia's violent break-up in Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia, which involved the first generation of Yugoslav feminists together with younger women, students, mothers of soldiers and, later, refugees.(e.g. Slapşak, 1997; Einhorn and Sever, 2003; Helms, 2003a; Cockburn, 2007; Dević, 2010). While the occurrence of ethnic atrocities during the war led to the division of some women's groups along ethnic fault lines, a good number of women's and feminist organisations remained in opposition to ethno-nationalist rhetoric and thus found ways to cooperate across the ethnic divide. Maja Korac provides a poignant description of women's agency as a "politics of small steps" (Korac, 2006: 516), which captures the informal and non-institutionalised character of women's groups and aptly describes a kind of activism born

out of the "exceptional" situation of the war. During the interviews activists recounted how they took on new roles. They learnt how to respond to the emergency arising from the conflict, as well as to deal with their personal/collective plight caused by violence, trauma and the extreme politicisation of ethno-national identities. They had to find new strategies and re-invent activism, as one feminist with a long-standing involvement in the movement of the Former Yugoslavia puts it:

> We had to do it all over again, *de nouveau* as the French say, and to start doing activism in a different way.

Despite some limitations identified by a number of key scholars,[8] these new dynamics of women's activism are therefore crucial in destabilising the gendered conception of citizenship and the repression of women's agency underpinning the dominant ethno-national discourses. In line with the shift of the international approach to civil society building and its focus on creating an NGO sector (Belloni, 2002; Fagan, 2005), women's groups became among the main beneficiaries of international funds and training in the process of Dayton's implementation. This led to the bourgeoning of recognised women's NGOs, which are currently active in different areas of intervention, such as domestic violence, women's political participation, women and culture, youth and education, leadership, victims groups, transitional justice, to name but a few. Activists who were interviewed recounted moments when women's groups have been successful in collectively working around common issues and towards specific goals. For instance, within this logic local women and feminist NGOs organised a collective multi-level advocacy campaign on the introduction of gender quotas, which laid the ground for the adoption of the Law on Gender Equality in 2003 as required by the membership in the Council of Europe. Another achievement is the existence of an effective network of cooperation across the two entities (the Bosniak Croat Federation and the Bosnian Serb Republika Srpska) tackling the pressing issue of domestic violence. However, the highly divisive nature of ethno-nationalism and the legacy of the conflict present challenges to the development of a common political agenda. As one interviewee contends:

> There isn't a strong and collective political platform (of NGOs) and this applies also to women's groups. It is true that there are some women's associations who know how to work. Without them the law on domestic violence would have not been passed. Also, the

> creation of the gender mechanism would have not been successful without women's groups working together. The fundamental issue is that women's groups are working pretending or not wanting to see this, avoiding opening this Pandora box of identity. This could be a good thing if it were part of a strategic vision, i.e. let's not create this conflict, we don't know how to deal with this aspect of ethnic identity therefore let's work on other issues. Within this logic there have been some achievements. However there is a lack of a common vision when political and other issues force us to deal with the contentious issue of identity.

While some local feminists who were interviewed argue for the necessity to initiate a clear and more radical collective stand against ethno-nationalist politics, it also appears that some women's groups are wary of openly challenging nationalist elites:

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

Evidence from my field research suggests that the highly divisive nature of ethno-nationalism and the legacy of the conflict, together with competitive allocation of international funds, present challenges to the creation of a pervasive women's movement and a common political agenda (Deiana, 2011). Nevertheless we must not lose sight to the fact that, as suggested by some of my interlocutors, women's groups continue to find strategies to circumvent the climate of hostility, to build strategic allegiances and to have an impact on their immediate reality. The campaign

for the Law on Gender Equality and the network against domestic violence provide only but a few examples of successful cooperation that illustrate instances of women's active involvement as citizens.

Moreover, the case of post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina provides further evidence of political agency grounded precisely in the refusal to accept the exclusionary logic that delimits the boundaries of identity and belonging. As highlighted earlier, by crystallising citizens' identity around the categories of three constituent people, the only "choice" for individuals who do not wish to be represented exclusively as Bosniaks, Croats or Serbs is to be associated with the category of "The Others". This applies to minority groups but it has now come to include also a larger number of people in Bosnia-Herzegovina. My interlocutors suggest that "the Others" constitute a heterogeneous group that represents individuals from mixed families, those who, being brought up in Socialist time, feel a deep attachment and sense of belonging to their Yugoslav identity and, generally, to any other individual who does not (or does not wish to) fit within the model of national(ist) citizen. As one activist poignantly states:

> We have this – the three musketeers Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks and then we have the Others. And this identity of the Others is never defined. We don't know WHO are the others. We know that the Others are not Croats, Muslims or Serbs obviously but this category was never defined. Croats, Serbs and Muslims are also written in male nouns, you know. So we can also claim, we can say that women are the category of others, but also Roma people, gay people, the whole LGBTIQ population, feminist, painters... you know you can put a lot of people in this category of The Others but it is not defined.

Indeed many feminist and women's activists seem to fall (and feel) precisely within the category of "the Others", which, they suggest, has now become the only subject position available to those who do not (wish to) belong to the dominant ethno-national communities. As argued earlier the constitutional provisions disenfranchise this heterogeneous group from electing representatives in key institutions. However, this should not be mistaken for a tale of disengagement and powerlessness. Instead it seems that identification with/as "the Others" becomes the subject position from where dissidents and those who are excluded can express a critical perspective on the pernicious essentialism of ethnic and religious identities, in the struggle to claim alternative senses of belonging.

Evidence from my field research suggests that the very condition/choice of "not belonging" becomes the foundation for re-enacting themselves as active citizens outside the boundaries of institutionalised practices of politics. This is possible through a number of heterogeneous collective actions which do not necessarily rely on one specific identity (such as women's groups) but rather on shared commitment to resist and disturb hegemonic discourses and practices of ethnonationalist citizenship. Some interviewees recounted their engagement in interventions which involve individuals, feminists, women's and grassroots organisations and include small scale projects, every-day activism, cultural initiatives, independent media and social networking. These instances are therefore representative of the "hopeful political practices", conceptualised by Jasmina Husanović to illustrate the effort to deal with "deep injuries and violent boundaries yet avoiding the trap of identitarian politics" in the context of Bosnia-Herzegovina (Husanović, 2009: 102).[9] I contend that, together with examples of a "politics of small steps" as enacted by certain women's groups, these hopeful engagements are crucial in highlighting new sites for political action whereby the gendered and ethnicised exclusions of dominant citizenship discourses and practice can be resisted. Accordingly I believe these interventions contribute to a re-imagining of citizenship rooted specifically in the "exceptional" history of Bosnia-Herzegovina's recent turbulent past, yet avoiding essentialism and exclusionary politics and encompassing a pluralist and anti-essentialist notion of citizenship beyond institutionalised practices and discourses.

Conclusion

This chapter has offered a feminist examination of the dynamics shaping women's citizenship in the context of transition from ethnonationalist conflict to peace. I have argued that studying citizenship in the case of post-conflict transformation is particularly important for feminist theory and praxis. Indeed, not only do post-conflict situations entail concerns about the gendered impact of violence and reconstruction, but as moments of social and political upheaval they also raise (feminist) hopes for the possibility of transforming gender power relations and reshaping society through principles of equality. These ambivalent forces are inevitably linked to the possibilities of constructing women's citizenship, conceptualised both as practice and as belonging, within the new political and social order. However, despite feminist hopes, the transition to peace often fails to address the centrality of

gender in the interlinked phenomena of ethno-nationalism, militarisation and conflict (Cockburn, 2010). In doing so, there can be no presumption that "peace" is better than "conflict".

At the same time, post-conflict environments, which are often characterised by high levels of international involvement, are emblematic of the contemporary challenges posed by globalisation to the concept of citizenship. This has led to feminist engagements with cosmopolitan ideals of citizenship that rely on the paradigm of human rights. I have suggested that if on the one hand the language of human rights has been mobilised transnationally to include women's rights, on the other hand the reliance on women's human rights standards raises questions about their enforceability, given that implementation remains a prerogative of the nation state, and their efficacy in addressing the broader political, social and cultural context shaping practices and understanding of citizenship. Accordingly, post-conflict situations raise questions about the validity and desirability of framing citizenship claims exclusively within this logic.

By focusing on the case of post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina, this chapter has grappled with the possibilities and limitations of mobilising the language of citizenship from a feminist perspective, in seeking to resolve the exclusionary enactments of ethno-national logic and to address the challenges posed by armed conflict. Bosnia-Herzegovina provides a crucial example because despite the democratic outlook of its institutional arrangements and the commitment to the protection of (women's) human rights, the post-conflict transformation has served to entrench ethno-national narratives as dominant political discourses and practices within institutions and individual and collective identities. In this way the consolidation of peace has led to a replication of the gender order, which underpinned the emergence of ethno-national discourse and the escalation of conflict with important implications for women's citizenship. Despite the later introduction of a series of legislative changes to address the shortcomings of Dayton, in compliance with key women's human rights document such as CEDAW and UN Resolution 1325 and as part of the broader EU gender equality strategies, these measures have not been successful in tackling the gender inequalities and stereotypes that permeate the broader social and political context of the Dayton citizenship regime.

This context therefore begs important questions for a feminist engagement with citizenship. If, on the one hand, the mobilisation of human rights is not sufficient to resolve the inescapably gendered and ethnicised exclusions embedded in nationalist politics and, if, on the

other hand, the peace has reduced citizenship to a logic of ethno-national belonging which compromises the possibilities of fully fledged citizenship for women and other individuals who do not (wish to) belong to one ethno-national community, then should we, as feminists, relinquish the notion of citizenship in order to find a new language for belonging and political agency?

I argue that it is precisely within these exclusionary and exceptional junctures of contemporary politics that we must find ways of resisting such practices and understandings of citizenship. This is only possible if we re-formulate the notion of citizenship to include a plurality of interventions that trouble traditional gender roles (and other power relations) and that attempt to reformulate solidarities without reifying national(ist) belonging. Clearly the global platform of human rights should not be abandoned; it should remain the site of continuous feminist mobilisation for political and institutional change. At the same time, women's organising in the aftermath of the Bosnian war illustrates the potential of political action grounded in critical engagement with collective and personal experiences of ethno-nationalism, conflict and violence. The exclusionary enactments of contemporary politics might not be resolved once and for all through human right and feminist interventions, but it is through a reformulated and pluralist notion of citizenship that we might start to enact our feminist visions for emancipation, resistance and change.

Notes

1. I would like to thank Giulia Carabelli, Sara Clavero and Roz Goldie for providing feedback on earlier drafts. Of course, any errors, omissions and inaccuracies remain my own responsibility.
2. In October 2000 commitments to address the gendered impact of conflict and peacebuilding were ratified in UN Security Council Resolution (SCR)1325; an eighteen point document that sets an agenda for women, peace and security. The United Nations recently confirmed these commitments through the ratification of UN SCR 1888 on the prevention of sexual violence in armed conflict (adopted in September, 2009) and of UN SCR 1889 on women's participation in peace processes (adopted in October, 2009).
3. This chapter draws on 25 in-depth interviews and ethnographic data that I gathered in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2010. I analysed this data in my doctoral thesis "Gender, Citizenship and the Promises of Peace: the Case of Post-Dayton Bosnia-Herzegovina" (Deiana, 2011). The interviewees were feminists, civil society activists, members of political parties, officials in (local and international) gender machinery institutions, academics, individuals working in cultural production and the media. All the interviewees shared an

interest in gender issues. The majority of interviewees were women. Most of the interviews were undertaken in English.

4. The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina is Available: http://www.ohr.int/dpa/default.asp?content_id= 380. The complex institutional structure includes two entities, the Bosniak Croat Federation (FBiH) and the Bosnian Serb Republika Srpska (RS) and the separate district of Brkčo. The creation of the two entities was a crucial condition which brought the nationalist leaders to the peace negotiations. The borders of the entities were painstakingly negotiated to mirror the territorial gains and ethnic composition achieved during the war through displacement and ethnic cleansing. Given the disputes over its strategic position at the border between the two entities and Serbia, the Brcko district was created as a (temporary) solution and remained under international supervision. The entities were recognised under the condition that the nationalist leaders would abandon their partitioning aspirations and recognise Bosnia-Herzegovina as a unified multiethnic state. Since the signing of the accord, state level institutions have been questioned and on a number of occasions political deadlock has threatened the very idea of a unified Bosnia-Herzegovina.
5. The DPA is similar to ongoing or attempted settlements in deeply divided societies such as Northern Ireland, Cyprus and Lebanon (Belloni, 2007; Bieber, 2006). The accord includes a highly-elaborate structure of eleven annexes aiming to deal with the wide array of post-conflict reconstruction tasks, including human rights protection, the rights of refugees and displaced persons, and civilian implementation. It is also important to note that the DPA was conceived as a transitional measure to stop the war. However, due to external and internal dynamics within Bosnia-Herzegovina, the original framework still in force today has only been marginally amended.
6. Two citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina who were prevented from being candidates for the Presidency and the House of Peoples of the Parliamentary Assembly allegedly solely on ground of their ethnic origins (as they were respectively of Roma and Jewish origin) applied to the EU Courts of Human Rights. The court decided that the constitutional law is in breach of the European Human Rights Convention and recommended changes in the constitutional provisions.(Sarajlić, 2010a) However, as of 2011, Bosnia-Herzegovina's successive governments had not reached an agreement on the constitutional changes. As argued, this illustrates that the enforcement of human rights does not preclude the role of the nation state.
7. For instance, in the context of education different curricula exist for students belonging to different "ethnicities" on a number of subjects, such as history. This has led to the so called "two schools under one roof" system whereby joint classes are held for "universal" topics (e.g. mathematics), while students are divided according to their "ethno-national" belonging to be taught different (and possibly competing) national histories and cultures.
8. A key contribution of the literature on women's organising in the aftermath of war lies in identifying issues which challenge the cohesion of women's groups and hinder the possibilities for women's organisations of becoming a broader movement for change. A number of studies reveal challenges revolving around the divisive legacy of the conflict and the politicisation of ethno-national affiliations (Cockburn, 1998; Helms, 2003a, b, c), the nature

of women's NGOs as humanitarian assistance and service providers rather than political (Walsh, 2001), and the (positive and negative) role of international assistance and funding criteria (Helms, 2003a; Pupavac, 2006). Evidence suggests that, to some extent, these challenges are still in place today.

9. Jasmina Husanović explores possibilities for agency and emancipatory political practices in the biopolitical landscape of post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina (Husanović, 2009). She applies Giorgio Agamben's theory of a politics which begins precisely in the opaque "state of exception" (Agamben, 1998) to the context of war and post-war Bosnia-Herzegovina, where the exclusionary enactments of ethno-national logic, the traumatic events of the conflict and the dynamic of humanitarian international intervention have reduced citizens to "bare life", as opposed to politically qualified life (Husanović, 2009). Within this context Husanović identifies the possibilities for emancipatory practices within non-institutionalised women's and grassroots activism and in cultural interventions.

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