INTRODUCTION

We all know what a chastity belt is, don't we? But, what could a chastity *border* belt possibly be?

This surprising concept was all nicely explained in an article with the same title, published in the Serbian weekly *NIN*, in March 1990, one year ahead of a violent war that caused the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to disintegrate.[1] "Chastity border belt" was the name given to the stretch of land along the state border that—according to the article—needed special protection against illegal intruders. This stretch of land was in the north of the country, separating the Yugoslav republic of Slovenia from neighboring Italy. The article implied that Slovenians were not taking seriously their duty of protecting Yugoslav borders and symbolically defined Slovenia as a chaste, but not very trustworthy maiden, in need of proper protection, control, and defense (March 25, 1990, 18–20).

In 1993, while the war was raging through Croatia and Bosnia, the Croatian weekly *Danas* wrote about the changing political fortune of Vojislav Šešelj, the leader of an ultranationalist party in Serbia. The article made fun of Šešelj's Bosnian origin, discussing his posture, blond hair, and blue eyes (insisting that Bosnians are supposed to be dark) as well as his ever-changing political alliances (sometimes with and sometimes against Serbian president Milošević). But the article's title mocked, first and foremost Šešelj's manhood. It read: "Is Šešelj a Spy or a Woman?" The question is repeated in the article, which imagines Šešelj in a woman's dress, insinuating that, since nothing is certain with him—from his political allegiances to his mixed ethnic origin—his manhood may also produce some surprises (March 26, 1993, 29).

The evocation of female chastity in a newspaper article about the state borders and the questioning of the masculinity of a politician in an article about his ethnic origin and politics may have been quite coincidental. However, there seem to have been too many coincidences of this kind in the Yugoslav press in that period: texts in which the bodies and capacities of

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women and men acquired some surprising new meanings; in which the states and their national and ethnic groups became personified or symbolically represented as female or male bodies; in which the notions usually associated with norms of sexuality or assumptions of "proper" manhood and womanhood were suddenly associated with matters that concern state territory, daily politics, and—last but not least—ethnicity.

What was happening? Why were female and male bodies vested with such meanings, and why were they linked to notions of gender, sexuality, and ethnicity? What do these meanings have to do with the bloody war as a result of which the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia disintegrated—a country once known for worker self-management, participation in the nonalignment movement, and its beautiful Adriatic beaches? To what extent were these newspaper articles that mocked and accused, and many others that threatened and incited, really directly responsible for the brutality by which the former neighbors treated each other's bodies during the 1991–1995 period?

This book offers a perspective from which these questions might be answered and asserts that there was no coincidence in the vesting of female and male bodies with meanings that relate gender and sexuality to ethnicity, nation, or the state.[2] It was no coincidence that these images were in the press long before the war and during it, a war whose most notorious strategies focused precisely on the violation of the female and male bodies.

To the contrary, this book asserts, both the images in the press and the violent strategies of the war were vested with a very specific power: the power to produce ethnicity. The living and the symbolic bodies of women and men were the primary sites of this production. The war itself was the mode of production—*the wars*, actually, in plural. For there were two wars through which ethnicity was produced in former Yugoslavia: the "media war" and the "ethnic war." The former started long before the actual fighting was even imaginable, and its traces are present to this day. The latter raged from 1991 to 1995, in Slovenia, Bosnia, and Croatia, and since then has been flaring up and burning in larger or smaller fires, many times, in different places in the region.

In this book I argue that ethnicity was produced through the representational practices of the media war as much as through the violent practices of the ethnic war. In other words, I do not define the ethnic war as a war between ethnic groups (as common sense would have it); rather, I perceive both the media war and the ethnic war as wars that produce ethnic groups.

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Separate, never collapsible onto each other, yet constitutive of each other, these two wars aimed to make ethnicity the only mode of being, to obliterate and obscure everything that could cast a shadow on its omnipotence.

From Media War to Ethnic War

It remains uncertain who was first to use the term "media war," but at the end of the 1980s the expression was commonly accepted by the national media, the public, and politicians.[3] The term referred to the direct and intensive engagement of the media of the different Yugoslav republics in forging nationalist politics, defending the leaders and the politics of, supposedly, "their own" nation and republic, while at the same time fiercely attacking leaders, politics, and general population of other nations and republics.[4] Various medieval figures suddenly started being referred to as if they were contemporaries, and contemporaries suddenly claimed more or less symbolic ties to medieval heroes. In almost postmodernist fashion, history stopped being linear and progressive—past was not past, future was not future, everything was happening here and now, and on the pages of the press.

The main condition that made the media war possible, probable, and effective was the closed, divided, and exclusive discursive space that existed during the late 1980s and early 1990s, in which the inflow and exchange of information between republics was greatly reduced (by controlling access to broadcasts and publishing from other territories), and within them was censored. However, this tightly controlled and restricted media space within a single republic indicates that the main target of the media war was not the audience on the other side of the republic's border, but the audience within its own, closed space. Ivan Čolović (1994) was first to point out that the media war was not only a mode of hostile communication between the quarreling parties, but primarily a mode of "auto-communication," with its most fundamental role to foster the cohesive and mobilizing power of an ethnically defined group (163).[5] I take his analysis a step further, and assert that the media war was about *production of ethnicity*, with notions of femininity and masculinity and norms of sexuality as its essential ingredients.

It was apparent that in mid-1980s the media in former Yugoslavia started covering stories that they had not covered before. The concern with which the media suddenly started addressing the so-called women's issues, especially issues regarding reproduction and sexual violence against women,

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was striking. Given that previously only feminist groups or official women's organizations would engage in discussing such issues, their sudden media prominence was a novelty, as was the framing of the discussions. References to childcare, maternity leave, abortion rights, legislation on rape, sexual morality, and so on, were now discussed (in political bodies as well as on the pages of the newspapers) in light of the population growth, traditional values, and historic dreams of, or historic injustices against, a particular ethnic group.[6] Family values were redefined and reasserted in terms of ethnic and religious values. Ethnic groups declared themselves endangered and started counting their population.[7] The *white plague* (a popular term that was coined to describe low fertility rates and negative population growth in Vojvodina and some parts of Serbia proper) became the most feared disease, and women—especially professional women and women who had abortions—were branded the main culprits (Drezgić 2000). Accused in speeches by religious and political leaders, in newspaper articles and TV interviews, in popular booklets and street posters, women were called to come to their senses, give up paid jobs, and raise children for the nation. Equally significant, men were summoned to account for their capacity to control their women, or defend the graves of their forefathers. And while the lives of women and men were brought into the stories of the nations, the reverse was true as well: nations and territories were referred to as raped or pregnant, as virile or virginal; states became mothers or stepmothers.

Within this atmosphere of media hostility, life for many people in Yugoslavia went on more or less as usual. The country's economic decline worried many families more than political speeches. And while there were some far-sighted individuals who warily talked about approaching war, for most others the "war" was just a word politicians used to scare each other. So for many Yugoslavs the actual fighting came as a surprise, although the process of secession and violent disintegration that started in 1991 was preceded by diffused violence and sporadic, low-intensity armed conflicts during 1989, 1990, and the first half of 1991. In Croatia, armed clashes between the Croatian majority and Serbian minority started already in 1989. In 1991 they escalated into a full-blown insurgency of Serbs from the Knin region in Croatia. Violence also followed a demonstration by Albanian students in Kosovo in January 1990, who demanded the end of the state of emergency in the province that had been declared by the regime of Slobodan Milošević the previous year.

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Nobody, however, perceived these conflicts as an overture to a war. Not even when, early in the morning of June 27, 1991, tanks left their military barracks and rolled onto the streets of Ljubljana and other Slovenian cities, following the Slovenian and Croatian declarations of independence from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia two days earlier.[8] Within two weeks the tanks had to withdraw from the streets, and Slovenians celebrated victory. Later that summer Croatia was engulfed in war, and in April 1992 fighting started in Bosnia. While the independence of all three former Yugoslav republics was recognized internationally (Slovenia and Croatia in January 1992, and Bosnia in June 1992), this meant nothing in terms of prevention of the violent disintegration, that would last until the Dayton Peace Accords were signed in December 1995.

At the beginning, this disintegration was called "civil war." But this term soon disappeared from use, and the term "ethnic war" was widely accepted both inside Yugoslavia and by the international community. This characterization was supposed to indicate that in different regions different ethnic groups were fighting each other and proclaiming their right to sovereign control of a specific territory that was also defined in ethnic terms. What made the ethnic component recognizable to Yugoslav citizens, and those familiar with the country, was the growing nationalism of different groups throughout the 1980s. As a political force nationalism had appeared earlier, as both a bottom-up (in 1968 in Kosovo) and a top-down (in 1971 in Croatia) movement.[9] But the term "ethnic war" was to a great extent part and parcel of Eurocentric, Orientalist, and Balkanist[10] perceptions of the Balkans—both within and outside of it—that slowly but surely became the main frame of reference for Yugoslav disintegration. With these discourses an entirely new country emerged, marked by a "history of ethnic hatred";[11] with people in search of a new father figure;[12] and with irreconcilable civilization, cultural, and religious differences among the national groups, as well as from the rest of Europe.[13] These characterizations came from nationalist politicians and academics within Yugoslavia as much as from outside. A few Yugoslav and international authors struggled to explain that both the rise of nationalism and the war were due to the fact that Yugoslav socialism already incorporated nationalism, in its administrative and political demarcation of ethnicity-based republics and its system of political representation.[14] But most important, they argued that the power struggle of communist elites since the Second World War was also organized along republican-ethnic lines.[15] Thus, political processes leading toward war had

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already produced ethnicity as the main carrier of political power, as the most significant social category, and as the most privileged identity, resulting in decentralization without democratization, and finally, in the creation of ethnodemocracies (Sekelj 1990).

Thus, not surprisingly, ethnicity did become the ultimate explanatory factor of Yugoslav social reality, the nature of its people as much as the nature of its disintegration. The bloodier the war became, the easier it was to call it, and its violent strategies, "ethnic." The fact that the war itself, the violence it unleashed, and the representation of this violence in media, were actually producing "ethnicity," was obscured or denied. As a history of heterogeneity was replaced by a "history of ethnic hatred," there were neither discursive nor geographical spaces for nonethnicized realities.

In his analysis of the war in former Yugoslavia, Robert Hayden (1996, 2) concluded that nationalism in the Balkans "has not been only a matter of imagining allegedly 'primordial' communities, but rather of making existing heterogeneous ones unimaginable." This unimaginability of heterogeneity was, according to Hayden, pursued by two strategies. One—evident in the political manifestos and constitutions of the newly established states—shows the reinterpretation of the historic and cultural evidence of heterogeneity in each of the states, and redefinitions of the majority ethnic group as the only rightful proponent of the state's sovereignty, excluding, thus, all others who lived in the same territory. Street names were changed, national heroes and novelists of "wrong" ethnicity were expunged from school curriculums, language was "purged" of "foreign influences," and people not belonging to the majority ethnic group were excluded from citizenship. Where the lack of constitutional rights or political and cultural intimidation did not persuade the minorities that they should move out, another strategy was used—direct violence. This violence obscured and erased heterogeneity and mapped the national territory in blood and bones, creating one of the most abhorred practices—and as some would say, one of the most accurate metaphors[16]—of our time: "ethnic cleansing." Sexual violence against women was one of its key components.

Accurate facts and figures about sexual violence and the rape of women during the wars in Croatia and Bosnia will never be known with certainty, regardless of the numerous fact-finding missions.[17] What has become certain, however, is its systematic and deliberate nature. A United Nations Commission of Experts determined and documented patterns that, according to its report, "strongly suggest that a systematic rape policy and sexual

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assault policy exists, but this remains to be proved" (United Nations 1994b, 11). Although the remark "but this remains to be proved" could render the finding indeterminate, the evidence presented indicated that rape and sexual assault were related to the policy of the ethnic cleansing, as conducted by Bosnian Serb forces. Out of 1,100 documented cases of rape, about 600 occurred in detention, indicating that they were neither random nor opportunistic (ibid., 12–13). While rapes in detention were also practiced in camps run by Croats and Muslims (ibid., 10), the U.N. Commission showed that in the case of Bosnian Serbs it was a consistent policy.[18] It was less known at the time that men too were sexually assaulted, and that this assault also had systematic nature.[19]

Ethnicity was produced through these violent practices of the ethnic war, as much as through the representational practices of the media war. The acts of violence were at the same time acts that defined both people and territories in ethnic terms. Furthermore, it was obvious that media war was not letting up, as news about sexual violence hit the TV screens and the pages of the press, and became media stories. These stories—whether cautious and impersonal, or full of pathos and fiery—became yet another way to assert ethnic inclusions and exclusions, to define ethnic groups and territories, to mark those who belonged and those who did not. In short, both the act of violence and the act of representation were engaged in producing meanings, and the struggle to control these meanings was as fierce as the struggle to control territories.

This is why I grant the same epistemological status to the meanings produced through the violent practice and the meanings produced through the representational practice. The images in the press are not approached as secondary to the reality of blood and flesh. To the contrary, the media war is seen to be as productive of ethnicity as the ethnic war, albeit by different means: instead of physical violence it uses words, photos, and cartoons. Still, the word and the deed cannot be collapsed into each other. Textual and visual images in the press can never be equated with the actual violence, nor can we draw a direct link between the media war and the ethnic war. Rather, I argue, notions of femininity and masculinity, and norms of sexuality and definitions of ethnicity, create the links between the media war and the ethnic war, and mediate the relationship between the words and the deeds. The meanings given to the words and pictures are derived from the same gendered, sexualized, and ethnicized practices from which the violent acts receive inspiration, justification, and/or sanction. Marked

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by daily politics and the web of cultural practices, violent acts and newspaper cartoons and articles draw from the same pool of widely shared assumptions about manly and womanly proprieties or about sexual moralities.

This does not mean that there is only one meaning attached to any particular violent or representational practice. Competing and conflicting meanings are produced through dominance, subordination, exclusion, and marginalization; the shifts and ambiguities in meanings reflect changing domains of power. In the context in which the primary difference is marked by ethnicity, ethnicity will inform both the act of violence and its media representation, and other differences will be obscured. In other words, the act of violence and its media representation are both produced within, and contribute to the same discursive and material reality, even if by different means.

Introducing gender and sexuality into the equation, I want to destabilize ethnicity. I want to show that without notions of masculinity and femininity, and norms of (hetero)sexuality, ethnicity could have never been produced, and the practices of the two wars would have remained unintelligible. We would make little out of the stories of state borders and threatened territories were they not conveyed through familiar gendered and sexualized imagery. What made both the media war and the ethnic war so powerful, so effective in mobilizing people's sentiments, and ultimately so deadly, is the familiarity and the casualness of notions that gave meaning to the bodies of chaste maidens and men in dresses.

The Fe/Male Body: Gender, Sexuality, Ethnicity

In this book the body—female and male—stands central. Both the violent practices of the ethnic war and the representational practices of the media war in Yugoslavia rested upon the symbolic and physical capacities of male and female bodies. Bodies were vested with gendered and sexualized meanings that made ethnicity appear transparent and unambiguous; that treatment reified ethnicity, turned it into an empirical fact, or obscured it altogether. This is a good enough reason to focus on the bodies. But there is another one—my attachment has always been to feminism and its political concerns with and theoretical perspectives on the *female body*. When I started this research, I did not think much about the *male body*; the material

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itself forced me to reconsider and to give an account also of the male body as it was treated in this conflict.

In Western feminism, the female body was always a central, if not *the* central, political and theoretical issue.[20] Theorizing on the female body, initially as a site of power and dominance, and later also as a site of autonomy and subjectivity, is a major "moral and political battlefield" (Fuss 1989, xii) of Western feminist thought, ranging from the investigations of the links between the embodiment, sexuality, and subjectivity to the essentialism-constructivism debates and discussions on sexual difference (Davis 1997b).

One outcome of all these debates is that the category of the female body has, to a certain extent, undermined gender as the central category of feminist analyses and has defined gender only as a point of departure.[21] Criticism within and outside of Western academia made that point clearly. While notions of femininity reflect social and cultural constructions of the erotic and reproductive possibilities of the female body, it has become increasingly clear that there are other, equally significant relationships in the body politics of different societies. Heterosexuality is a case in point, recognized as a significant organizing principle of social life. From the famous work of Adrienne Rich (1994) to studies on the relationship between feminist theory and lesbian knowledge, heterosexuality is introduced into Western feminist study of the body, albeit with struggle, as a new significant dimension of theorizing the female body.[22]

However, many of the debates on the body have suffered from "ambivalence towards the material body and a tendency to privilege the body as metaphor" (Davis 1997b, 15), creating a gap between social and cultural representations of the body and "embodiment as experience or social practice in concrete social, cultural and historical contexts" (ibid.). Kathy Davis argues that bridging this gap meant, first, accepting that women's experience of their bodies, social and cultural practices implicated in the female body, and symbolic meanings and representations of the female body are *all* produced through multiple social relationships defined by class, race, sexuality, and ethnicity, as much as particular sociopolitical contexts, such as racism, colonialism, or nationalism.[23] Second, it also meant that feminism has to concern itself with the male body too. Otherwise, as Davis (1995, 19) notes, feminism will reinforce the oppositional dualism of the body-mind split, which keeps only women and femininity trapped into bodily matters.

I follow Davis on both accounts, attempting not only to bridge the gap

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between the metaphoric and material body but also to show that lived experiences and symbolic representations constitute each other. This means that I analyze practices toward and meanings of both the female and the male body. The male body may have different roles to play as a site of production of ethnicity, but they are no less significant than the roles of the female body. Furthermore, I approach the fe/male body as gendered, sexualized, and ethnicized all at the same time. Finally, I take the context of the two wars, ethnic and media, as a concrete social and historical setting within which both the practices toward, and the symbolic meanings of the female and male bodies are produced.

Thus, there are a few assumptions about the relationship between gender, sexuality, and ethnicity that guide my analysis of the fe/male body. First, I understand gender—and thus femininity *and* masculinity—as constitutive of other social categories and power relations. In a war perceived as an ethnic war hardly anybody is just a man, or just a woman. Rather, a person is a Serb man, or a Croat woman, and so on. Manhood and womanhood are ethnicized and gendered at the same time. In stating that gender and ethnicity constitute each other, I do not assume a neat, balanced or fixed relationship. Rather, I hope to show that these categories produce each other in ways that are often ambiguous, contradictory, and conflicting.

Second, I presume that femininities and masculinities are not simply symmetrical, parallel, or complementary, nor are their practices and meanings produced only, or always, in relation to each other. There are aspects of masculinity, for example, that acquire meanings in relation to other masculinities, as much as in relation to femininities. An image of a Croat man will be juxtaposed to an image of a Serb or a Muslim man, as well as to an image of a Croat woman, which in turn will be related to an image of a Muslim woman, as well as to an image of a Croat man. Each of these masculinities and femininities, and the variety of their relationships to one another, will be thoroughly investigated.

Third, norms of sexuality constitute different femininities and masculinities, and the hierarchical relations between them. The hierarchy, however, does not refer only to heterosexuality—with female and male sexualities and sexual capacities (from that of desire to that of procreation) being hierarchically related to one another, differently sanctioned and controlled. It refers also to the sanctioning and positioning of homosexuality, vis-à-vis heterosexuality, and their relations to different masculinities. Thus this

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book analyzes intersections of different masculinities and homo/heterosexualities with ethnicity.

These assumptions impact upon my conceptualization of ethnicity. As is already clear from the previous section, I do not approach ethnicity in the way of classic (foundationalist) scholarship[24] or the early constructivists.[25] While appreciative of diverse and rich feminist, black, and (post)colonial studies that place identity politics in the center of their analysis of ethnicity,[26] I am wary of the straightforwardness of this politics. Thus I follow the footsteps of the scholars who go beyond oppositional duality and assume that gender, ethnicity, and heterosexuality—while different constructions of power and subordinations—are not separate or cumulative but rather mutually constitutive domains of power.[27]

This means first that I perceive ethnicity in a similar way to gender—as a relation and a category of *power*, always concerned with living individuals or communities, but never reducible to them. Thus I do not ask, "What is ethnicity?" because ethnicity seems to be many different things in many different places: black (but apparently not white) in Britain, Turkish (but not German) in Germany, and Muslim (but not Christian) in Bosnia. I ask rather, "How are specific realities *ethnicized*?" Through what workings of power are specific color and religion, specific individuals and communities, specific traditions and histories, and specific bodies defined as ethnic?

Linking ethnicity to gender and heterosexuality furthermore allows for a reconceptualization of nationalism. For, if ethnicity is produced through gender and heretosexuality, then nationalism is too.[28] Consequently, while ethnicity appears as the central category of so-called ethnic nationalism—as the marker of the ultimate Self-Other dichotomy—I insist that this centrality itself is produced, and that gender and heterosexuality are implicated in this production. In other words, the Other of nationalism is never *only* ethnic, but also always gendered and sexualized, albeit in ambiguous and conflictual way: a (female) rape victim is always female and ethnic at the same time, but her ethnicity and her femininity may bear different significance in different contexts; a man belongs to the ethnic Self only if both his heterosexuality and his masculinity are unquestionable; what will question them, however, may be very different, in different contexts. In all these cases, the physicality of the ethnicized body can hardly be separated from the symbolic meanings vested in it.

Feminist authors have already pointed out that the female body has symbolic functions, that it often epitomizes many different, if not contradicting

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and conflicting meanings. Sharon Macdonald (1987) argues that the "duality of gender metaphor" constructs the female body as inherently ridden by dual oppositions, making it an apt metaphor of dualities both *within* gender hierarchies (virgin/whore) and *between* them (mother/warrior, peace/war, passive/active, self/other, inner/outer).

Much of this capacity of the female body to epitomize duality and oppositions rests on the epistemological status of femininity in Western philosophy, where masculinity gives meaning to the universal and abstract, while the status of the feminine is linked to the particular and specific. However, femininity can also embody the universal. Marina Warner (1996, 12) notes that the "female form" used in monuments throughout the Western hemisphere "does not refer to particular women, does not describe women as a group, and often does not even presume to evoke their natures." To the contrary, it is emptied of the particular and made "hollow" (in the case of Statue of Liberty, even literally) in order to create a transparent metaphor of the universal, be it freedom, homeland, courage, resilience in the face of adversity, or unconditional love.

I would suggest, however, that hollowness and transparency are always only partial and that epistemologically, the universal and particular in the feminine do not only oppose each other. They also constitute each other. The universal claim (of liberty) serves as a marker of the particular difference (between those who are free and those who are not), while the ambiguity of the female body allows it to recall the universal and still remain specific (pointing to the United States as a "land of free"). Thus, it is not only duality that marks the female form, but also ambiguity: the capacity to be universal and particular at the same time.

It is precisely this ambiguity of the female body that is significant for the nationalist representations, because, as Jan Penrose (1993) argues, a nationalist claim is in itself an ambiguous claim: it relies on a general category of nations in order to establish specific and distinctive existence of a particular nation. This paradoxical position in which a national particularity cannot be established without universality of the concept of the nation means that it also cannot be represented without incorporating both the particular and the universal at the same time. Penrose (ibid., 44) further argues that "visions of people and place as discretely bonded entities" produce symbolic geographies of the nation; these symbolic geographies are, moreover, always racialized and ethnicized.[29] The female and male bodies implicated

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in this production are thus not only gendered, but also racialized and ethnicized.

Analyzing nationalism and war in former Yugoslavia, Rada Iveković (1993, 123) points out that feminine particularity is allowed into the universal only when representing masculine ideals and values. She argues that the fact that women embody universal ideas "thereby serving to justify them, doesn't mean that what is embodied, the principle or mechanism, is a 'feminine' one. . . . What is symbolically 'embodied' in the female figure can still remain a male ideal, activity, or experience."[30] However, saying that the female body represents masculine ideals and experiences implies, first, that specific ideas are essentially feminine or masculine and, second, that feminine experience is erased from these representations, remaining forever subordinate to the power of the masculine.

I question these assumptions in this book, showing that the representational capacities of both the female and the male body lie precisely in integrating specific lived experiences, of specific women and men within specific political and cultural contexts, with supposedly universal meanings; that is, meanings that in the European and Northern and Western tradition have figured as universals—civilization or humanity, for example. Thus, I show that specificity and particularity are attached to both the female and the male body, albeit in a different way. Furthermore, I contest the essentialist assumption of feminine innocence in matters of war and violence, and analyze it rather as one of the gendered narratives of war, to which many have contributed, including feminists. I will analyze international and local feminist theorizing on the fe/male body in war, and its implications on local feminist activism against the war in former Yugoslavia, starting from the assumptions outlined above.

My analysis of the productive power of the two wars is organized around three symbolic categories of the fe/male body: *the maternal body, the victimized body*, and *the armed body*. The choice of these three symbolic categories follows the theoretical concerns expressed above. But it was primarily led by the fact that the bodies of women and men—with all their powers and vulnerabilities—were the very site upon which the two wars were fought: fierce or broken, cowardly or perverse, mute or too outspoken, naïve or treacherous, hidden or starkly present, the maternal body, victimized body, and militant body were ascribed meanings through acts of violence, as much as through words, photos, and political cartoons. The power of a

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media image and the power of a violent act both depended on the different capacities of the female and male body for conveying their messages. It is the embodiment—lived and symbolic at the same time—that enabled ethnicity to be produced. Thus, this embodiment will be my guide in tracing back critically the process of production.

The Structure of This Book

The three parts of the book follow the three symbolic bodies, the maternal, the victimized and the armed, ending each time with a discussion of the controversies that each of these bodies raises in feminism.

The first part of the book is dedicated to the maternal body. In it I concentrate on two case studies: the media representations of two public actions of women, in which the participants defined themselves explicitly as mothers. One is the 1987 protest against a statement about rapes and prostitution by an Albanian politician from Kosovo—probably the most significant case for the flare-up of the media war. Another is the protest against the Yugoslav national army (JNA), its detention of soldiers who had completed their service, and its mobilization of new recruits in late August and beginning of September of 1991. The protests involved all the Yugoslav republics except Slovenia (because the Slovenian war for independence from the rest of Yugoslavia had ended in July, with the JNA withdrawing and de facto accepting Slovenian secession). In these two chapters I analyze articles, illustrations, cartoons, and photographs published in the main Croatian and Serbian weekly and daily after these two events, and I search for meanings of gender, sexuality, and ethnicity vested in the imagery of the maternal body. While the female body is central to this analysis, I also highlight the role of the different male bodies juxtaposed to the maternal body. In the last chapter of this section, I debate the ambiguities in the feminist analysis of motherhood and protests, in the light of similar protests in Latin America and South Asia.

The second part of this book deals with the victimized body. I focus on two different aspects of victimization. First, in chapters 4 and 5, I analyze the construction of *symbolic collective victims* in the Serbian and Croatian press, where gender and sexuality played a somewhat different, but still crucial role in producing ethnicity. In the Serbian press, the victim was "the Serbs"—the people. In the Croatian press, the victim was "Croatia"—the state. This difference in the representational strategies of the Serbian and

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Croatian press will prove to be relevant for the practice and representation of sexual violence against both women and men, addressed in chapters 6, 7, and 8. The section closes with a problematization of the overpowering presence of the victimized female body in feminist studies on war in Yugoslavia. While acknowledging the vicious nature of the sexual violence against women in violent conflicts, I search for an analytical framework that would allow for a different conceptualization of violence in relation to both femininities and masculinities, drawing on studies of conflicts in South Asia and Rwanda.

The last part of the book deals with the armed body. An examination of the media imagery of female soldiering is followed by an analysis of the invisibility, in feminist discourses in the former Yugoslavia, of the women soldiering between 1991 and 1995 in the national armies and paramilitaries of Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia. The absence of the armed female body from feminist texts is taken to indicate the meanings of gender, sexuality, and ethnicity for feminism, and is related to the presence of the victimized body. In the concluding chapter, I deal with feminist discomfort with female militancy and women as perpetrators of violence in the context of shifts in feminist theorization of war. Following South Asian feminist analyses of female militancy, I argue for a conceptualization of violence wherein it will be seen neither as inherently masculine nor as only gendered.

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