

Newsletter „Women, peace, security“ May 2013



Dear readers, by publishing this newsletter, we wish to contribute to better information about UN documents on security, demilitarisation, and to the greater influence of women on post-conflict problems solving, first of all in Serbia, and then in the Western Balkans. We hope that this newsletter will be read by those who are interested in the re-examination of the traditional concept of national security, the reform of the security sector, the gender dimension of security, security integrations and feminist antimilitarist concept of security. We expect your contributions on these questions. It is accessible online on the website: www.zeneucnom.org

The editorial board

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Activities of Women in Black on the demilitarization of security

Subjects and not objects of history

Since 10th until 12th of May, feminist discussion on forced mobilization and women's resistance was continued. By the end of 2010 seven Initiative Board members, from almost all Republics of ex Yugoslavia, started organizing Women's Court. Initiative Board is consisted out of ten organizations from all ex Yugoslav states and during February of 2013 it was transformed into Organizing Board. Women in Black are holders of program activities of this court.

For the discussion were prepared two readers-'From maternal policy of peace to feminist and antimilitary resistance,' 'Reader on history of antiwar resistance in Serbia by the beginning of 1990.' Thirtysix women took part, out of twelve cities of Serbia.

The experience on organizing Women's Court showed women have the need for a safe space, but there is a fear of repeating trauma, especially in the case of tacit, unrecognized and forgotten injustice, as those which are connected to force mobilization and militarist violence, it was said in the beginning.

The experience regarding discussion with women from Zvornik, Srebrenica (Bosnia and Herzegovina) who have witnessed on war as well as from Iraq, transmitted Natasa Lambic from Women inBlack to women in Sremski Karlovci. During discussion with women of Bosnia and Herzegovina was concluded that institutional justice can not satisfy victims and either the survived ones. Not by numbers of trials (there are too many crimes), nor by satisfying victims (low-judicial punishments, unrecognized suffering). 'All are unsatisfied with sentences. That is the outcome of the Tribunal of Hague. It did not succeed to guaranty that there will not be repetition of crimes'- said Lambic.

Prof. Dr. Svenka Savic, form the University of Philosophy in Novi Sad, explained why the stories of women are significant, claiming that women who are highly positioned in publicity, do not speak of their problems, while Roma women are afraid that their stories nobody want to hear. Savic says that memory is always 'a construction of what was happening in the past. When we speak up our memory it is important to know that it depends on individuals. Sometimes we say something and sometimes we do not. Also, the story changes, when we say our memory couple of times. When something is pronounced, then it exists. Every life story and every event has its meaning to be noted. It is important for us as women, as researchers and historians. Historians do not think these stories are important. We as feminists do. Stories are important for women's movement-they show there is many of us, and we are different.'

Stasa Zajovic says that war against civilians is less evaluated then armed conflict of warriors. She said organized oblivion of forced mobilization crime in Serbia shows that there is a triple wall of silence, one is silence of victims as themselves, the silence of the state who never admitted suffering of the forced mobilized and of their families, nor it ever questioned regarding its own responsibility, and society has its own wall of silence in order to protect itself of trauma.

Gordana Radosavljevic says that the workshop during which women from Serbia spoke on mobilization, military violence, resistance...since 1991 until 1999, was organized because: 'We want different approach to history, to be subjects not objects and to say how did we feel in those terrible times.'

Then Ljiljana spoke of an armed man in a schoolyard in the times of NATO bombing, of truck who used to unload arms and ammunition, and no one of the neighbors reacted. Maria saw the day Kumanovo agreement was signed, which ended war in Kosovo, how air defense celebrates on the roofs of hospitals and maternity hospital, out of which she concluded that they were inside all of the time, though it is forbidden by Geneva Convention. Maria's son, other Maria from Vojvodina, was called up to the army, though he was under eighteen. When his family got the news he got killed on the Lastovo island, his mother developed breast cancer. The son returned to his family after 15 months, but in the meantime they did not know anything about him. Mariana spoke how in 1994 in Belgrade cafes refugees from Bosnia were mobilized and citizens of Belgrade were indifferent to this fact, happy for being excluded from mobilization.

A saleswoman in Mladenovac told Senka how Green Berets from Bosnia killed eight people in Pljevlja, and when she found out that the killer was a Serbian soldier from Vukovar, and said it to her, the woman got mad. Ivana, whose father Ivo, moved from Croatia to Belgrade in 1945, suddenly for her mother's family, became 'ustasha'. Nadezda's two sons were mobilized the same night. Her divorced husband revealed the information where is one of them hiding, so the mother had to choose which one of them she will send to the battlefield. Acquaintance of Anelia, who got killed on the battlefield, was proclaimed to have committed a suicide, so the military does not have to provide any reparation to his family. Manda knows that men could of escape from Serbia for 5.000 deutsch marks, though it was forbidden, if they knew the right person. Janja informed that one of the trial counsels of Ratko Mladic, used to sell amnesty to deserters, for 3000 euros. Ljiljana did not know that antiwar resistance exists: 'I can not forgive myself because I persuaded my brother for ten days to join the army, now he is alcoholic. Croats released him and he was treated here in Serbia as a deserter.' Janja's brother who use to maintain tanks and only, was most saddened when he saw that books in their library were just the same as ours, even the same editions. Ceca says in Vlasotince, all those who were taken to the battlefield got confirmation as volunteers. She does not want to speak of war, because she still lives in one.

In Violeta's small town, they were throwing stones on the house of Croat who suffered of cerebral palsy: 'I could not stand the wartime, I felt at home only among women,'- she said.



'Our souls are killed,' said journalist Gizela Tot, and Zanka Stojanovic a mother of Nebojsa who was killed during bombing of Serbian Radio Television, said that we have to stigmatize all of those who

have harmed our children. Rosa Jakovljevic, mother of Dragan, one of the two guards who were killed after all those wars in the caserne of Belgrade, while they were serving the army said: 'But, so many returned out of war, and my son during peace time, did not.'

The second conclusion was that men have returned with traumas, dysfunctional behavior, but they do not speak of war. Women felt miserable, but they want people to know about war. During and after war, gender and military violence are twisted. The state did not take over the responsibility for traumas. This burden was taken by women. Women's resistance was permanent but not visible.

'The peace is more than just an absence of war-it was concluded after discussion'.

The activists have suggested that next actions should be a monument for the victims, insisting on President Nikolic's rejection of dukedom title, that 11th of July should be proclaimed as a Day of remembrance of genocide in Srebrenica, and that war reparations should be distributed, forbiddance of a denial of genocide in Srebrenica and fascist groups, as well.

The attendants were watching the movie of Milica Tomic 'Srebrenica's women are speaking,' directed by Milica Tomic and production of Women in Black. In this documentary relatives of the executed in Srebrenica testify in front of Serbian citizens on genocide, due to its thirteenth anniversary. There was a documentary of German television DW on women's resistance to mobilization in 1992, in village of Tresnjevac, Vojvodina, and 'Letter to my father' regarding review of the author on his fathers participation in the war. The author is Srdjan Keco.



The real face of fascism

The Day of Victory over fascism, peace activists have marked far away of official ceremonies. Activists organized dancing performance near monument for the hanged patriots, in the centre of Belgrade, in front of the dozens of citizens. Ljubica Duvnjak was representing fascism, and Valentina Jelacalife and antifascism. With music theme 'Michael meets Mozart' written by Piano Guys, Valentina was hanging photos of heroines on a fishing thread, helped by other activists. Ljubica sneaks behind her back and embraces her. The fight between fascism and antifascism starts, between life and death. Women approach Valentina with transparent 'Antifascism is my choice' and then Ljubica falls on her knees, supported by women, Valentina takes off mask from Ljubica's face showing her real face.

This action point was our need to express our disapproval of today's Serbia relation toward antifascism and to remind on this date, in accordance with the words of Stasa Zajovic, coordinator of Women in Black.

'Since the inheritance of antifascism is erased, we are living in the country where prevails revisionism on all levels-state, education-where we have not only relativization but glorification of criminals of the Second World War, and since during the wars of nineties executions were committed under the same symbols,...we as responsible citizens, antifascist, have the obligation to react on those things and not to allow the equation of fascism and antifascism,' said Stasa Zajovic.

Before this performance, the activists visited memorial park Jajinci. And they laid bouquet of red roses on the place where Serbian citizens of all nationalities were executed since 1941 until 1944.

On 9th of May, Women in Black and Artie/Centre for promotion of culture, art and design, issued a statement-'Today, more persistently than ever the antifascism in Serbia is under the question, and from all sides. The authorities are responsible for it in the first place, because they remember Serbian antifa inheritance only when they need support of some of the allies of anti-Hitler's coalition, for their actual politics. A modest form of marking this day in the past years as well as repeal of 20th of October, as a Day of deliberation of Belgrade, shows that we do not preserve memory on events which have resulted with deliberation of the humanity of one of the darkest ideology in our history. We do not preserve memory on human suffering, nor scaffolds which have marked this ideology.'

And it continues:'Thanks to educational programs young generations for years do not learn anything about antifascist struggle, the dates of National Liberation Struggle are covered with oblivion, fascism and antifascism are relativized and more and more often Serbian fascism is rehabilitated. Commission for naming streets and squares of Serbian cities are deprived of names of national heroes and heroines, and schools are getting new names. Monuments dedicated to them are devastated, memorial plaques are taken away. Nobody speaks to young people regarding crimes in Belgrade during Second World War, of existence



of four concentration camps on the territory of the city, of Jewish community which vanished during occupation. This horrible inheritance of quisling government is not spoken at all. The historic facts regarding Nedic, Ljotic, chetnics and partisans are interpreted arbitrarily. We are faced with anti-fascism and anti-communism. Equalization of partisans and chetnics and rehabilitation of chetnics movement and at the same time erasing and ignoring everything that has to do with National Liberation Struggle riles discernments and wrongly determines our actual activities,-it is concluded in the statement.

'We are sure that we should remind on our antifascist past all the time, against which this struggle was lead, and on everlasting value of this struggle. Therefore we will visit Jajince on 9th of May where 68.000 of people were executed and buried in the mass tombs. We call all our antifa friends who do not want erasing of our antifa past-to join us!'

We remember crimes in Visegrad

In Visegrad during prayer and lowering 3000 roses in Drina, started marking 21 years since the crime over Muslims occurred in this city. After throwing roses over the bridge of Mehmed pasa Sokolovic, on the graveyard Stratiste, seven of identified Bosniacs, who were found in the Perucac lake in 2010, were buried. The two youngest victims were only six and seven years old, and the two oldest were 78 and 74.



That very same day were buried:Vildana (Dzermal) Zukic (1986-1992), Nihad (Islam) Ibisevic (1985-1992), Kasim (Hadzihasan) Hasic (1914-1992), Aziz (Halil) Alic (1953-1992), Fadila (Im-sir) Bosnjak (1934-1992), Nura (Redzo) Canto (1948-1992), Sevka (Ibre) Selman (1918-1992).

All photos from Visegrad recorded by Italian photographer Luca Bonacini

Before they left to Visegrad they published statement: 'In April of 1992, Serbian aggression started, lead by Uzicki corps of Yugoslav National Army. During the aggression 3000 persons were killed and whole Muslim population exposed to state organized persecution, imprisonment, torture and humiliation,...A prove of Serbian direct responsibility for the crimes are recently founded mass tombs in lake of Perucac. The whole city was transformed into scene of crime. On the Drina river bridge civilians were tortured, tossed in the river, all together old women and babies. In the house of Meho Alic on 27th of June, 1992, 60 people were burned to death. The only one who survived Zehra Turjcanin, testified in the Tribunal of Hague, against criminals Milan and Sredoje Lukic. In the house of Adem Omeragic, on 14th of June in 1992, 59 people were burned. The youngest was two years old victim, who did not even had a name, from Kurspahic family. In Vilina Vlas hotel, as the place of mass and systematic sexual crimes, over 200 women. They were captured as sexual slaves, as it was a headquarter of Milan Lukic (member of Visegrad brigade of Republic Srpska Army). Women of all ages were raped, including small girls, some of them have committed suicide, and only thirty of them survived,' reminds the statement.

'After Foca, Visegrad is the place where the greatest number of Bosnian women were raped. It is noted within the shameful map of femicide as mass execution of women. We will never stop searching spaces for voices of women, who have survived war sexual violence. For the crimes in Visegrad in front of the Hague Tribunal were lawfully convicted by the end of 2012-Milan Lukic on life sentence and Sredoje Lukic on 27 years of prison. None of them was accused for war crime of rape as war tactics. This verdict is a contribution to a just peace in the region, and an obligation for the authorities of Republic Srpska to respect demands of victims community of Visegrad, and to stop with threats of removal of the monument from the graveyard Stratiste in Visegrad'-warn Women in Black.



Unspeakable feeling

On Drina bridge have spoken courageous women of Visegrad who were expelled 21 years ago. Hedija Kasapovic President of the association 'Visegrad 1992' of families and relatives of the victims and civilian victims of the aggression- said that still they are searching for 1200 of them and only 30% of victims have been identified. On the graveyard Stratiste were buried 379 of them.

Bakira Hasecic in front of the association Women war victims named unpunished crimes and perpetrators who still freely walk through the city. She founded the association which gathers women from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina, and they bravely testified in the Tribunal of Hague in the processes for rape as war crime, as well for other sexual crimes.

'It is shameless that sexual abuse was excluded of the accusations,'-she said.

Stasa Zajovic said that Visegrad is noted within the shameful map of mass executions, rape and torture of Muslim women. Special gratitude and admiration we want to express for the women of Visegrad and the whole Bosnia and Herzegovina for their testimonies on monstrous sexual crimes. We admire your fight against impunity of sexual and all other crimes, because you have open the road for women all over the planet and their fight for dignity and justice. As you are, we are deeply disappointed too, and feel indignation because the international justice is extremely unfair to you. Together we will keep fighting against the impunity of crimes over women, we will not stop demanding justice for the victims of sexual crimes both in peace and war times.'

Then she continued:'Thank you for confidence you showed so we can share the pain, express our condolences,



solidarity and compassion. Our relations have ennobled our human existence, mitigated the immense feeling of shame because we know we are coming from the state successor of criminal regime which committed aggression on your country, planned crimes, organized armed forces which have committed numerous crimes and those of Visegrad are one of the most monstrous. In this city they were killing life itself, killing people just because they have different names, turned the whole city into concentration camp, and even after 2000, Belgrade authorities did not make essential rupture with the criminal past. Creators and collaborators of the politics of nineties came to power. They have signed Brussels agreement under the pressure of the international community. It is positive, no matter it is simply meeting international obligations and keeping their own positions. It is positive that they will not be able to produce conflicts and disrupt peace in the region. However we know they have not changed and that their acts of apology as well as promises or prostration are just technical gestures which are extracted, cynicism toward victims, stultifying the sense and values of justice. As long as the word genocide is too hard to pronounce for them, as long as they do not reveal the truth of direct responsibility of Yugoslav National Army, especially Uzice corps, as long as in this town exists street named after it, as long as the whole truth regarding mass graves within Perucac lake, as long as in Serbia rehabilitation of war criminal Draza Mihailovic goes on and criminal chetnics hordes who have continued with lethal attacks over Muslim population during nineties, through Bosnia and Herzegovina and elsewhere, as long as those new 'authorities' instead of verbal outbursts and extracted gestures, do not undertake concrete steps and measures, there will not be change,'-she concluded.

A thundering applause could of been heard. New reis-ul-ulema of the islam community Husein Kavazovic greeted Stasa Zajovic expressing his gratitude for speech and for the visit to Visegrad. Women in Black lead the wreath into Drina river, at first it sanked and then it came up again on the water surface, after hundred meters.

Then, they continued toward the graveyard where seven victims, out of which two were kids, a girl six years old and a boy of seven, were buried. Once more citizens were greeted by the side of reis, for coming, as well and all NGO' and Women in Black.

We visited notorious Vilina Vlas where 200 Muslim women were sexually abused in 1992, but the proves of this crime, were not sufficient to press charges in the Tribunal of Hague. Milkana and Nadezda from Krusevac, Ivana from Leskovac, Snezana, Ljilja and Y from Belgrade, all of them from Women in Black came close to the spot, in silence and by car. We were shaking of the chill and of Serbian wedding celebration, here and all over the town, on this very same day. We continued our journey in silence, could not speak for a long time, what we felt seemed unspeakable.

Ljiljana Radovanovic



Three stories of one crime

I applied as one of the activists of Women in Black to visit Visegrad on 25th of May. Until then I have never visited any place of crimes committed in my name, too. Because I am Serbian as well. I can not write this report out of routine, as anybody could do. After all I have seen, felt and experienced, wrote from Krusevac. Muddy river, swollen, rain drizzles, it is dark and cold, cold enters the bone, I can feel it, but yet I don't know why, bridge on Drina water, as when I used to read Andric once upon a time, but for a moment. Because there are three thousand red roses on a red canvas. I am suffocating, drowning, the tears shed falling on roses, I feel a heavy stone on my chest, I can not inhale with my whole lungs, I think its over, I will drown. I wonder why, why such a pain, such a shame, so that I can't lift my head, I am afraid what kind of glance is waiting for me. I have to, facing is horrible but inevitable. Slowly, I lift my head, under my eyelids I feel the heat of tears, I have to, I have to look in front of me. There is Bosnian woman, approaches, embraces me and kisses me, she is grateful for our arrival, women are coming along, welcoming us, we introduce ourselves, talk, standing on the bridge with red roses which will flow soon down the Drina river, as a sign on three thousand lives which are lost. In one day. We hold the wreath made of white roses, want it to flow with the red one. Women keep approaching and want a photo with us, saying they want to show it after proudly...they ask us how we are, together with them are children, with their innocent smiles. A hundreds of people on the bridge, hundred of glances. But in one I felt the anger, it was like an arrow sank into my chest. I spoke to myself-people we are not guilty for what have happened, for the crimes committed in our name. But they were committed, now I am witness of what have happened. We are leaving the bridge. White and red roses are floating down the river Drina. Together, without glances of anger nor curse. We are directed toward graveyard. The procession of hundred people slowly goes, step by step. They go to send off their loved ones. I walk petrified, with spasm of pain. And then suddenly, all this silence is broken with sound of music and trumpets, celebration. Wedding, people dancing, Serbian flags raised, flaunt. They shout and sing, warn us with horn on their cars, to move away so they can pass by. The police maintain peace and order. My soul is without peace, could not have it anyway, at this moment. Two children are being buried, innocent souls of a criminal war. Those were their neighbors, they should of start the school together, in 1992. How our memory is short? I walk slower because my burden is heavier. We have arrived at the graveyard. I enter with my head bowed, crying and ashamed. The graveyard is on the hill, I turn back and see Drina and bridge under sunshine. Is it a sign I ask myself. How can I find peace on this earth? The land is cold and wet, just dug, waiting to receive remains of the victims. I smell death, crime and clamminess. And I do not know if this land can change the smell after



thousand of graves inside of her, thousands in one day. I turn my head again watching the city. It seems like nothing happened. And what about graves, pits, a curse I have heard, memories, where we shall put it...souls full of pain, hearts full of sorrow and desperation. The pain spreads all over my chest, more and more and I feel I am breaking slowly, as all of this pain spills in every pore of my existence. I meet two Bosnian women. They say, they have pull their strength to come and visit this place for the first time. Their beloved ones are buried here. We talk, and they offer o me a coffee, Turkish delights, they look at me with great understanding for the glance of mine and my presence. Thank you Amina and Madzida, thank you for your kindness and comprehension, thank you for the coffee which warmed my heart, and your helping hand which healed my soul, thank you for that. Thank you for with it I felt fragrance of blooming acacia, I noticed yellow dandelion, I felt sun warmth, which have appeared somewhere there below the clouds. Just over the bridge and the other bank of Drina river. I turn once more to look once more mass tombs, to remember better all the misdeeds done here, in the name of my people, in my name, because I belong this people, too. The shame I carry with me, inside of me and do not know how I will get rid of it. It is a heavy feeling and a laborious one. You have to live with it. How live those perpetrators who have done all this and proudly still walk through the city. In what kind of country do I live in? Today, I wonder, tomorrow will be the same, and many other days as well. I will wonder as long as I remember one day which was turned into crime place in just one night.

Milkana Pavlovic

Nadezda Kostic from Pescanik (Krusevac), marked her memories on crime in Visegrad in 1992: 'I would like to thank women for giving me the opportunity to be present on 21 anniversary of crimes over Muslim civilians in Visegrad in April of 1992. Earlier I did not know much of these crimes, because in times of war and media blackout, it was not spoken in Serbia. When the bodies were found in Perucac lake, I found out more, but not enough. So, as an antimilitarist, activist and Serbian woman, I wanted to contribute as the one who is ashamed and wishes absolution for the mass crimes which were committed by some of the people there, who are not named nor punished, yet, for their monstrous deeds.'

'When we approached bridge with wreath and when I saw all those people who have gathered to show their respect for their relatives, and friends, victims, I trembled. They started taking photo of us, greeting us, it was obvious it meant to them that we are present. I was proud then, showing everybody that I feel compassion with their pain. I trembled and felt spasms, listening speech of the people from the organizing board. I had in front of my eyes those innocent victims who perished and were tossed into cold Drina river. Especially, I was touched with the speech of a woman who spoke



first of mass crimes of rape in Vilina Vlas hotel, where 200 of women, mothers and girls, served as sexual slaves of Serbian soldiers in the headquarter of Milan Lukic. Thirty of them survived, but many of them committed suicide. Unfortunately, nobody was sentenced for rape crime. It was horrible to me, and I will not stop searching for space for voices of women who survived sexual violence during war time, as well as for the victims of sexual violence in peace time. Also, I liked the speech of mufti who called on peace and harmony, asking people not to be afraid to testify on crimes, because it is the only way they can help themselves, others as well to name perpetrators and convicted.'

'Organizers were especially grateful to Stasa Zajovic and Women in Black. Her speech was touching in the name of Women in Black who are undisputed in their mission so the crimes are not forgotten and that perpetrators are convicted and punished'-she concluded.

'I was very excited and happy when on 25th of May we departed to Visegrad because I did not have to hide to my surrounding where I am going. Everybody wanted to join me and wished me a pleasant journey. Before we entered Bajina Basta, we made a pause near monument to Zivan Djurdjevic, who was tortured in 1943, and literary roasted on a spit, until he died'-wrote Ivana Ristic from Leskovac.

'In Visegrad all around me Serbian flags and music, as all of them waited this very day (for me and many others very sad), to organize wedding. I was shocked and furious who do not have, I would say, ethics, heart, soul, nor shame. I felt ashamed because I belong to this people. I had the need to ask them loudly aren't they ashamed?'

On the bridge of Mehmed pasa Sokolovic are 3000 thousand roses for three thousand victims. I hear people around me talking. They know who the perpetrators are, but they say it is hard to bring them to the justice, they are protected by the state, because there are no evidences. No evidences? And here are so many witnesses. I conclude that people still live in fear.

The messages of reis and activists was: 'Testify of crimes, because if you do not it is a crime too. Hiding the truth is a sin. Do not hate but testify.'

On the graveyard we sent off seven victims of aggressor's crime, and two of them were kids. The girl was born in 1986 and the boy in 1985, it means they were six and seven years old. Tears on the faces of their relatives witness how huge their sorrow is, but also they say they are happy because they have found their remains, which mitigates their pain and victims have found their peace, at last.

It was terrible for me to see a small teddy bear hanging beside the grave on a wooden mark where the seven years old child should have been buried with its mother. The tears started by them selves. The



pain I felt that moment its just mine and I still have it with me. If the kid would have been alive, it would be a 28 old man. What kind of monster we are talking about when akid bothered him only because his name was different?



On the graveyard a boy and a girl, approach us. They express their gratitude and want a photo with all of us. The boy asked since when we have joined the revolution? We

were confused and asked him what the revolution is? He responded: 'The revolution is, I guess, when you are against your people because they are bad.'

'People kept approaching us, grateful for our support and it gives me the strength I need to continue fighting against impunity, to indicate the crimes which were committed by the citizens of my country and to demand justice for the genocide victims'-wrote Ivana Ristic

The days of executions in Prijedor

Activists of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, representatives of the associations of victims, as well as other NGO's, marked the Day of white straps, on 31st of May, by gathering peacefully on the square in Prijedor and honoring civil victims of war, in the city in which in 1992 existed two concentration camps: Omarska and Keraterm. Through those two, thousands of people have passed and couple of thousands have been killed brutally, including 103 children.

The order for marking non-Serbs, gave Milomir Stakic, who was at the head of Crisis Staff of Prijedor municipality. He is convicted by the Tribunal of Hague on 40 years of prison. Also, seventeen more people have been convicted for crimes of Prijedor, too. The message they sent to the authorities was that it is unacceptable that in the centre of the city there is no memorial for civil victims of war, though 3.183 civilians were executed in the city.

The participants of the protest, after walking through the main square of the city, where they think should be the memorial for all civil victims of war, read the list of demands to local authorities, and laid 103 roses for executed children of Prijedor.

They all had white armbands, which is a symbolic reminder on the order of war authorities of Prijedor since 31st of May, 1992., in accordance with which all 'non-Serbs' had to mark their houses with white sheet and they were obliged to wear white straps if they wanted to get out of their houses.



On the banner Women in Black were holding was written-‘31st of May-A world Day of white straps.’

Stasa Zajovic, as a coordinator of Women in Black considers that despite of all, even this kind of gathering is ‘historic’ one for Prijedor. It shows what means joint and pressure in solidarity on municipality authorities, which do not only ignore but as well, humiliate memories of pogrom, torture and humiliation of non-Serb population in Prijedor. ‘It shows the strength of civil society in facing the past, and how necessary it is to create a community in solidarity, of people who will not allow something like that to repeat, in spite of all problems with mechanisms of institutional justice on the international level’-she concluded.

Though, she is disappointed that the activists from all over Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia came, but not the representatives of the local authorities. ‘It shows that an elementary moral order has been disrupted. Today’s action is a scream to establish a watershed between good and evil, because such kind of insensitivity is an act of injustice toward ourselves, and in the first place, toward victims of those horrible, contrary to the mind, fascist crimes’-she concluded.

While the procession walked in dignity, without a permission, out of the local pubs they could of heard loud music, and numerous citizens of Prijedor were sunbathed in their gardens, watching with no interest what is going on. She said it bothered her the most, even more then if there was any kind of incident.

‘Unfortunately, great part of people are manipulated, but we are glad that every year the number of people in these against impunity of crimes, gatherings is growing. However, today the greatest evil is indifference and hiding glances.’

Remembrance you can not forbid

The last day of May we were in Prijedor. We had armbands, white straps, reminder on excluding, marking, destroying those who are different. Local authorities did not allow protest walk, but we walked to main square of the city, with activists of the initiative ‘Because it concerns me,’ people from Banja Luka, Bijeljina, Mostar, Prijedor, Sarajevo, Tuzla, Zagreb, Zenica, followed by the silence of those we were passing by. We wondered whether those who were here in 1992 were ashamed to see white straps once more, on the arms of their citizens?

One of the youngsters in the procession asked the another one:‘Have you ever thought it could be like this?’ Forbidden walk became an act of deliberation of fear, appointment of crimes, refusal of memory on victims only as private act within their families. Mother Meira Dautovic, whose



children were executed in Omarska, came. Other women, too, ex prisoners of Omarska, walked proudly through their city, from which they have been expelled. We were all so happy for being here.

Through concentration camps of Omarska, Trnopolje and Keraterm 31.000 people have passed. The main square is named by Zoran Karlica who was at that time, a leader of Serbian army which have committed in Prijedor's area the most monstrous crimes and a systematic destruction of non-Serb population. A painful irony all around us.

Young people were reading poetry of poets from Prijedor. Goran, a youngster from Prijedor, read a list of demands addressed to local authorities, which still conduct policy of segregation and systematic discrimination, deny crimes, forbid commemorations, do not allow constructing of a memorial for the executed civilians of non-Serb nationality. Around us banners- 'The crime is a crime, no matter how long we are silent-Antifa Prijedor,' 'Remembrance you can not forbid.'

We demanded equality between all the citizens of Prijedor, to stop the fascist practice of 'second-class citizens' and forbidding of remembrance of the victims of those crimes. We have sent a clear message that people who have been killed are not forgotten.

Last year there was one man standing on the square. One year later, many young people stood, first of all from Prijedor, whose civic courage broke the silence of their parents. We laid white and red roses with names of the executed children of Prijedor as a foundation of the forbidden monument. Young people, post-war generations, in a symbolic way, hit a slap in the face of their parents generation, which was silent.

The city was quiet, as no one expected, maybe not even the participants themselves, after so many obstructions, that it will happen for real. During the vigil there were no opened animosities, laid roses were there even hours after participants split. While we talked we asked ourselves if their silence was a sign of review, will the gesture of their children make older generation to face with their memories and speak up.

Young people gave to Day of white straps a new dimension. It became a day of all those who do not want to live in the society where people are excluded and destroyed based on different identity. It is important that those who are building future of Bosnia and Herzegovina realized that there will be no peace without truth regarding past, without facing the guilty or determination of accountability.

It is more important what they have done together, overcoming all the borders which divide them.

Text was written by Natasa Lambic after conversation with Dzana, Ljilja, Marija, Milka, Natasa, Stasa Zajovic, Goran and Vlada with whom she was there.



A better part of Belgrade does not forget crimes of Prijedor

Women in Black have organized a peace action on 23d of May, on the Republic square, at 13,30 in silence and black robes, under the title 'Crimes over women in Bosnia and Herzegovina-we remember.' It was coordinated with association of women from Prijedor-'Izvor.' On the black placards it was written-'In war of Bosnia and Herzegovina more then 20.000 of women were raped,' 'In war of Bosnia and Herzegovina more then two million people were expelled,' 'In war of Bosnia and Herzegovina 97.287 people were killed.'

In the statement of Women in Black it is said that we want to remind with this action on the scale of crimes over women. 'The rapes were conducted on all the sides. Mass and systematic rapes of women during aggression on Bosnia and Herzegovina, were the act of man's hatred over women, but also the act of ethnic cleansing, loot and territorial expansion. Among raped women, the greatest number were Muslim women, and among perpetrators, the greatest number were Serbs. Only in the region of Prijedor 266 women were killed, among them ten girls, and still identified as missing are 107 women.

'Sexual crimes during history were not appointed and punished. Only, thanks to coalitions of solidarity of feminists and legal experts, they have become a part of international and national judiciary. We will never stop demanding spaces for the voices of women who have survived sexual violence in war. We will never stop demanding justice for the victims of sexual violence, both in war and in peace time'-it is said in the statement.

Participants demand punishment for all the responsible for mass and systematic rapes, executions in the death camps in municipality of Prijedor (Omarska, Keraterm, Trnopolje), and of the institutions of Serbian state to stop denial and diminishing of crimes committed in our name, so thus will finally respect dignity of victims, and beside mere and declarative statements of high officials in Serbia, will show the rapture with policy of policy of diminishing and denial of crimes. It has to be followed with a concrete steps on political and criminal level, educational and cultural, too.

'We consider Serbia has to meet those obligations too, so the right to truth and justice is satisfied. It is, first of all, our responsibility toward victims of the crimes committed in our name. By this peace action we continue fighting against the oblivion which prevails in Serbia, we create culture of remembrance, and by it we do contribute to fine neighborly relations and peace in the region'-inform Women in Black on 22nd of May.



By laying white bags, with names of 266 executed women and children of Prijedor, on the central square of the city, on 23d of May the Day of white straps was marked. Symbolism of white straps comes from 31st of May, 1992, when authorities of Bosnian Serbs of Prijedor (later on in other places as well), ordered through local radio, to non-Serb population, obligation of wearing white armbands when they are going out of their houses, and to mark their houses with white sheets. It was a begin-

ning of the campaign of mass executions, rapes, concentration camps, and other crimes, which have resulted with removal of 94% of Muslims and Croats from the territory of Prijedor.

It was the first time since 1939 and Nazi manifesto by which Jews of Poland had to wear yellow ribbons with blue Star of David on their arms, and that members of one ethnic or religious group were marked in this way, for extermination.

A judgment cynical and insulting

On 1st of June, Women in Black together with Association of victims of Zvornik municipality, will mark 21 years of mass crimes over non-Serb population during Serbian aggression on Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 1992. Today, after so many years, they are still searching for the of 611 executed persons, it was said on 31st of May.

It is reminded in the statement that in Bijeli potok in 1992, were committed horrible crimes on the territory of Zvornik. Members of paramilitary formation 'Yellow axis' have expelled, executed and looted approximately 1300 people. Almost one third of them were children. Twenty one years ago, on 1st of June, in Bijeli potok were brought Muslims from seven local communities of Zvornik. They were pushed into trucks, men were divided from women, and children from their parents. All of them who were capable joining the army, were taken to secondary school of Karakaj, and executed-700 people. For those crimes in front of Special Court of Belgrade in 2010, were sentenced Brano Grujic on six years of prison and Branko Popovic on fifteen years of prison.

'The judgments are low and it is cynical and insulting for the victims. The judgment makes victims suspicious toward institutional legal system, which showed this time, again, that it does not meet the justice. Moreover, by this sentence, the crimes are not only unpunished, but the impression is that they are even worth of committing'-it is concluded in the statement.

The statement emphasize that Women in Black have continued friendship and cooperation and joint work, with the families of victims, after the judgments, creating just peace in the region, by doing so.



Nothing for armament

Due to 24th of May-International Day of women actions for peace and disarmament, Women in Black issued a statement demanding of: 'Serbian Parliament to disable purchase of fighter planes from any state and that Ministry of defense and other officials should be prevented from arbitrary negotiations, and especially from signing the contract.'

'In spite of serious deficit in the budget of the state, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense-Aleksandar Vucic, after meeting Russian Minister of Defense, revealed that a purchase of Russian planes-MIG 29 M2, are a done deal.

Assessments of the experts are published-Serbia would need at least a billion euro for the squadron of 12-16 planes, since the price on the world market for modern and multi-purpose combat aircraft is between 50 and 100 million of euro. Maintaining and exploitation of this squadron would cost 250 million of dollars, which is one third of military budget'-it is said in the statement.

'Preparations for this huge procurement are not transparent, Parliament did not have a discussion, and we are sure that there would be a group of responsible deputies who would point out the danger of such spending, and which would for certain push Serbia into unnecessary and irrational credit. Because, financial means with which state dispose so far, are not even sufficient for fuel supply or pilot trainings.

We emphasize that publicity is not well informed upon the exact international obligation of Serbia in keeping its airspace, meaning it can be conducted without the announced adventurous investment, with huge expenditures due to megalomania of the state leadership. Behind so called 'international obligations' which can be met without huge expenditures, is hidden a thesis which comes from military circles-that a strong aviation is necessary as a factor of distraction. It becomes expensive and daredevil doctrine, within the state of dilapidated hospitals and schools, and people whose nutrition is based on digging out of container garbage.

The experience of Serbia shows that the army was used as dangerous instrument of hegemony and only, in the last two decades. The purchase of those modern aircrafts shows that dangerous nationalist ideas are not past, yet. Serbia is a poor country and the money spent for military purposes is a direct jeopardize for existential minimum of the majority of its population, especially the vulnerable groups.

Instead of military expenditures, it is necessary to invest in education, in the health care, social care, science and culture'-stated Women in Black on 24th of May.

Only poor Vojvodina is a good one

On 8th of May, Women in Black have organized a discussion in Belgrade, under the title-'Vojvodina-tragedy or farce of one autonomy.'

Participants analyzed in most of the cases, the situation in Vojvodina, just before and after Brussel's agreement, regarding relations Belgrade and Pristina. Laslo Vogel, publicist, says that when it comes to Vojvodina, then Democratic Party and Serbian Progressive Party, on the same tracks. He evaluated that Vojvodina will be a collateral damage and a compensation for the loss of Kosovo.

When on 12th of April, in Novi Sad, was organized protest, by the side of province opposition, and some of the associations of citizens, who have demanded a resign of Bojan Pajtic, premier of Vojvodina, as well as giving up the adoption of the Declaration on the Protection of the constitutional and legal rights of Vojvodina, the outcome of Brussel's negotiations was unknown.

Dr Slobodan Sadzakov from the Univeristy of Novi Sad, said the meeting was organized in Belgrade. Vojvodina's club, in accordance with Law on information of public importance, demanded information regarding meeting in April. They have found only that it was held on the place where it is for-

bidden in accordance with city rule book, because the only spots which are not forbidden are near SPENS and near Miletic. They could not find out how much the meeting costs, and a request to set the stage came from the union 'SLOGA.'

Vegel says that offices of Serbian Progressive Party and Socialist Party of Serbia, are their fractions and the nest of their extremists is in Vojvodina.

Djordje Subotic, president of Vojvodina's club, considers that after Brussel agreement on Kosovo, it is a right time for the new constitution which will define Vojvodina as a Republic. 'We can expect various things of Constitution since 2006, because it allows elimination of existing and creation of new autonomous regions. The Constitution prescribes substantial autonomy for Kosovo and a false one for Vojvodina, which is in laws of Serbia defined as budget expenditure of 7%'-says Subotic. He predicted that after loss of Kosovo, 'Serbia of memorandum' will move to Vojvodina.

The Declaration should have been formulated immediately after the decision of Constitutional Court in July, last year, in accordance with which its 22 jurisdictions are abolished, said Subotic. One of the provisions of the law on determination of the jurisdiction of Vojvodina, which was declared as unconstitutional, is the one which considers Vojvodina's territory to be consisted of Banat, Backa and Srem. Every action provokes a reaction, so one of the producers of chocolate in Vojvodina, after this kind of decision made a new recipe: a chocolate with three fillings-Backa, Banat and Srem.

In Vojvodina, everything turns to Cyrillic, the architecture of the province is being deformed, the streets which are urban and show that Vojvodina is different then south Serbia-vanish. Instead of baroque, which is a standard in Vojvodina, they build churches in Byzantine style. But, Subotic considers there is a hope since 2000, when on a local festival won a new song from Vojvodina, under the title-'Vojvodina is not for sale.'

The 'Third Balkan War', as a sociologist Janja Bec Neumann qualifies period since the Vojvodina 'jogurt revolution' in October 1988, until 1999, was financed with money from Vojvodina. 'There is still something to be plundered. That is the motive of the decision of last summer to abolish the autonomy of Vojvodina. There will not be no autonomy as long as there is something to rob'- she concluded.

Sadzakov agrees with her, when he says-'Serbian nationalism feeds itself with robbery and centralism, blind for its own economic interest.'

Vegel sees that Vojvodina is sharply divided on radical and a civic one, since 1945. 'The autonomy is not the question of Vojvodina but of the state. If Vojvodina would not want it, then Belgrade should

VOJVODANSKI KLUB VAJIDASÁGI KLUB VOJVODINSKÝ KLUB CLUBUL VOIVODOINEI ВОЈВОЂАНСКИ КЛУБ VOJVODINAKO CÍDÍPE



of persuade it. While there was SFRJ, Belgrade had a counterbalance, corrective Ljubljana, Zagreb, Sarajevo...After the split of SFRJ, Belgrade remains a lonely city without benchmark, competitive spirit, which helps economic development. Autonomy is a synonym of democracy. It is liberal idea in the essence because it bridles power of majority.'

Dr Bec Neumann considers Vojvodina decays since 1918. In accordance with GDP and share of literate percentage in the population as whole, Vojvodina was on second place in SFRJ. Now, it is noted only by the nostalgic ones. Since 'Turkish times' Serbs are settled in north. Out of 32,8% of Serbs, as much as it was within the population of Vojvodina in 1918, today they are close to 70%. At the same time, in Vojvodina there is 50.000 less Croats and 150.000 less Hungarians, compared to 1991. Approximately, 260.000 SFRJ refugees came to Vojvodina, more than after Second World War and the gap between them and natives is mitigated by force.

'Nationalist beast does not manage in Vojvodina, because 30% of the population are not Serbs and in Vojvodina just know how to live with others'-said Bec.

Sadzakov and Subotic agree that Socialdemocratic League of Vojvodina and its idea of autonomy are on the low level. 'Nenad Canak pays the price of show biz and godfather story. He should retreat due to calculations and affairs'-Sadzakov said. Subotic said that Socialdemocratic League of Vojvodina lost its way because it was based on personal ties of Canak and Boris Tadic. Judita Popovic, deputy of Liberal-democratic Party, evaluated that Alliance of Hungarians of Vojvodina is a holder of those ideas, but with the concept of territorial autonomy, so that Serbian nationalism loses its exclusivity.

Bec started speaking on phenomena of 'white spots' of Vojvodina, of which there are no debates. Vojvodina did not face concentration camps formed on its territory during 1991, let alone with those after Second World War. In accordance with German data, 60.000 of Germans have perished in those camps, with their full names and surnames. It was more than one quarter of the population in Vojvodina of that time. Out of 540.000 acres of land in Vojvodina which was nationalized, 400.000 belonged to Germans-said Bec.

Vegel added that 1944 was the worse for Hungarians from Vojvodina. All over villages in Vojvodina were boxes, placed for 'suspicious' Germans and Hungarians. The result was 'strict-court'. In Subotica, a person who was 'too feminine' and inclined German officer for money, perished.

He reminded that the ethnic cleansing was conducted in 1990 by direct threats or by expulsion from the municipal services, especially courts. Subotic said that it was not only Hrtkovci where Croats were expelled from, but also they were leaving in great number from Novi Slankamen and Kukujevi. In Ruma, professors who were not of Serbian nationality, were expelled from their jobs and refugees of Serbian nationality were employed.

Popovic agreed there was no facing the past in Vojvodina, not the first time, and second time as well, during XX century.

Awarded in spite of all

Women in Black was among invited during marking International Day of fight against homophobia and transphobia, which was marked thirteen times in the world, and in Serbia nine times. LGBT persons, on 17th of May, this year, in Student park, organized a colorful picnic. With colorful chairs, balloons, delivering fortune cookies to citizens, with increased security measures. Though Serbia has laws which punish discrimination and homophobia, the reality is different.

With ban of Pride Parade, several times, and constant threats with violence, the state withdraw in front of violators, and to members of LGBT community, were deprived from their right to freedom of assembly.

During last year, three final judgments were noted, for the discrimination of gay population-against one daily news, politician and a person who discriminated his or hers colleague due to assumption of his or hers sexual orientation.



Department on organization, prevention and police work of Police Department within Ministry of Internal Affairs in Serbia, are awarded with first 'Rainbow' award, which provides Gay-Straight Alliance.

Among journalists were Office for human and minority rights, Ministry of justice and state administration, director of theater piece 'Perverted'-Andrej Nosov, and Gordana Mitrovic-first trans person who spoke of their problems and based on whose life was filmed a movie-'When I was a boy, I was a little girl,' which was shown at Berlin festival.

The war broke hearts

On 17th and 18th of May, ninth forum of transitional justice was held in Jahorina. The main issue was a reconciliation in Yugoslav postwar countries. More than 200 people from Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosovo, attended. Women in Black were presented by Ljiljana Radovanovic.

Initiative to form a fact-finding commission on the victims of the wars in the former Yugoslavia, (REKOM). The holders of this initiative are NGO's from all over ex Yugoslavia and they demand out of post-war countries to form the commission as the interstate one.

A member of Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Zeljko Komsic, espoused on 17th of May for reconciliation, by saying it is the precondition for normal life of the citizens in the region.

'People want ordinary life, job that can be lived off, hope for the future of their children. Without reconciliation, equality, economic prosperity, it will be difficult to preserve the hope'-he said on opening

ceremony. He added that people were so tied on the territory of ex Yugoslavia, so war broke ties, but also hearts of the people in this region.

Representative of the President of Croatia-Tonci Stancic said facing the past and clarification of the role of all in this region, is a precondition for cooperation and regional stability. 'It is hard to go further with the burden of past.' To him, trials for war crimes can not be the only instrument of reconciliation and stability, nor they are enough so that voices of the victims could be heard and the justice for them, fulfilled. 'The victims must not remain without names, their identity has to be determined.' He added in Croatia they are still searching for 1705 missing people.

Personal Representative of the President of Kosovo-Selim Selimi, evaluated the region demands joint work on peace and seek for justice in the region. 'The need for justice is more important then the need of the court. We have to do everything to find out destiny of missing people'-Salimi said.

Dino Mustafic, director, said that reconciliation means 'appreciation of pain and suffering of others. We can not and should not forget what have happened, but we can forgive.'

Regarding transitional justice we can not say that there have been great changes in the region, we have expected. Some have specified that Tribunal of Hague have contributed to this, claiming it could of contributed much more to transitional justice. Religious dignitaries of all three faiths, denied they have contributed in any way for war to happen, nor they invoked hatred. Mostly they agree they should contribute to reconciliation in the region and that their prayers and efforts provide it in the region.

Second day of forum started with a session of experiences in North Ireland. Avila Kilmurray, in the name of Community Foundation from Northern Ireland said-'Reconciliation consisted of numerous layers: political, institutional, national and individual. For the reconciliation is the most important to listen victims, not to contest her/his facts, and try to understand. We should hear perpetrators, too.'

During session from the perspective of scientific community, Denis Kostovic, in the name of London school of economics, said that there is no reconciliation if the victim and the perpetrator are equalized. The attendants have mentioned that there is no reconciliation without comprehending war events, the context they have happened within. 'We do not need the reconciliation with those who think the way we do, but with the opposite side. We have to quarrel with them properly at the first place and reach reconciliation. When it comes to it, victims must not be number or statistics, they got their names and last names, where they have been killed and under which conditions.'

Speaking of contribution of culture to reconciliation, almost the same examples have mentioned Lazar Stojanovic from Serbia and Dino Mustafic from Sarajevo. They agreed it is not easy to make artistic programs which are related to the events of the past. Many artist earn for their living and live of their salaries, so directors



and actors have to record and act what is not problematic for the authorities, and theater pieces and movies are made with financial support out of budget. Just few of them got the possibility to send their messages to their people or others regarding war. Representative of victims said-‘When I say that Srpska Republic has been soaked with blood of our children, they respond it is not polite to say something like that.’

During session-Reconciliation out of perspective of civil society, mostly they spoke on cooperation of victims in the region. Some of them have the attitude that it should include association of veterans and ex prisoners, so we can see what have happened. As the most significant inheritance of the Tribunal of Hague, it was emphasized that it contributed to find out the truth on crimes, and it made judgments by which was said that rape is a war crime and a crime against humanity.

Participants have attended play ‘If this would be a movie,’ directed by Dino Mustafic, based on a story written by Almir Imsirevic.

Ljiljana Radovanovic

Women’s art festival in Pristina

FemmesFatalesFestival (FFF), organized by ARTPOLIS-Centre for Development of art, was held in Pristine since 27th until 29th of May, in Oda Theater, in a sport centre ‘Boro and Ramiz’, which still keeps the same name. And all of the passers by we have asked would respond so, and even they would try to answer in Serbian though we have raised our question in English. The city pulsate with youthful energy and vibrancies, we were meeting our dear friends all the time on the streets or in pubs of Pristine.

Zana Krasnici (Krasniqi) a founder of ARTPOLIS and her team have organized very well the first attempt of theirs. It is four days of program-theater plays, movies, exhibitions, debates, concerts, promotions, performances...Unfortunately, we and Dah Theater could not stay longer then one day and a half, so we could not see much more. It was really touchy to see young volunteers, Albanians and Serbs, how cooperate and communicate, though they are from Gracanica, Laplje village, how they welcome guests of FFF, and through politically engaged art and activism participate in peace building.

Second day of festival, there was a projection of short movies under the title ‘Women in war,’ by young directors from Kosovo. Four of them were shown-‘Return,’ by Bljerta Zekiri (Zeqiri), 21 min-



ute, 'Lullaby' which lasted four minutes, 'Empty bucket,' of 21 minute, by Antonete Kastrati and 'Shkurta,' by Arzane Kraja, lasting 20 minutes. All of them are about bombing in 1999. And all of them are connected by highest esthetic values, poetic expression, clear political and ethic principles. No trace of a trap of auto-victimization. It is about extremely responsible engaged art. They show immeasurable suffering of Albanian people, first of all women. Perpetrators of crimes-Serb armed forces are appointed in a rather discreet way. We, who are from Belgrade, felt as always when we visit places of crimes committed in our name, anger and shame. We stopped breathing due to care and tenderness for women and girls who were victims war sexual violence. 'It is facing with ourselves, patriarchal mentality, which blames women and children'-siad Zeciri after the projection. Kosova media were appointed too, because they named children born after war rape-'children of shame' but also were mentioned men who supported women who gave birth after war crime of rape. The movie was awarded in the most prestigious festivals of the world. In Serbia they have not been seen yet, though it would be high time for something like that.

At night was theater play 'Crossing the line,' based on the book Women side of war, made by Zorica Trifunovic and Lina Vuskovic. It is a collection of women's testimonies on war, on the territory of ex Yugoslavia, between 1991 until 1999. Directed by Diana Milosevic, it initiates question of facing the truth, the importance of women solidarity, out of all borders and divisions.

It was accepted extraordinary, with honest warmth, great attention. At the end, the audience stood up and applauded actors and the whole team of Dah Theater. This time, as always, we felt great confidence, mutual wish for communication, visits, joint work...

Stasa Zajovic

Impresum

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