

# WOMEN AND GENDER

IN THE LAST TWO  
DECADES OF XX  
CENTURY IN KOSOVO



MANUAL

Teaching History from  
a Gender Perspective

# WOMEN AND GENDER

IN THE LAST TWO DECADES OF  
XX CENTURY IN KOSOVO

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# Introduction

## Why this manual?

This manual, which focuses on the gender perspective in the new history of Kosovo, seeks to raise awareness and knowledge of gender as an analytical category in the teaching of history and participation of women in important historical processes and events at the end of '80s and '90s of XX century. Further, the manual seeks to empower teachers in Kosovo in applying the gender perspective and analysis while developing materials and textbooks for elementary and high schools. The manual can also be used for the subjects of sociology and civic education, and for inter-curricular topics in high school. The chapters presented in this manual seek to:

- Promote gender as an analytical category in teaching history so that students understand and learn about the social constructs of gender and history;
- Apply gender analysis in various historical sources to develop critical thinking and gender sensitivity;
- Include visual methodologies in the teaching of history in order to foster interactive learning, critical thinking, and teamwork on topics concerning gender and women in history.

- Encourage curiosity and skill in historical research with a gender perspective.

The manual is based on competence development-based teaching for competencies foreseen in the curriculum framework. Critical teaching of history from a gender perspective shall enable students to examine, understand, and raise questions on gender, gender norms, and relations in present-day history.

## To whom is the manual dedicated to?

This manual is envisaged as a complementary resource to be used by teachers of History. In compliance with the curricula documents issued by the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation of the Republic of Kosovo – MESTI, the chapters in this manual are dedicated to students of X and XII grades for the subject of History. However, they can be also used in other subjects of the curriculum, such as Society and Environment, Civic Education, Sociology, Psychology, and Philosophy and Logics, for X, XI and XII grades, depending on the content of programs for these subjects.

## What is the content of the manual?

The manual comprises of five chapters, including an introduction, basic material, and methodological instructions on how to use the material:

**Chapter I.** Gender, women, and the conflict in Kosovo 1989-1999

**Chapter II.** Independent/parallel institutions: Civic mobilization and daily life

**Chapter III.** Women's activism in the 1990s

**Chapter IV.** Resistance paradigm shift

**Chapter V.** History teaching from a gender perspective

The descriptive parts offer students the necessary information to comprehend the basic concepts and the gender perspective in history learning for the '80s and '90s of the XX century in Kosovo. The interactive parts provide teachers with strategies and examples for interaction that place students at the centre, thus encouraging among them critical thinking and active learning. The descriptive and interactive parts relate to one another and are supported by additional explanatory materials (assignments, reflection questions, and a glossary of key terms).

## How to use the Manual?

The chapters provide a supplementary and alternative material for history textbooks currently in use. Each chapter in the Manual can be used for one or more teaching classes not only in the subject of History but also in other subjects of the curricula, such as Society and Environment, and in inter-curricular cases.

The Manual provides a triple teaching and participation methodology:

1. Descriptive and introductory part by the teachers;
2. Group work; and
3. Individual work.

These three methodological segments are interrelated and contain respective resources and illustrations. Teachers are encouraged to use the Manual based on the learning results and use it as a starting point to integrate a gender perspective in history teaching.

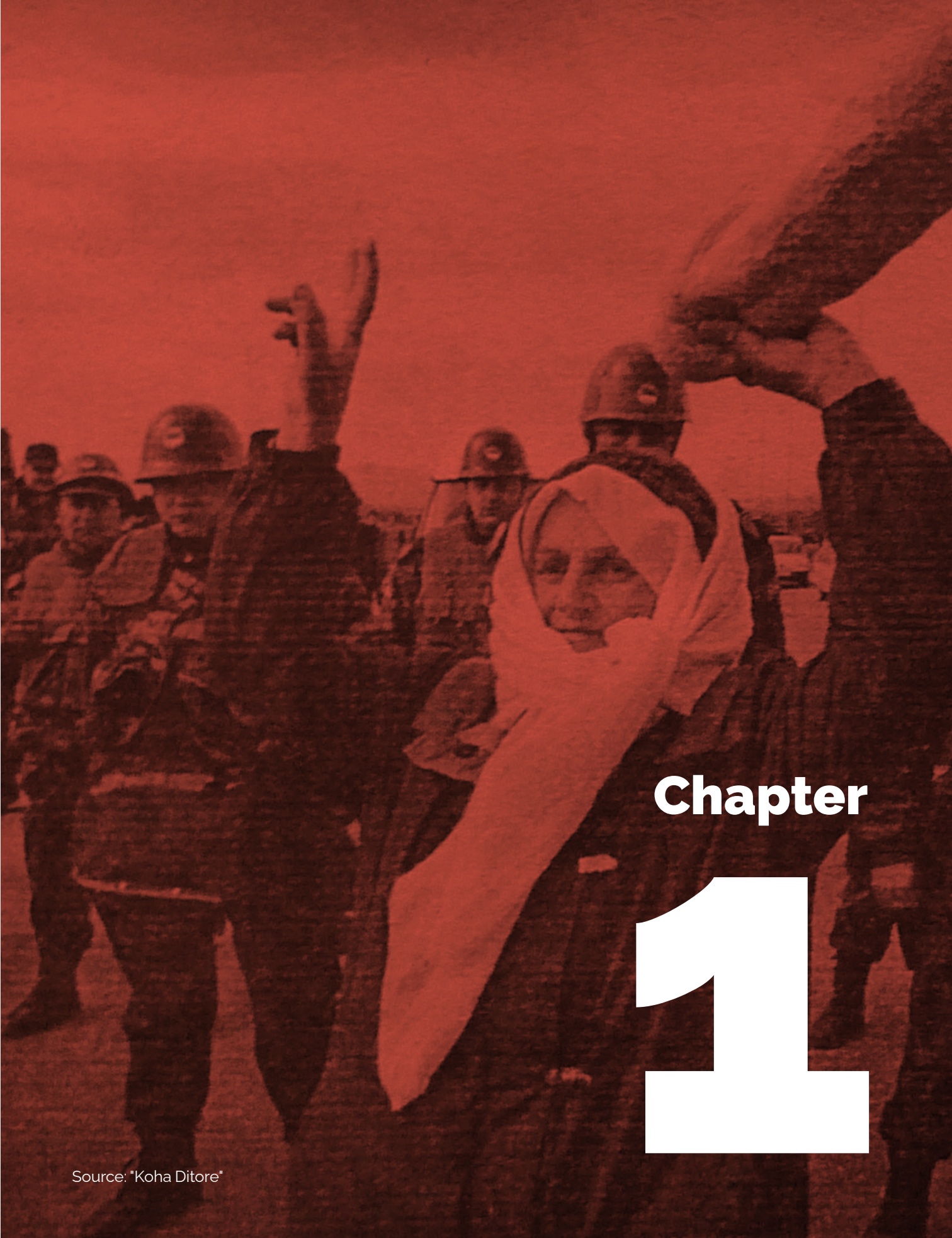
## How was this Manual drafted?

In 2021, the forumZFD – Program in Kosovo initiated an independent study on gender representation in textbooks about History for high schools in order to encourage actions supported by the findings of the study on the integration of the gender perspective. The Organisation forumZFD is an international non-governmental organization (INGO) founded in Germany in 1996. forumZFD works in the field of

conflict transformation in Europe, the Middle East, and South-East Asia. In Kosovo, this organization focuses on topics of dealing with the past and peace education. The research was followed by workshops, with the participation of MESTI representatives, scholars, civil society representatives, teachers, and journalists, where they discussed about the study findings and identified the approaches, events, and topics to be included in the manual. The workshop increased their knowledge of gender perspective and activism of women at the end of the '80s and '90s and contributed to shaping the key pillars of the manual. Aiming for suitable material for the teachers, the data followed by the study and the workshop reflections are included in the teaching plans compiled by the group that worked on drafting the manual.

Further, the work on the manual was inspired by the contribution of many women in the new history of Kosovo and by the activism on increasing the visibility of women in the public realm such as education, science, economy, politics and culture. This manual is an initial but significant step to constructing a gender perspective history. As such, the manual shall increase the awareness of gender perspective in the social dynamics and institutional teaching of history.





# Chapter

# 1

Source: "Koha Ditore"

# Gender, women, and the conflict in Kosovo in 1998-1999

■ *The term conflict is used here to indicate political and armed conflict between states or even within a state.*

■ *Article 13 of Resolution 1325 stipulates:*

*[The Resolution] Encourages all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants;*

**Discuss:** *Why the United Nations differentiate between various gender needs and how does it relate to the gender aspect in conflict?*

Gender and gender role differences between men and women are a social construct. Gender is constructed through (the) interaction with social structures. Beliefs and values on differentiated gender roles and power relations are central to the social dynamics before, during, and after the conflict. In a society with large power differences between women and men, men act mainly in the public sphere, whereas women (are) in the private sphere of their homes and families. Conflicts affect women and girls differently than men and boys. Various factors such as ethnicity, age, social and economic class, ability etc., impact the shaping of conflict experiences and the overcoming of gender differences. Gender roles that could have been traditionally determined as woman/man before the conflict change as a result of the conflict.

The word "conflict" stems from the Latin word *conflictus*, which means clash/dispute.

In a conflict, all social and institutional structures become targets of attack through various forms and strategies that are used. When understood as such, conflict concerns politics, power, the fight between states/peoples, the rebuilding of institutions, and peace-making. To better understand the conflict, one should take into consideration four components.

Gender is an element of conflict that does not concern only women. Gender and women should be seen as protagonists in the conflict. The focus not only on women but on gender too involves an analysis of ideas as to what is considered feminine (femininity) and what is considered masculine (masculinity) and the forms of gender study that not only define conflict but are also defined by the conflict. A gender analysis addresses (the) gender roles of women and men and the relations between men and women during the conflict. A gender analysis of the conflict identifies the nature of how gender changes during the conflict and the gender dimensions in the peace-making process.<sup>1</sup> Women are often seen as victims in situations of conflict. However, they play multiple roles. They are mothers, caregivers in the family, fighters, and peace activists. Civilians, especially women and children, are the majority of those who are affected by armed conflicts, including refugees and displaced persons. This urged the United Nations to adopt Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security to address gender issues in conflicts and peace-making<sup>2</sup>.

Resolution 1325 brings to the attention the differentiated gender influence and recognizes the contribution of women and men for sustainable peace through equal participation in conflict transformation processes and structures.

Gender scholars argue that nation, national identity, and nationalism function through gender. They have emphasized that women, in the nationalist outlook and practice, as cultural forms, as embodied signifiers and activists, play a biological role in social reproduction.



*Propaganda poster in the period of Fascist Italy. Translated text:*

- The Italian woman with her sacrifices marches together with the fighters

Source: <https://galvanjacqueline.wordpress.com/2016/04/15/gino-boccasile-opticc-5/>



- Dhaskarina Pinoçi - Laskarina Bubulina; Fighter and commander of warship Agamemnon during the Liberation War of Greece (1821)

Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laskarina\\_Bouboulina](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laskarina_Bouboulina)



- “If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring in a folding chair”

Shirley Anita St. Hill Chisholm was the first African-American woman in Congress (1968) and the first African-American woman who rasked for nomination for President of the United States from one of the two main political parties (1972)

Source: <https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/shirley-chisholm>

It is a well-known fact that a nation often is symbolized by a woman and vice-versa, women often serve as symbolic signifiers of the cultural identity of a group that includes the repository of its traditions, reproduction, originality, and its labor force and soldiers<sup>3</sup>. Thus, against this analysis of structural inequalities in a conflict one should also look into the stories that maintain the national identity. Who are the heroes and heroines? How are women portrayed? How are men portrayed?

In Kosovo, the main stories on history, remembrance, and commemoration focus on men, and values of masculinity shape the processes of “national imagining” – or how a nation is imagined. In this imagining, women's roles relate to the family, as one of the main gender roles for them. However, women in Kosovo played an active role in the state-forming processes too. They participated in the efforts for independence. Likewise, women were active in the armed resistance, in the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). Yet, in general, the role of women in state-forming processes was not duly dealt with or remembered compared to that of men<sup>4</sup>. Women's participation in the state-forming processes produces potential emancipating and liberating material, and challenges traditional views of femininity and masculinity. However, even post-conflict women remain “secondary” activists and are always pushed toward the private sphere. Therefore, we ask: why do women remain invisible in the history of conflict, collective remembrance, peace-making, and state-forming processes?

Methodological instructions on  
how to use the manual

## Gender, women, and the conflict in Kosovo in 1998-1999

**Duration:** 1 x 45 min.

Learning results:

- Describes the concepts of gender, conflict, and gender roles during the conflict. .
- Makes a distinction of gender influence on society during and after the conflict.
- Argues about the gender perspective and contribution of women activists in history.

### ACTIVITY 1

The teacher divides students into groups. The teacher asks the groups to fill in the table below. "Describe the concepts of Gender, Conflict, and Gender Roles in Conflict":

1.	Gender	Conflict	Gender Role in Conflict

**ACTIVITY 2**

The teacher asks the students to read carefully the basic material and respond to questions using the approach “Through her/their eyes (viewpoints).”

Referring to the text in Topic #1 think about and respond to these questions:

**Group 1:**

1. What is the role of gender under conflict circumstances?
2. Should gender responsibility be divided under conflict circumstances?
3. How does conflict influence gender roles?

**Group 2:**

1. What types of conflict are you aware of?
2. How was the term conflict used in this manual?
3. How are women viewed during (a) conflict?

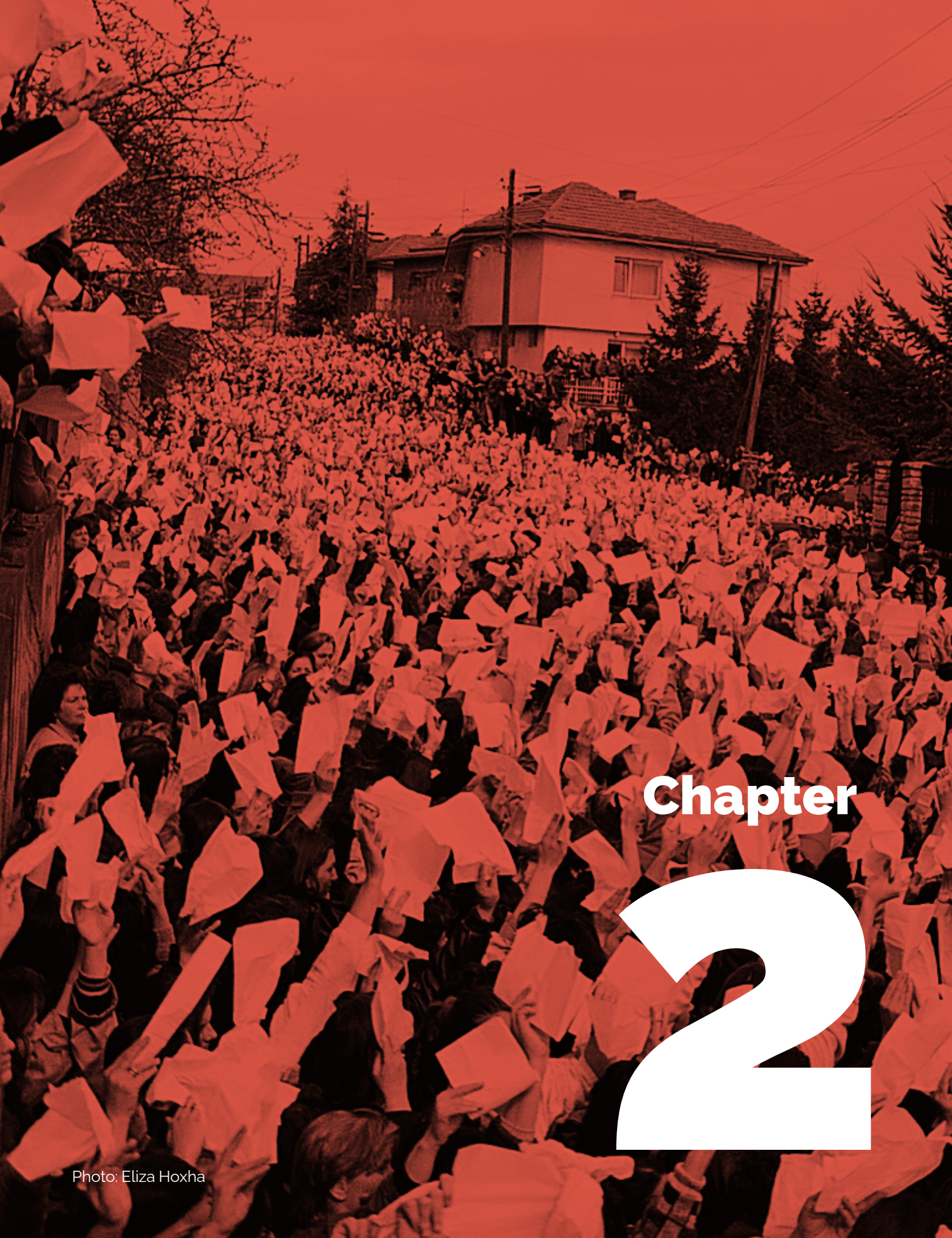
**Group 3:**

1. What do gender scholars argue about the gender role in shaping nations?
2. Discuss why the United Nations Organization makes a distinction between various gender needs and how does this distinction relate to the gender aspect during (a) conflict.
3. Based on the text, analyse how women are portrayed during the conflict.

**ACTIVITY 3**

Discuss with the students the four key elements for conflict analysis:

1. Profile. To determine the conflict profile, some of the questions to be asked are: (i) What is the context of the conflict? (ii) What is the history of the conflict? (iii) Which political, economic, and social institutions and structures have shaped the conflict?
2. Actors. We should ask (i) Who are the influential actors in the conflict? (ii) Who are the key actors? (iii) and what are their interests, goals, hopes, positions, preferences, expectations, and motivations?
3. Causes. Here we research into (i) What causes a conflict? (ii) Which are the structural and immediate causes?
4. Conflict dynamics. We ask, (i) What are the conflict dynamics? (ii) What incites a conflict? And (iii) Which scenarios could be built?



**Chapter**

**2**

Photo: Eliza Hoxha

# Independent/parallel institutions: Civic mobilization and daily life

*Based on the willpower expressed with decisiveness Kosovo-wide by the majority of the Kosovo population, a willpower that was sublimated even in the statements of the ASHA of Kosovo about the new constitutional position of Kosovo, and based on the role and position of the Kosovo Assembly as the highest representative and constitutional body of the power and self-governing in Kosovo, the Assembly of Kosovo solemnly stated:*

## ■ The Constitutional Declaration

*On Kosovo as an independent and equal unit in the framework of the Yugoslav Federation (Confederation) as an equal subject with the other units of the Federation (Confederation).*

The end of the 1980s and 1990s of the previous century brimmed with various forms of resistance, which, if we were to make a definition and description of how they emerged as accurate historical units, would be difficult to achieve. In that period there existed a type of similarity and continuity inside the atmosphere, events, and patriotic feelings that permeated the Albanian population in Kosovo, as part of (the) socialist Yugoslavia.

In February 1989, the Belgrade power decreed an extraordinary state of affairs and put in place the "special measures" for Kosovo. Hereafter, discrimination against Albanians was legitimised, a discrimination that was convincingly sealed by imposing the Law of the Republican Assembly of Serbia in Kosovo, and amending the Constitution of 1974, which, until that time, guaranteed Kosovo the status of an autonomous province<sup>5</sup>. In the program of 30 March 1990, published in the Official Gazette of Serbia, entitled "The program to establish peace, freedom, democracy, and prosperity in the Autonomous Serbian Province of Kosovo", a series of legal amendments came into power, enabling a transfer of competencies from all state structures of Kosovo to the Serbian structures, namely to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Serbia<sup>6</sup>. This furthered the exclusion of the Albanian population from the state structures of Yugoslavia.



The Kosovo Democratic League (LDK) was established in December 1989. This party served as a leader of the political platform of Kosovo in the 1990s. LDK followed a peaceful approach, especially in relation/ about to the strategy for (a) peaceful resistance against the system – in hopes that through such form of resistance, they could garner international support in relation to the Albanian cause in Yugoslavia. LDK hoped that the domino effect of the fall of communist systems would hit Yugoslavia too before something more tragic happened<sup>7</sup>. This period corresponds to the time when other party alternatives emerged in Kosovo, such as the ecological party Union for the Democratic Yugoslav Initiative known as UJDI (in Serbo-Croatian Udruženje za Jugoslovensku Demokratsku Inicijativu), the Social Democratic Party, and the Youth Parliament (later the Parliamentary Party) and the Republican Party<sup>8</sup>. Of all these parties, LDK had the biggest support.

In 1991, more than half of the Albanians were fired from their jobs. Afterwards, the police state was installed in Kosovo<sup>9</sup>. In September 1991 all Albanian delegates of the Kosovo Assembly summoned a referendum to declare the independence of Kosovo. 99.87 % of the delegates (representing 87% of the electorate) voted pro-independence. On 7 September 1990, Kosovo was declared a Republic within Yugoslavia, writes (Zëri i Kosovës, 22 September 1990, 1.)

In 1990, we see other forms of resistance emerging, characteristic of that period in history. The resistance practices and the language used to express dissatisfaction went through a visible transformation that was collectively internalized. Gestures such as lighting candles on balconies to commemorate victims of violence, signing a declaration-petition entitled for democracy, against violence, honking car horns at specified times to mark mourning

■ *Kosovo was declared an independent and sovereign Republic on 17 February 2008, whereas the independence declared in 1991 concerned securing the equal status within Yugoslavia. After the dissolution of Yugoslavia by the former-Yugoslav wars, in 2008 Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia.*



# GAZETA ZYRTARE E KRAHINËS SOCIALISTE AUTONOME TË KOSOVËS

Nr. 21	Prishtinë, më 3 korrik 1990	VITI XLV
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Në bazë të të drejtave sovranë të popullit të Kosovës, duke përfshirë edhe të drejtën për vetëvendosje, Kuvendi i Krahinës Socialiste Autonome të Kosovës, në mbledhjen e përbashkët të të gjitha dhemave të mbledhur më 2 korrik 1990; Kushtetut dhe shpallë këtë

### DEKLARATA

Duke u nisur nga vullneti i shprehur vendas, miratim anëtarëve Kosovës nga ana e shumtës së popullit të Kosovës, vullneti ky i shprehur edhe në deklaratën e ASHA të Kosovës në prill të 1978 dhe kushtetutit të Kosovës, si dhe duke u nisur nga roli dhe pozita e Kuvendit të Kosovës si organ përfaqësues dhe kushtetutiv dhe më i lartë i pushtetit dhe i vetëqeverisjes në Kosovë, Kuvendi i Kosovës solemnisht shpall:

1. Kuvendi i Kosovës, formë në nxjerrjen e Kushtetutit të re të Kosovës, tash e tutje do të komunikojë publikisht me këtë emër duke e emëruar njëkohësisht bashkësisht shoqëro-politike organ i pushtetit të shtetit, vetëm si Kosovë.

2. Deklarata kjo në fuqi menjshërbë dhe e njëjta shpallë në „Gazetën zyrtare të KSAK“.

KK Numër 010-22/90  
Prishtinë, më 3 korrik 1990  
Kuvendi i Krahinës Socialiste Autonome të Kosovës  
Kryesia e mbledhjes  
Bashkëpunuesi, d.v.

### DELEGATËT E KUVENDIT TË KSA TË KOSOVËS, NËNSHKRIMTË TË DEKLARATËS

1. Bajram Gjurgjeala, d.v.
2. Refik Raka, d.v.
3. Zymer Lulaj, d.v.
4. Osman Nuhaj, d.v.
5. Muhamet Shabani, d.v.
6. Halit Kryeziu, d.v.
7. Nazim Kelmendi, d.v.
8. Milazim Vllah, d.v.
9. Nasir Berisha, d.v.
10. Malqo Bajoku, d.v.
11. Agim Dabaj, d.v.
12. Daut Jashanica, d.v.
13. Ismail Sauti, d.v.
14. Selim Gashi, d.v.
15. Agim Morina, d.v.
16. Uro Gashi, d.v.
17. Zeynep Broqi, d.v.
18. Bakir Krasniqi, d.v.
19. Nasir Sullani, d.v.
20. Nasir Matoshi, d.v.
21. Nevil Abdullahu, d.v.
22. Ismail Gashi, d.v.
23. Shemsedin Ibrahim, d.v.
24. Adem Vllah, d.v.
25. Adem Mikollovi, d.v.
26. Edin Dzhahiri, d.v.
27. Halim Demaj, d.v.
28. Nasir Gashi, d.v.
29. Rafi Ruzdaj, d.v.
30. Durim Muhaxheri, d.v.
31. Fetije Shala, d.v.
32. Birjona Jusufi, d.v.
33. Adem Ademi, d.v.
34. Veli Haxha, d.v.
35. Azem Ndziri, d.v.
36. Qemal Bajraktari, d.v.
37. Hamit Baci, d.v.
38. Sabit Berisha, d.v.
39. Lucie Laj, d.v.
40. Muharem Shabani, d.v.
41. Mehmet Ibrahimaj, d.v.

### DEKLARATIN KUSHTETUSE

**MBI KOSOVËN SI NJESI TË PAVARUR DHE TË BARABARTË NË KUADËR TË FEDERATËS (KON-FEDERATËS) TË JUGOSLLAVISË SI SUBJEKT I BARABARTË ME NJËSITË E TJERA NË FEDERATË (KONFEDERATË)**

1. Në 1945 Deklaratë shprehet dhe shpallë qëndrimi historik kushtetues i popullit të Kosovës dhe i këtij Kuvendi si akt i vetëvendosjes politike në kuadër të Jugosllavisë.
2. Ky Kuvend duke e shpallur nga ana e tij dhe në nivel të tij Kosovën si njësi të barabartë në Jugosllavi, në bazë të principave të demokracisë autokratike mbi respektimin e vullnetit të njerëzve dhe të kolektivitetave nacionale dhe kombëtare, për konfirmimin e këtij akti historik të tij në Kushtetut të Jugosllavisë me mbështetje të plotë të opinionit demokratik në Jugosllavi dhe të opinionit ndërkombëtar.
3. Ky Kuvend Kosovën dhe popullin e re kushtetuese të saj e konfirmon si bashkësi politike-kushtetuese dhe pozitë politike-kushtetuese të përbashkët të qytetarëve dhe nacionalitetëve të barabarta të Kosovës, ku shprehim të shprehur e popullit të Kosovës dhe një ndër popullit në numër në Jugosllavi, njësoj si dhe serbët dhe popullin e tjera në Kosovë konsiderohen popull — komb dhe jo kombes (pakës kombëtare).
4. Në ndërkohë, deri në aplikimin definitiv juridik të kësaj Deklarate kushtetuese, Kuvendi dhe organet e pushtetit të Kosovës marrëdhëniet e tyre në vendin kushtetues të Jugosllavisë i mbështesin në Kushtetut të fuqi të Jugosllavisë dhe jo me amendamentet e Kushtetutit të 1974 të Serbisë të vitit 1980, me ç'rast bëhet edhe anulimi i Vendimit të Kuvendit të Kosovës i datës 23 mars 1980 mbi dhënien e pëlqimit në këto amendamente.

42. Sokol Prokshi, d.v.
43. Hyzen Bashota, d.v.
44. Murtez Hrahmani, d.v.
45. Hyzen Salihu, d.v.
46. Valentin Domnika, d.v.
47. Xhevat Pllana, d.v.
48. Jusuf Konjufca, d.v.
49. Rifat Rifati, d.v.
50. Selim Krasniqi, d.v.
51. Tafii Salihu, d.v.
52. Ramadan Kelmendi, d.v.
53. Remzi Malaj, d.v.
54. Avdi Graqjevi, d.v.
55. Isak Restelica, d.v.
56. Fehmi Nallbani, d.v.
57. Ruzhdi Bakalli, d.v.
58. Bajram Arifi, d.v.
59. Flamur Xhibu, d.v.
60. Gëzim Lipovca, d.v.
61. Shemsal Hajdini, d.v.
62. Feride Hyreni, d.v.
63. Qelshere Doshnjaku, d.v.
64. Afijete Aziri, d.v.
65. Refika Belegu, d.v.
66. Hilmaz Jashari, d.v.
67. Hamit Kishani, d.v.
68. Kadrije Ismajli, d.v.
69. Leonora Zajmi, d.v.
70. Besir Busha, d.v.
71. Gjyljeta Mulla, d.v.
72. Selviqe Xhinaj, d.v.
73. Gjerasim Dizdari, d.v.
74. Nijazi Hoxha, d.v.
75. Kadrija Dajqi Gashi, d.v.
76. Imer Gashi, d.v.

77. Mikrosime Nishiu, d.v.
78. Ruqer Pula, d.v.
79. Sanije Çitaku, d.v.
80. Gani Miftari, d.v.
81. Fahri Bekteshi, d.v.
82. Mëshum Shala, d.v.
83. Gafur Kiberi, d.v.
84. Ilaz Ramajli, d.v.
85. Sabri Hashani, d.v.
86. Skënder Skënderi, d.v.
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88. Qasim Kelmendi, d.v.
89. Skënder Aliu, d.v.
90. Rihem Bekeri, d.v.
91. Gani Vula, d.v.
92. Xhemajli Bajra, d.v.
93. Nasir Prokshi, d.v.
94. Vetom Shala, d.v.
95. Nikollë Shabani, d.v.
96. Halil Muxhari, d.v.
97. Isa Shekhu, d.v.
98. Zijadin Salihu, d.v.
99. Ali Shabani, d.v.
100. Gëzim Hakiq, d.v.
101. Jakup Bullatova, d.v.
102. Adnan Zhejta, d.v.
103. Tafii Berisha, d.v.
104. Bauri Bajrami, d.v.
105. Mehmet Sahatcu, d.v.
106. Dahir Abasi, d.v.
107. Muhamet Ahmeti, d.v.
108. Xhevat Zejnullahu, d.v.
109. Shaban Hashani, d.v.
110. Fatos Pula, d.v.
111. Nazim Fejzullahu, d.v.

### PËRMBAJTJA

Kuvendi i Krahinës Socialiste Autonome të Kosovës

Deklaratën kushtetuese mbi Kosovën si njësi e pavarur dhe e barabartë në kuadër të Federatës (Konfederatës) të Jugosllavisë si subjekt i barabartë me njësitë e tjera në Federatë (Konfederatë)

MUZEU "SHTËPIA E PAVARËSISË SË KOSOVËS DR. IBRAHIM RUGOVA"

Beton Organizata Gazetaro-Botuese „Gazeta zyrtare e KSAK“ — Prishtinë, rruga APF 2, F.P. 182. Telefonat: drejtori 33-975 administrata dhe kontabiliteti 33-981. Drejtor dhe redaktor përgjigjës Alush Salihu, Përdoruesi për vitin 1990 është 200 ditësh. Xhirologjaria 68400 — 603 — 1221 SHKESH — FIBAK në Prishtinë. Reklamacionet prunohen brenda 30 ditësh.

Shtyp: OPGEP „Rilindja“ — Prishtinë

days – all those were forms of expressing resistance. Many of these ideas were initiated by alternative groups in the political sphere, the character of which was progressive, and at times, social democrat<sup>10</sup>.

In this period we note the emergence of women's resistance, again, recalling the aspect of interlinking with the power hierarchy. On 8 March 1990 –International Women's Day, Albanian women, although only the ones who lived in the city of Prishtina, marched to protest against the system in power, including the forced recruitment of Albanians in the Yugoslav Army<sup>11</sup>. From January 1992 Yugoslavia had begun its dissolution and the European Community recognized the separation of Croatia and Slovenia<sup>12</sup>. Below we present some case studies from civic activism and participation of women in the 1990s in Kosovo.

Methodological instructions on  
how to use this material

## Independent/parallel institutions: Civic mobilization and daily life

**Duration:** 1 x 45 min

Learning results:

- Identifies political and civic circumstances in Kosovo in 1989.
- Analyses the attempts of the Albanians for equal rights in former Yugoslavia.
- Discusses the political engagement and social solidarity of the Albanians in the '90s.

### ACTIVITY 1

The teacher divides students into groups. The teacher asks from the groups to fill in the table below by identifying the political and social circumstances:

1.	Civic resistance	Political resistance

**ACTIVITY 2**

The teacher asks the students to carefully read the basic text and respond to the following questions:

**Group 1:**

1. Why did the need for resistance emerge?
2. What was meant by "special measures" for Kosovo?
3. What was the political organization of the Albanians under those circumstances?

**Group 2:**

1. Discuss the decision of the Assembly of Kosovo, dated 20.06.1990.
2. What was the importance of this decision for (the) society?
3. How many women were members of the Assembly, according to the signatures in the Declaration of Independence of 2 July 1990?

**Group 3:**

1. How do you envision the life of your peers during that period?
2. What were the active civic forms as a form of solidarity?
3. What was the contribution of women under those political circumstances?

**ACTIVITY 3**

Discuss (about) the political and civic mobilization in Kosovo in the '90s.





**Chapter**

**3**

Photo: Eliza Hoxha

# Civic activism and women in the 1990s: Case studies

## Blood Feud Reconciliations

■ *Blood Feud*  
Reconciliation actions are mainly initiatives in societies that are divided by some conflict and that seek to recover from the burdens of such conflict. The initiative of Babrak Karmalit in Afghanistan in 1985 for national reconciliation in the Afghan Civil War can be considered such an action. In Australia, reconciliation action concerned forgiveness/ conciliation between the indigenous (Aborigine) people and the Anglo-speaking colonizers. Similar initiatives for reconciliation occurred in Rwanda after the genocide in 1994.

The period of 1990-1991 also coincides with a series of historical events that were linked with one another, which in the Albanian historiography are known as the Movement for Blood Feud, Reconciliation in Kosovo. The purpose of the movement – given the real threats that the Albanian population in Yugoslavia was facing – was to initiate a campaign to promote reconciliation between families, which, according to the customary law, known as the Lekë Dukagjini Canon, were either involved in blood-feuds or various other altercations, so that people would be united in the face of the newly created situation.

This movement can be interpreted as a form of objection against the system, since the initiative as such, apart from being unifying, was also an initiative that countered division as a strategy of stereotyping and dehumanization (we recall here the anti-Albanian discourse in the Serbian public sphere during the '80s). The blood feud reconciliation movement emerged at a time when, as De Renzy emphasizes, Riza Krasniqi<sup>13</sup>, a citizen of Deçan, because of the blood feud, could not participate in the protests against the



system. The blood feud reconciliation process was aligned with the situation by enabling (the) active participation of as many citizens as possible in the resistance against the system. This movement was an initiative for (the) internal unification and thorough societal mobilization against the system. As Etemaj recalls, the initiators of the blood-feud reconciliation were subjected to persecution by the Police<sup>14</sup>, which illustrates the method of how violence was used by the oppressive system that wanted to have everything under (its) control. According to the leader of this action, Anton Çetta, the blood-feud reconciliation campaign was a way towards the civil Albanian resistance, which had a more self-defense character than a unifying appeal to call the weapons to fight<sup>15</sup>.

Some 500 youth and intellectuals, working in small teams, were engaged in the blood-feud reconciliation. The initial stage of the work involved small teams comprising students in particular. These teams, these groups of students and intellectuals, would go and speak with the women of the families who were in blood feuds to convince them to forgive blood. According to Anton Çetta, these women played a "decisive, discrete role" in the decisions of other family members about blood forgiveness<sup>16</sup>. Hava Shala, a participant in the blood forgiveness, who was active in the resistance against the system, recalls a case when it was needed to negotiate with women about blood forgiveness: "The forgiveness was almost reached or "an oath was made to reconcile." And then the men said, the men from the men's chamber, that, "Even if we forgive it could be that the wife of the murdered and his children may not agree and may break our word, our oath." And then, I remember being seated next to Myrvete and [...]. [thus] in other words, between Myrvete and professor Anton Çetta and I addressed Professor Anton in a somewhat lowered

*Discuss the role of women in the Blood Feud Reconciliation action.*



■ Anton Çetta, Hava Shala and collaborators in the Blood Feud Reconciliation.

Source: Oral History of Kosovo.

voice that, "Could Myrvete and I go to the wife, if it is so important to them?" It was of course important to us too, but for the first time men had started some kind of eschewing the order in the men's chamber and we did not know whether it was fear that kept men from leaving (the chamber) or a pretext to not say the final positive word. And he said, "Men, we have two men-like strong women, two students" just like Professor Anton knew better how to say it. He said, "We would like to lighten your burden, and we would like to send these two to talk to the women so you do not have to bear that burden with the wife of the murdered"<sup>17</sup>

"The door to our father's house has been shut off forever, there is nothing more tragic than that for us, and you know what it means to be a daughter without a father's door to know on." And I told her, "Yes, of course I do, that is why we came, and knowing this is hard, for sure there would be no need to come for easy things." I said, "I want to ask you a question, and I want you to respond to me from the bottom of your heart." I said, "If your brother had been alive today, for a moment, if I could give my soul to him and make it possible for him to give an answer today. And I would ask him today, would he rather seek revenge upon his blood... or would he rather forgive his blood for the interest of the future of this country, or would he allow his blood to go unavenged and remain dishonoured? How can unavenged blood-feuds remain dishonoured today?" And I remember that she [...]. [places her hand on her cheek] abruptly stood up from the bed, she sat down in fact, and "Ah," she said, "you've placed me in a tight spot" she said, "but for the love of God, he was brave, a valorous young man he was." I still get goose bumps when I recall that conversation. And she says, "I am sure he would forgive his own blood price." Silence hung between us

for a moment, and she said, "Look, my daughter, go now. Take your friend and go home. I will speak to my sister. My daughter has said to me, 'When I come back, I want to hear something good from you', her daughter, the teacher. She says, "This is a done deal." And she came out to see us off at the yard, she greeted me and Musa, the one who was very sick, and suddenly a force took her over (she smiles). And then her daughter came from Morina and forgave the blood price at Verat e Llukës."<sup>18</sup>

After discussions would take place separately in men's chambers, the initiators of the blood-feud reconciliation talked to convince members of families in blood feuds and once the families expressed willingness to reconcile, such reconciliation was stated jointly in front of witnesses<sup>19</sup>. On 1 May 1990 the largest gathering of blood -feud forgiveness in front of witnesses was organized at Verat e Llukës near Deçan, where some 500 thousand people gathered, and this was reported in the free media. The Blood Feud Reconciliation Action started on 2 February 1990 and concluded on 17 May 1990<sup>20</sup>.

## The Forum of the Democratic Woman (LDK)

*Discuss about the role of propaganda in creating gender and ethnic stereotypes in conflicts.*

■ *"At the beginning of the "alternative movement" or "the parallel system", women were very active and included in large numbers but while the system grew into an established way of life, women's inclusion in decision-making positions within the movement decreased. Women represent half of the labour in the education system, more than half of the alternative health care system and the majority in the social services, yet they work in more or less subservient roles instead of having an active voice in the development of the society."<sup>30</sup>*

The Forum of the Democratic Woman was established on 7 March 1990<sup>21</sup>. Women professionals and activists like Edita Tahiri, Luljeta Pula-Beqiri, Flora Brovina, Milajete Shala, Naxhije Buçinca and Edi Shukriu played an active role in the LDK activities. The Serbian propaganda, which labelled Albanian women as primitive, and who served as reproduction machines, irritated many citizens of Kosovo. A group of women activists decided to establish an organization to promote women's rights. They established the Independent Association of Women, which started as an initiative with the signatures of 1300 women. Later, this Association was transformed from a small organization into a general, social one and later joined the LDK<sup>22</sup>. Although the group found the Forum already established, the inclusion of women activists in a political party in such large numbers signalled the strengthening of political action of women activists. The Forum was structured in a similar way to the LDK, i.e., it had branches in many villages, it had an assembly, and various committees that functioned in parallel with the party committees<sup>23</sup>.

The absence of a decisive role in the formal political structures became obvious for (the) women activists in the 1990s. In relation to this, human rights activist and later ambassador Vjosa Dobruna recalls the situation:

The Forum of the Democratic Woman is nowadays one of the LDK structures organized in branches and sub-branches. The Chairwoman of the Woman's Forum is a member of the LDK Presidency<sup>24</sup>.

## Association “Nënë Tereza”

With the aggravation of the economic situation and the exclusion of Albanians from the social welfare system and in response to the needs, the humanitarian organization “Nënë Tereza” was established in the first part of 1990, as an independent association<sup>25</sup>. The health care sector in Kosovo received a heavy blow after the forceful measures by the Serbian Government. According to Nietsch, some 8547 health care workers in Kosovo suffered from these measures<sup>26</sup>. In the independent/parallel system of Kosovo, health care started to be organized around the humanitarian organization “Nënë Tereza”. At first, it had 239 general doctors, 140 specialists, and 423 nurses working on voluntary basis at clinics established in some 86 privately owned houses around Kosovo. The idea was for the association to meet the sanitary and health care needs denied by the Serbian power<sup>27</sup>.

In time, the association was transformed into a network of spaces that provided medical services as an independent/parallel system for the Albanian population, which often did not feel safe, while receiving medical services from the public hospitals that operated in the 1990s. The majority of the medical staff had lost their jobs in the public sector after the instalment of forced measures, so they started to provide such services from privately owned houses. The connection with the association “Nënë Tereza” enabled many professionals to become part of a network providing medical services to Albanians and other communities. Throughout the decade of the 1990s, the network expanded with the establishment of 96 healthcare centres that operated in 25 municipalities. The association engaged in voluntary work (with) some 7000 workers, including nurses and doctors<sup>28</sup>. Students of medicine conducted their practice in the improvised spaces of outpatient clinics, on (a) voluntary basis<sup>29</sup>.

■ *Humanitarian medical associations seek to provide medical services in countries affected by war and conflict and in countries where access to medical services is intentionally denied to certain groups. One broadly known organization with this scope of work is Médecins Sans Frontières (Mjekët pa kufij).*

## Association “Motrat Qiriazhi”



■ A Hasë girl at the library

Source: Motrat Qiriazhi

The Association “Motrat Qiriazhi” was established in 1989 by two sisters, Igballe and Safete Rogova, with the goal of increasing the education of women in rural areas. The association was named after the last name of Qiriazhi sisters, the first Albanian teachers who worked to educate Albanian girls at the end of XIX century. At the start of its work, the association covered only the area of Has in Prizren. Later, this association expanded its activity across the largest part of Kosovo. The association was based on the idea that peaceful resistance and non-violence were the right approaches to counter the political situation in which the Kosovo Albanians found themselves.

## Centre for the Protection of Women and Children

In 1993, after being fired from their jobs at the National Library of Kosovo, Sevdije Ahmeti and Vjosa Dobruna established the Centre for Protection of Women and Children, a non-governmental organization to aid mothers and children, which also played a crucial role in documenting violation of human rights in Kosovo by the regime of Milošević. The reports of the Centre for the Protection of Women and Children were an important part of (the) international human rights organizations, such as Amnesty International etc. The Centre for the Protection of Women and Children became part of international networks on women and children's rights and influenced in making internationally known the violations of human rights and freedoms in Kosovo. The Centre for the Protection of Women and Children continues its activities to this day addressing issues concerning the welfare of women and children in Kosovo.

■ *Amnesty International is a non-governmental organization from the United Kingdom that acts to protect human rights. Its activists are especially focused in advocating for the protection of human rights anywhere and anytime they are violated by authoritarian states.*

## Albanian education: *School-houses*



### ■ Closing down of schools in Kosovo.

Source: Newspaper Bujku, 3 September 1991, front page.

*Discuss why were Kosovo Albanians forced to organize school-houses instead of schools in public buildings.*

The discriminatory politics of Serbia against the education system in Kosovo started in 1989 with the education that was segregated on a nationalism. As a result of this segregation, physical segregation of schools ensued. The 1990s corresponded with the establishment of an independent /parallel education system for Kosovo Albanians. This included political, economic, and welfare state institutions, and schools that functioned under the framework of the self-declared independence. The organization of Albanian schools within the independent/parallel system became a necessity in 1989 when the Serbian authorities imposed ethnic segregation at schools – Serb students should not be taught in the same classes or time as the Albanian ones<sup>34</sup>. The Albanian teachers did not obey the decision of Serbia and continued to teach in line with the Kosovo curriculum<sup>35</sup>.

On 1 January 1991, the Serbian authorities stopped payment for Albanian teachers of high schools, and on 6 April 1991 for those of elementary schools. In May 1991, the Serbian government decided to close down half of the high schools for Albanians and increase the number of Serbian students. In August 1991, the Serbian authorities fired 6,000 teachers, principals and vice-principals of high schools. The start of the academic year 1991–1992 found all Albanian teachers expelled from the education system, whereas the school entrances were blocked by police forces. This incited Kosovo-wide protests<sup>36</sup> and the re-organization of education in school-houses. From 1992-1999, some 3000 houses and other privately owned spaces were transformed into schools and university auditoriums. The University of Prishtina and all its academic units



conducted work in 250 privately owned buildings<sup>37</sup>. Initially, education staff worked without pay. In 1993, education workers started to receive a payment of 20 German Marks which increased in 1997 to 150-160 German Marks for elementary and secondary education and 180 German Marks for higher education<sup>38</sup>. The establishment of the education system outside of the Serbian curriculum also implied that Albanian teachers would act as units within the institutions of an independent Kosovo. This was important to Albanians as it represented the challenge to the oppression from the Serbian regime.

In the 1990s the number of students in high schools and universities decreased. At the University of Prishtina, from 19,620 in 1991-1992, the number of students for the academic year 1996-1997 fell to 13,805 students. From a gender perspective, this decrease was different. In high schools, there were more girls who dropped out than boys, whereas in university, there were more boys dropping out due to employment or leaving the country after being drafted to serve in the Yugoslav army<sup>39</sup>.



■ Students at class at school houses.

Source: Shyqeri Obërtinca



■ Students at class at school-houses.

Source: Shyqeri Obërtinca

Methodological instructions on  
how to use the material

## Civic activism and women in the 1990s: Case studies

Time: 1x45 min.

Learning results:

- Identify initiatives of civic activities in the '90s.
- Analyse women's initiatives in organizations and institutions in the '90s.
- Discuss the solidarity and activism of women in the '90s.

### ACTIVITY 1

The teacher divides the students into groups. The teacher asks the groups to fill in the table below about:

1. Blood feud reconciliation
2. The Forum of Democratic Woman (LDK)
3. Association "Nënë Tereza"
4. Association "Motrat Qiriazi"
5. The Centre for Protection of Women and Children
6. Albanian education: School-houses

No.	Initiative	Purpose
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

**ACTIVITY 2**

The teacher asks the students to carefully read the basic text and answer the questions:

**Group 1:**

1. What role did women play in the Blood Feud Reconciliation Movement in Kosovo?
2. Assess the role of Hava Shala and her collaborators in the Blood Feud Reconciliation Movement in Kosovo.
3. Discuss the responsibility of women in the reconciliation process and the decision for forgiveness.

**Group 2:**

1. Who were the women the Forum of Woman (LDK) comprised of?
2. How did the women organize the Forum of Woman (LDK) and did they have equal inclusion in LDK decision-making?
3. Compare the importance of women in politics back then and now.

**Group 3:**

1. How did the need for establishing the humanitarian charity association "Nënë Tereza" arise?
2. What contribution did the association "Motrat Qiriazit" give to the peaceful resistance?
3. What was the impact of documenting the violations of human rights by the Centre for the protection of Women and Children?

**ACTIVITY 3**

Discuss and analyse how important was the solidarity and organization of the Albanians in school-houses based on the following questions:

1. Why were Albanian students and teachers excluded from school buildings in the '90s in Kosovo?
2. What motivated the Albanian students to continue education in *school-houses*?





Chapter

# 4

# Shifting the paradigm of resistance

■ *The Dayton Agreement of 1995 was a peace agreement signed by the presidents of Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

The increased violence exerted by the Serbian regime and the lack of appropriate tackling of the situation in Kosovo in the Dayton agreement in 1995 drove a larger number of people to abandon the peaceful resistance<sup>40</sup>.

This changed approach towards the political situation drove many women to re-evaluate how they expressed their activism against the occupation system. However, the political activity of many women – who would later join the armed resistance – was a continuation of their participation in illegal movements, which were dissident ones (which means one movement against an established official system) against the Yugoslav regime. Those movements worked to advance the national cause of the Albanians in Yugoslavia. One element that characterized their participation in these activities was the liberation from gender expectations and roles that were being imposed in a patriarchal society.

Breaking out of the tradition was a key challenge for the women. It was not unusual for them to be stigmatized once they left those roles behind. On the other hand, participation in illegal movements was closely linked with the family circle in which those girls had grown up. It was not unusual for young Albanian girls to have strong national sentiments if their family was involved in activities of opposition movements, which in itself made it easier for them to get involved in the national cause, this being a type of activism that had an emancipating effect.

The women who took part in the opposing movements had the sentiment of being liberated from the expectations of a patriarchal society, a sentiment that was replicated among women who participated in the armed resistance. Unlike the development of political polarisations between the peaceful resistance and the armed one – which emerged as two opposing battalions at the end of the 1990s, solidarity among women, despite how they expressed their activism, was visibly larger than that of men. This is closely linked with the manner of women's activation in the 1990s in general. This method of activation gave rise to the sentiment that women were fighting for a double cause – liberation from the expectations of a patriarchal society and liberation from the Serbian regime. Thus, even though the manner in which these two fought was not common, what was common anyway was the liberation from patriarchy, this being a transnational and universal effort for gender equality.

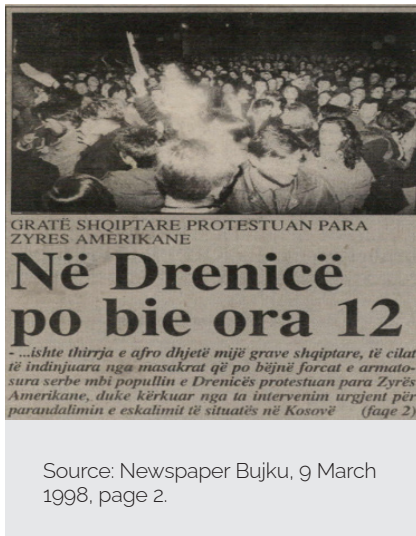
Below we present a broader mobilization of women and their protests against the police and military violence exerted by Milošević's regime.

### **Women's protests in Kosovo in 1998**

With the scaling up of state repression at that time, women responded to the mass mobilization against violence, for peace.

■ *Emancipatory activism seeks to highlight and fight practices and policies that oppress certain social strata and groups, while working to achieve equality between the oppressed groups and the privileged ones.*

## The protest of 2 March 1998, according to the newspaper *Bujku*, was organized as follow:



“Only twenty minutes sufficed from the moment the German radio broadcast the information for nearly ten thousand women to gather in front of the American Office to protest against war, terror, and massacres that the invading Serbian forces were exerting against the innocent Albanian population in Drenica. The initiative for this protest was taken by the League of Albanian Women of Kosovo (LGSH). Flora Brovina, Chairwoman of the LGSH, addressed the mass saying that, ‘this protest was organized because of the massacre that is ongoing for a long time in Drenica. Drenica is ours, and therefore, what happens in Drenica, happens all over Kosovo,’ said Flora Brovina.”<sup>41</sup>

Similar protests were organized in other cities of Kosovo<sup>42</sup>. Meanwhile, on 10 March, more than 10 thousand women gathered in “Nënë Tereza” Square in Prishtina to light candles to commemorate the victims of the violence by the Serbian police<sup>43</sup>.



## The White Paper protest: 8 March 1998

Meanwhile, on 8 March 1998, some 50 thousand women protested in front of the United States of American Information Service Office in Prishtina. The women who protested held white papers and stayed silent. According to the newspaper Bujku, the women protesters demanded:

"We call upon the United Nations and the Security Council to immediately protect us, as we are an endangered people. We invite the United States of America, a friendly state, to expedite intervention. We invite the European Union to urgently re-examine its position towards Kosovo. We demand urgently the opening of a corridor that would enable us to help the population in Drenica with medications, bread, and clothes. We are pro-peace, and with our white papers we show the world that we enjoy no rights and that we have to write our own rights with peace, and not with blood, reads the silent protest declaration."<sup>44</sup>

That was a powerful message directed to international observers, and, at the same time, an image that portrayed the strength of the Albanian women through their silence and resistance<sup>45</sup>. The date of the protest, 8 March, the International Day of Women, bears special significance, because the war that was being waged gave two messages: liberation from state violence, and an end to the violation of women's rights.



■ The White Paper protest: 8 March 1998

Photo: Eliza Hoxha

*Discuss why it was named The White Paper Protest and what did the protesters seek to achieve with that protest?*



■ The White Paper protest: 8 March 1998

Photo: Eliza Hoxha

## The protest “Bread for Drenica”: 16 March 1998



■ The protest “Bread for Drenica”: 16 March 1998

Photo: Eliza Hoxha

Another protest that left a huge mark and had a powerful – both media and moral – effect on the sufferings of fellow citizens in rural areas in Kosovo was the protest “Bread for Drenica”, held on 16 March 1998. Women started from the American Culture Centre and marched towards Fushë Kosova to go to Drenica. Participant and women’s rights activist Igballe Rogova, describes the protest as follows:

“As we marched outside of Prishtina, the Serbian police forces accompanied us the entire time. It was the beginning of spring, and there was wind. But we did not feel the wind, as we were surrounded by a crowd of ten thousand women, girls, and some men who had joined us. When we reached Fushë Kosova, some six kilometres from Prishtina, we saw the Serbian police had formed a cordon that blocked the road. They would not let us pass. I remember how Edita Tahiri shouted at them: “Drenica needs food!” They paid no attention to us and refused to move. The organizers discussed whether we should insist on marching forward but since the police officers were heavily armed, we decided that would be very dangerous. Eventually, after they stayed there for a while, shouting, we decided there was no other way but to return to Prishtina.

On our way back, we went to the International Red Cross Office in Prishtina, and we left the bread outside of their office. That too, was a symbolic act to tell them they were supposed to bring food to the people in need in Drenica. Then, we proceeded to the American Culture Centre. Some of us met there with some American officials. We started to sing quietly “Bread for Drenica”. The whole time, the Serbian

police surrounded us and threatened us. But our song was getting stronger all the time. We managed to draw (the) international attention to what was happening in Kosovo, especially using the media. The photographs from that powerful march were shared worldwide, making the international actors more aware that a scenario, similar to that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, was taking place in Kosovo. I believe that although we were prevented from bringing bread to Drenica, we brought hope. We contributed to drawing (the) international attention to our suffering and to encourage the eventual intervention"<sup>46</sup>.

This is how some other sources recall the protest "Bread for Drenica":

"Some 12,000 women carrying bread started a predetermined march of 50 kilometres from Prishtina towards the surrounded area of Drenica. The bread that women were holding symbolized the basic needs of humans that were unmet. Although the Serbian police sent them back to Prishtina, the highly visual demonstration managed to gain the attention of the international media. Later, on 25 March 1998, women organized another demonstration calling for a "peaceful divorce" from Serbia"<sup>47</sup>.

The newspaper *Bujku* reported about the protest with an article under the title: "Bread in front of the barrels of the violators." In this reporting, statements of some participants took central place:

"We are not demonstrators, but women, mothers, and sisters who want to go to Drenica to bring bread to the mothers and children who are isolated there".<sup>48</sup>

Similar protests were organized in Glllogoc (nowadays Drenas), Klina and Vushtrri.<sup>49</sup>

*Discuss why was the protest called Bread for Drenica?*



■ The protest "Bread for Drenica": 16 March 1998

Photo: Eliza Hoxha

## Women as chroniclers and documenters of violations of human rights and freedoms

■ “women activists were the first ones on the scene to document violence, murder, and violations of human rights. It was less dangerous for women to move from one place to another because they were not suspected as activists of human rights by the regime of Milošević. When we assessed there was greater danger for male colleagues, we would go to the scene to document human rights violations, murders, beatings, looting, etc.”

The Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF), established in Prishtina by the end of 1989, was one of the first civil society organizations that brought together intellectuals and human rights activists in Kosovo. In the 1990s, CDHRF played a key role in documenting human rights violations in Kosovo by the regime of Slobodan Milošević. The CDHRF kept population of Kosovo and world opinion informed of the violations of human rights and freedoms in Kosova. The CDHRF documented such violations of human rights through a large network of activists across Kosovo. Women were active participants in documenting human rights violations and police and military violence. A CDHRF activist recalls,

## Women in the armed resistance

In the Kosovo war 1998-1999 the military and police violence by the Milošević regime was directed against the civilians. In this way, Albanian civilians fell arbitrary prey to the violence. Under such circumstances, the armed resistance, incited by police and military violence of the regime of Milošević, was carried out in a guerrilla manner. Under such circumstances of war, there was room for women to be part of the resistance, without obeying the mould of traditional gender roles. Apart from their active participation in other war dimensions, women's participation in the armed resistance was not limited to the literal sense of the word. The establishment of safe networks to transport refugees from the war zones, the transportation of the wounded using improvised medical ambulances, the transportation of basic material for the attacked civilians, and even the transportation of weapons testify the participation of women in various forms in the armed resistance.



Source: <https://gazetainfokus.com>

- Participation of women in the resistance was often linked with their social and political position. Many women became part of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and were active participants in the fight for liberation. The most significant examples of women's participation in the armed resistance are names like: Gjevë Lladrovci, Fitnete Ramosaj, Mimoza Shala, Hyrë Emini and many, many others.

We should recall the fact that many of the women who were active in the 1990s established the necessary networks to ensure support and care for many civilians who were expelled or wounded by the Serbian police and army. This form of engagement transformed their defensive resistance into an active one. Many women put themselves in danger exactly because of their activities. The continuation of activities to emancipate women and raise their awareness of their rights in the 1990s had a direct effect in creating an atmosphere of collaboration at the most critical moments for Albanians in Kosovo, and sparked a sentiment of solidarity between women, strengthening their resistance in many ways.

Methodological instructions on  
how to use the material

## Shifting the paradigm of resistance

**Duration:** 1x45 min.

Learning results:

- Identify some of the women's protests in the '90s.
- Analyse the effect and goal of women's activism in the local and international aspects.
- Appreciate women's contribution in conflict circumstances during the '90s.

### ACTIVITY 1

The teacher divides students into groups and asks the groups to fill in the table below, referring to the material about:

1. Protests of 2 March 1998
2. White Paper Protests: 8 March 1998
3. Protests "Bread for Drenica": 16 March 1998
4. Women chroniclers and documenters of the violation of human rights and freedoms
5. Women in the armed resistance

Political aspects	Civic aspects	Gender inclusion	Solidarity and enthusiasm

**ACTIVITY 2**

The teacher asks the students to carefully read the basic text and respond to the questions:

**Group 1:**

1. What demands, and symbolisms did the protests organized by women activists had?
2. What was the local and international effect of the requests of women activists in these protests?
3. How do you assess the courage of these women activists under the war circumstances? Please argue!

**Group 2:**

1. What was the purpose of the women's protest on 2 March in front of the international community in Prishtina, and how did this organization echo?
2. What was the message of the white papers at the protest of 8 March 1998?
3. Discuss why the protest was called "Bread for Drenica"?

**Group 3:**

1. Apart from the protests, what were the other engagements of women activists to call for peace?
2. How important was it to document violations of human rights, and police and military violence, and why?
3. What did the CDHRF activists say about the engagement of women in their/ documentation?

**ACTIVITY 3**

Discuss (about) the inclusion of women in the armed resistance, responding to the questions below:

1. While discussing, please assess the text within the quotation marks "*The establishment of safe networks to transport refugees from the war zones, the transportation of the wounded using improvised medical ambulances, the transportation of basic materials for the attacked civilians, and the transportation of weapons testify the participation of women in the resistance in various forms. Participation of women in the resistance was often linked to their social and political position.*"
2. During the class on "peaceful and armed resistance in Kosovo, in the '90s", which were the events that made the most impression on you, and why?





# Chapter

# 5

Source: Association "Motrat Qirazi"

# Learning history from a gender perspective

Gender and women continue to be invisible in the teaching of history. The absence of women role models in history, and the silence around gender and gender perspective in constructing historical accounts and institutionalized history are noted in textbooks, museums, memorials, and commemorative sites. Therefore, the gender perspective in the teaching of history addresses women's invisibility in history textbooks. In fact, a gender perspective is aimed at being spread in all textbooks and school materials in Kosovo because the elimination of gender stereotypes is important for quality education<sup>50</sup>.

Gender is a social construct and at the same time, a historical category. For a long time, women historians have emphasized the lack of gender perspective in the subject of history and have "provided examples through the centuries and countries to dispute contemporary claims that women, due to their physique and psychological temperament, are weaker, more passive, less rational, and more emotional than men"<sup>51</sup>, and that as such, they are not considered subjects of history.

Gender perspective in the teaching of history examines the gender dynamics in the production of history, brings bringing to our attention women

as citizens with full rights, as activists and participants in political, economic, and social developments. Therefore, the initial question in the teaching of history from a gender perspective is: How is history produced, and which are the dynamics that make gender and women invisible in history?

As Michel-Rolph Trouillot argues, "history is the fruit of power and power is never as transparent so that its analysis becomes unnecessary."<sup>52</sup> This precondition coincides also with the gender perspective and the teaching of history because gender perspective unfolds the silences throughout history. According to Trouillot, "silence enters in the process of history production at four key moments: when facts are created (finding the sources); when facts are collected (archiving); when facts are extracted (building narratives) and when their importance is seen retrospectively (making history at the last instance).<sup>53</sup> Gender perspective "enables us to understand why not all silences are equal and why they cannot be addressed – or improved – in the same way"<sup>54</sup> Therefore, gender perspective in the teaching of history addresses silence about women's participation in social, political and economic processes, and the impact of silence on the society and collective memory.

No history is complete. History is incomplete. Gender offers previously unknown historical perspectives<sup>55</sup> about the flow of history. A lesson of the past is partial if the experiences of women and men or ideas about masculinity and femininity are not taken as (a) basis. Therefore, (the) gender perspective acknowledges women as historical subjects. However, (the) gender perspective of history is not a synonym for women's stories although (the) women's stories are the starting point. History is shaped and influenced by gender. Gender references, metaphors, and rhetoric go beyond the descriptions of relations between men and women not only as distinction but also as (an) unfolding of power relations.<sup>56</sup>

Gender theories and the movement of women aim (for) equality between women and men in politics, economy, and society. Women's experiences and voices should be deemed a contribution to institutionalized history because they complete the mosaic of the past. Furthermore, as gender historians affirm, "history does not reconstruct an unmediated past but actively produces visions of the past" [...] and emphasizes differences between women within the concept of 'women.' itself."<sup>57</sup>

In this manual, with the purpose of learning the history of the last two decades of XX century in Kosovo, some of the questions that serve as starting points with regard to (the) gender perspective in the history of said period, would be the following:

- What are the events and actors that are represented?
- What are the existing narratives? Who are the key bearers of those narratives?
- How is gender represented? How are women represented?
- Which forms did women's activism take?
- How is women's activism represented?
- How is women's activism recalled?
- How did gender understanding change in these two decades at the end of XX century?
- What were the dominating representations of women and men and what were the associated images?

Raising these questions seeks to construct a gender-aware history, an institutional history that brings gender to the centre of analysis of historical events and provides explanations as to why gender and women remain untold and unwritten stories in the history. The gender perspective examines narratives of the past and offers valuable opportunities to complete (the) history. Further, (the) gender perspective brings an analysis of the reasons why women were excluded from history. Gender attention on and at women not only provides new information but also renders visible the limitations of history written from a single point of view<sup>58</sup>, thus opening the way to the multiperspective approach in teaching history.

Methodological instructions how to use the material

## Learning history from a gender perspective

Time: 1x45 min.

Learning results:

- Understand gender perspective in teaching history.
- Compare gender approaches in teaching history.
- Acknowledge the position of women in building the history of Kosovo.

### ACTIVITY 1

The teacher writes in the centre of the table: "Peaceful and armed resistance in Kosovo in the '90s"

Peaceful and armed resistance in Kosovo in the '90s	
Role of women	Role of men

**ACTIVITY 2**

The teacher asks the students to read carefully the basic text and answer the following questions:

**Group 1:**

1. How is gender perspective represented and how is women's activism in history represented?
2. What are the existing narratives? Who are the key bearers of those narratives?
3. What are the stories and key personalities in history lessons?

**Group 2:**

1. What forms did women's activism take during the "Peaceful and armed resistance in Kosovo during the '90s"?
2. How are women's engagement and contribution in the '90s recalled?
3. How did gender understanding change during the last two decades of XX century?

**Group 3:**

1. How do you understand gender representation during history teaching?
2. How did women's engagement and contribution during the "Peaceful and armed resistance in Kosovo during the '90s" impact (the) society?
3. What impact did the last war in Kosovo have on gender representation in decision-making institutions?

**ACTIVITY 3**

Students present their viewpoints on learning history through the gender perspective.

# Annex #1 Glossary

## Gender

Means socially constructed roles attributed to women and men. Gender is an acquired and learned identity, which goes through changes in time, and changes within and along cultures.

## Sex

(This) Means biological characteristics that define females and males.

## Gender roles

Gender roles are attributed to women and men and change based on the social and economic, political status, and cultural context. Gender roles are influenced by age, class, and ethnicity. Gender roles are socially learned, negotiated, and disputed. Gender roles are contextual and changeable.

## Conflict

Relates to politics, power, a dispute among actors, peace-making, and reconstruction of institutions.

## Gender-based violence

Means all acts of violence that result or are likely to result in injury or physical, sexual, psychological, social or economic suffering based on gender, including threats for such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation from freedom, whether this occurs in the public or private sphere.

### **Gender stereotypes**

Are generalized viewpoints or prejudice related to features or characteristics pertaining to or that should pertain to roles that are carried out or would be carried out by women and men.

### **Femininity**

Refers to behaviours, roles, and relationships between women in society, and the meaning attributed to those..

### **Masculinity**

Refers to behaviours, roles, and relationships between men in society, and the meaning attributed to those.

### **Paradigm**

Means a perspective, a group of ideas, a form, a model, standard..

### **Transnational**

That transcends national borders.

### **Genocidal**

Perpetrator or guilty of genocide.

### **Segregation**

Forced division based on racial or ethnic group.

### **Narrative**

Derives from the Latin language *narrare*, to recount a story. A narrative means the practice of representing events alongside a specific system of values. A narrative is a story, a recounting of social events.

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