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# **Limited Creativity: Women in the Serbian Architecture from the Early 20th Century to Date<sup>1</sup>**

The purpose of this paper is to point out the change in women's position in architecture in the period from the early 20th century to date through a prism of their architectural and professional achievements as a form of exercising their rights and achieving the equality with their male colleagues. The purpose of this paper is to also shed light on the reasons of tacit acceptance of the system of discriminatory character that allowed the women architects to be only the „anonymous associates“ (so that they could be able to deal with the job of architect), „assistants in the profession“ (urban planners or critics and publicists where they gained the most popularity and success) or to become „female reformers“ particularly in the domain of legal reforms, planning and development, which they essentially became only after the Second World War when the modernisation and emancipation processes took place and when the Law on Invalidity of the Previous Discriminatory Regulations was passed by which the women acquired suffrage. The paper particularly addresses the status of women architects today who are, besides all professional temptations, also in a conflicting situation. They are a pillar of family and social life, on the one hand, while they are constantly facing the attempts to be pushed from the mainstream of professional life and the attempts to deny their importance, role and influence in society, on the other hand.

*Key words:* modernisation, women architects, emancipation, Serbia, Belgrade.

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## Лимитирана креативност: Жене у српској архитектури од почетка 20. века до данас

Циљ рада је да укаже на промене положаја жена као стручњака у домену архитектуре у временском распону од почетка 20. века до данас, и то посматрано кроз призму њихових архитектонских остварења и постигнућа у струци, као облика остварења права и изједначења положаја у односу на колеге мушкарце. Рад такође има за циљ да осветли разлоге прећутног прихватања система дискриминаторског карактера, који је женама архитектама омогућавао једино да буду „анонимне сараднице“ (како би могле да се баве послом), „помоћнице у професији“ (урбанисти, планери или критичари и публицисти, захваљујући чему стичу највише популарности и успеха), или да постану „реформаторке“, посебно у домену законодавних реформи, планирања и изградње итд., и то суштински тек након Другог светског рата, паралелно са процесом модернизације и еманципације становништва, као и доношењем Закона о неважности претходних дискриминаторских прописа, када су жене де факто стекле право гласа. У раду је посебно третиран статус жене архитектке данас, која се уз сва професионална искушења налази и у противречној ситуацији – с једне стране, на позицији стуба породичног и друштвеног живота, а с друге се непрестано суочава са покушајима да се потисне из главних токова професионалног живота и да се оспори њен значај, улога и утицај у друштву.

*Кључне речи:* модернизација, жене, архитектура, еманципација, Србија, Београд.

### Introduction

The success on the path to modernization of a society is closely linked to the degree of emancipation of women in that society. This can be also recognized through the process of emancipation of women in the Serbian society which coincides with the creation of the Serbian state from the early 19th century to date. In spite of the efforts in the forties of the 19th century to organize Serbia modelled after the enlightened European countries, the example of the implementation of the Serbian Civil Code in the period of an entire century (1844-1946) shows that women were treated as inferior beings. Under this Civil Code, the position of women was inferior as a whole in all fields, and particularly dramatic in their right to inheritance, as well as in the subordination of married women to their husbands. This also implied the business inability of married women, as well as legal restrictions placed upon them, which means that women not only could not acquire and dispose of property, but they could not deal with any job without husband's consent either. Unlike in Serbia, this idea about the domination of husband over wife marked the family laws in almost all European countries in the period until the Second World War and more in moral context than in legal sense. This kind of domination is also seen in the private laws of nations that formed the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Kingdom of Yugoslavia from 1929). In the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, under the Serbian Civil Code that was in force in Serbia, only the married women in Serbia within its pre-war boundaries (thus also in Macedonia) were deprived of business ability because husbands had power to directly decide on that. The Monte-

negrin customary law also recognized the power of husband over wife, while the laws in other parts of the Kingdom did not recognize difference between women and men in this respect (Draškić, Popović – Obradović 1998, 15 - 24). After the First World War, the laws of the countries of the newly established Kingdom had to be equalized so as to also adopt the principle of equality between women and men concerning the inheritance, but also the related legal fields. However, the deviations occurred at the very beginning of the process of writing the laws for Serbia and Montenegro. However, there was no equalization of civil rights in any part of the inheritance law, so that the Serbian Civic Code remained in force in Serbia until the end of the Second World War (Draskić, Popović – Obradović 1998, 15 - 24).

The possibility of women's education marked a turning point in women's emancipation and opened a path to an independent choice of profession and to an economic independence of women. This was at the same time a powerful stimulus for women to clearly recognize legal discrimination they were exposed to and to stand firm against it. The numerous educational reforms were a strong factor in the process of modernisation (Božinović, 1996, 51-58; Stojanović, 1998, 239 – 251; Obradović, 1998, 252 - 262).

The Law on Schools, which established a basis for school system, was passed by Prince Aleksandar Karadjordjevic in 1844. It was prepared by Jovan Sterija Popović, the then Head of Department of Education of the Ministry of Education and professor at the Lyceum of Kragujevac, who was working on organizing the school system and education until 1848 (Božinović 1996, 50; Jovanović 2011, 27-57). Although a supporter of educational ideas, Jovan Sterija Popović was conservative regarding the education of girls. In his opinion, the girls schools should be opened with programs adapted to the women's needs. The Decree on Girls Schools was passed in 1846. The first public girls primary school was established in Paraćin in 1845, and then in Belgrade in 1846 (Božinović 1996, 50). The private schools for children and adults, as well as the schools for girls, were also established in this period. Although socioeconomic conditions in patriarchal Serbia made the development of educational system difficult, the work on improving the school system and educational institutions, but also on adjusting their functions to the needs of the country, was continued based on these first and the most difficult steps (Roter – Blagojević 1997, 126-168). In 1863, during the rule of Prince Milan Obrenović, a new Law on Primary Schools was passed according to which the education in schools for boys lasted three years in rural settlements and four years in towns, while the primary education for girls was reduced from six to five years. The school system reform resulted in the establishment of the Women's College in Belgrade in 1863, the institution that has become an ideal of women's education in Serbia. Based on the relationship of the Serbian society towards the Women's College, thus also towards the women's education generally, it was possible to consider the very character of modernisation in Serbia. (Djordjević 1922, 75-111; Djordjević 1924, 264-313; Pejović 1982, 17-40; Perović 1998, 141-161; Pavicević 1999, 74 – 94; Prosić-Dvornić 1985, 47-70; Stojanović 2009, 237-239; Stojanović 1998, 239-251; Ivanović 2002, 169-193). In the same year when this college was established, the Lyceum became the Great School. The Women's College in Belgrade operated until

1913 when, without changing its name, it was transformed into girls gymnasium. The history of this school is the best indicator of the relationship between the patriarchy and modernity in the Serbian society in the second half of the 19th century (Perović 1998, 141-143). In 1870, the women were allowed to attend lectures at the Great School (future University) in Belgrade. In 1871, Draga Ljočić started to attend the lectures at the Great School as a part-time woman student, but under the special conditions – exclusively escorted by professors, thus immediately making known that the society did not approve the presence of women in the Great School. Draga Ljočić abandoned the Great School after only one year and went to the University in Zurich where she graduated from the Medical School as a full-time student. The next women to enrol at the Great School in 1887 were Leposava Bošković and Kruna Dragojlović, who were the first two full-time women students (Obradović, 1998, 253; Vilotijević 2013, 21-31; Roter-Blagojević 2013, 32-35).

Compared to other students in the Balkan region and in spite of the patriarchal and narrow-minded social environment, unjust Civil Code and numerous accompanying difficulties, the women in Serbia showed a high awareness about the importance of education as a key factor also in the professionalization of architecture. The political changes that took place in 1903 also significantly contributed to the democratization of the school system in Serbia. The women acquired equal rights with men, their future colleagues, to attend lectures at the Great School (University). However, after having finished the studies and after having acquired the degree they were again discriminated: they could neither get the same jobs as men nor sat the state licence exam like their male colleagues having the same degrees acquired from the same faculties, neither were they allowed to advance in the profession. They were less paid and did not have the right to pension. It was only after the end of the Balkan wars and the First World War that the law by which the men and women physicians were given the same rights for the same duties was passed. The similar rights were also given in the domain of other professions (Božinović 1995, 80 – 81; Obradović, 1998, 254).

The women in certain professions, with degrees of the School of Medicine, Faculty of Philosophy, Faculty of Technical Sciences, Faculty of Agriculture, etc., quickly realized that they themselves had to struggle for the equalization of their rights with the rights of their male colleagues in the same professions, as well as that the legal regulation of the status of women as professionals in Serbia was a precondition for the improvement of their role and position in society. With strengthening the social institutions, the professional education was stimulated, thus becoming a key factor of social mobility (Stojanović, 1998, 239 – 240). The number of students who studied abroad increased, and amongst them also a number of women who acquired faculty degrees abroad. Very early, the girls were also included in the scholarship programs for studying abroad (Trgovčević 1998, 90 -92). The education of girls in the 19th and 20th centuries caused numerous conflicts between the traditional and the modern social currents in Serbia. The development of education has always been closely linked to the political and social life of a country, thus also in Serbia, although it has been always emphasized that the essence of this resistance

was in the then attitude that the school „subverts the values of patriarchal society“ and that it was a real threat to the ideal of the Serbian woman.

After the end of the Second World War, women were given equal inheritance right with men in legal practice based on the Law on invalidity of legal regulations passed before 6 April, 1941, in the time of enemy occupation (Božinović 1995, 159). The constitutional principle of equality between women and men, principle of the mother and child protection and principle of equal pay for the same work were established only by several laws and other regulations in which these rights were defined in detail. The basic Marriage Law (1946) by which the Church was separated from the State and the civil marriage was mandatory and which placed all relationships in marriage on an equal footings was amongst the first laws passed by the Federal Assembly. This Family Law was actually a Program of Equality between Women and Men. Several other laws related to the family matters (Basic Law on the Parent-Child Relationship, the Child Adoption Law, Guardianship Law, Law on Social Insurance of Workers, Civil Servants and Employees, etc.) specified the equality of women. Although the demand for women's suffrage was put forward in an organized way already from the second half of the 19th century, the results of this struggle were realized only after the Second World War in Yugoslavia, thus also in Serbia, when women were granted the right to vote, the political right recognized as a fundamental human right (Božinović 1996, 157-159).

### **Famous women architects in Serbia from the early 20th century until breaking out of the Second World War**

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Serbian engineers acquired technical education abroad, at the universities in Munich, Karlsruhe, Berlin, Aachen, Vienna, Zurich and Budapest, while after the First World War, at the universities in Paris, Prague, etc. With the transformation of the Lyceum into the Great School in 1863, and later with the establishment of a separate Department of Architecture of the Technical Faculty in Belgrade in 1897, the conditions for the education of architects in Serbia were created. In Belgrade, the then capital city of the Kingdom of Serbia, Coats and Slovenes, later the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the cultural institutions started to be established in spite of numerous problems and difficulties (operas and ballet in 1919, “Cvijeta Zuzorić” Art Pavilion in 1928 and the Museum of Contemporary Art in the Residence of Princess Ljubica in 1929 which was transformed into the Museum of Prince Pavle in 1936 and accommodated in the New Courthouse, etc.). The cultural life developed in the spirit of Europe. The influences came through different paths, through education of young people abroad, through books, exhibitions, visits of famous figures from abroad, cultural exchange between Belgrade and European cities, etc.

In the first half of the 20th century, the women architects also won their place amongst the highly educated professionals. Except for the works of the first woman architect, Jelisaveta Načić, their activities have not been comprehensively explored, although there is an entire generation of women architects whose activities have laid the foundations of conquering the professional equality in society.

The greatest merit for initiating this theme also belongs to a woman, the historian of architecture, Divna Djurić Zamolo, who started an extensive research on life and work of women architects enrolled in the Faculty of Architecture, University of Belgrade, in the period 1896-1940. This great research undertaking of Divna Djurić Zamolo was interrupted by her death. (Djuric – Zamolo 1996, 1 - 89).

The first generation of women who significantly contributed to women's emancipation in all spheres of social activity also includes the women who were amongst the first to acquire faculty degrees in the then typically men's professions, such as architecture. Jelisaveta Načić was the first amongst them. She also became the first woman student of technical sciences in 1896, in the first generation of the students at the Technical faculty (Grujić 1973, 281-282; Nožinić 1983, 275-276). Exactly in these years, the reforms at the then Technical Faculty started. In 1898, the Technical Faculty was divided into three departments: the Engineering and Construction Department, the Mechanical-Engineering and Technical Department and the Department of Architecture (Grujić 1973, 268). Jelisaveta Načić graduated from the Department of Architecture in 1900 and was immediately afterwards employed in the Department of Architecture, as a technical trainee in the Ministry of Construction. She was promoted to assistant architect already in 1901 and passed the state licence exam in 1902. However, she could not be employed in civil service because, under the law, only men were entitled to the civil service jobs. More precisely, the then regulations specified that „only the persons who completed military service can be civil servants“. Her love towards the profession and persistence resulted in her employment with the Department of Civil Engineering and Architecture of the Belgrade Municipality. Thus, together with Draga Ljočić, the first woman physician in Serbia, Jelisaveta Načić as the first woman architect became a pioneer in paving the path towards the employment of women in the civil service (Ibrajter Gazibara 2014, 42). Her first social and professional engagement was in the Association of Serbian Engineers and Architects in which she was an active member. She did not like to expose herself politically and, although turned to architecture, she was known to be a close friend of Dimitrije Tucović and a social democrat (Nožinić 1983, 276). For Jelisaveta Načić, the first woman student of architecture at the Great School in Belgrade, just like for Draga Ljočić, the student of medicine in Zurich, or Nadežda Petrović, the student of painting in Munich, the political determination was a parallel vocation, which would give to their vocations during their lives and work what Latinka Perović defined as (1993, 113) “some higher purpose: the profession as a service to people“. Jelisaveta Načić as an extremely active architect in the Belgrade Municipality was at the same time the only woman who worked in the Department of Civil Engineering and Architecture where she was the most active architect. Her work was interrupted after she was sent to the Neusiedl internment camp in 1916. There, she met an Albanian patriot and intellectual Luka Lukai whom she married in 1917 and gave birth to their daughter in the camp. She never again dealt with architecture, neither had she introduced herself as architect ever again (Nožinić 1983, 276-277; Djurić – Zamolo 1996, 1 - 89)).

Jovanka Bončić was the first woman who decided to study abroad where she went after having finished the Third Boys Gymnasium. Before going to study

abroad, she first started to study at the Great School in Belgrade because the students were eligible for the study abroad scholarships only after having finished the Great School. Jovanka Bončić was granted the scholarship by the Ministry of Construction to study in Darmstadt. She started studying there in academic year 1909/1910. There she met architect Andrei Katerinich from Russia whom she later married. After having acquired the degree in 1913, she became the first woman to graduate from the Technical Higher School in Germany (Trgovčević 1998, 90 – 92; Borovnjak 2008-2009, 265-266).

The period 1919-1929 in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes is characterized by an intense architectural activity that was followed by the progress of cities in the fields of urbanisation, electrification, asphalt paving of roads, industrialisation of larger centres, etc. (Kojić 1979, 1–4). The architectural policy also related to the development of vocational high schools and gymnasiums. Jovanka Bončić Katerinić designed numerous school buildings, which was in accordance with the state policy of reconstruction and development of the country. In Belgrade, her two school buildings stood out by their architectural composition design, while morphological structure of the buildings indicated the contemporary trends which Jovanka Bončić Katerinić employed in the later phase of her creative work. After having drawn up plan for levelling Queen Natalija Street and Dobrinjska Street, Jovanka Bončić Katerinić also designed the building of the „Queen Matria“ Women Teachers' Training School in line with the Program of the Ministry of Education. The building was soon built according to the latest school and hygienic standards at that time. After a decades-long schooling in unsanitary conditions, the schoolgirls were happy to move into one of the biggest and the most modern school buildings in Serbia. The school was named after Serbian Queen Maria who was a great benefactor of poor schoolgirls. The building was built in 1935, while the initiative to build a boarding school next to the school was abandoned for financial reasons.

The common denominator in all university centres in the Kingdom was the lack of basic conditions and financial resources for their successful operation. In 1939, the Ministry of Education passed the decision on an emergency construction of buildings in Belgrade, Zagreb and Ljubljana and the development and organization of institutes. The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in Belgrade was assigned land in the area of former Jatagan Mala, across the Karadjordjev Park. The building of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine was conceived as a monumental freestanding two storey building in the lower part of the block in Bulevar oslobođenja, and was built in 1941 according to the design of Jovanka Bončić Katerinić. The facades were executed without any ornaments, whereby the volumes of the emphasized pure forms essentially became ornaments themselves.

Milica Krstić belonged to the same generation. Her body of work was marked by designs of school buildings, from the small-town and rural elementary schools across Serbia to the representative gymnasiums in Belgrade. The period after the First World War was marked by construction activities, while design of school buildings was entrusted to the Department of Architecture of the Ministry of Construction that was responsible for design of schools in Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia (Toseva 1997, 95 – 112). In the period in which Jovanka Bončić Kateri-

nić headed the construction of the Women's Teachers' Training School building, the Milica Krstić's design of the Second Girls Gymnasium building was already materialized. Both buildings were situated in Queen Natalija Street. The Gymnasium building was academically conceived. The implementation of the elements of the Serbian medieval art was aimed at encouraging the association with both the tradition and the reputation and continuity of this school, one of the oldest schools in Serbia from which all girls gymnasiums and the Teacher's Training School stemmed from. Therefore, it was only natural to indirectly emphasize the importance of this representative building by an architectural expression inspired by the past. The building was built in 1934. It was not only one of the most monumental school buildings in Belgrade in the period between the two world wars, but also a place from which the most educated women in Serbia sprang and in which a famous women writer Isidora Sekulić was a teacher. As a senior adviser in the Ministry of Construction, Milica Krstić was assigned to design the building of the First Boys Gymnasium. The building is situated in Dusanova Street in Dorcol, Belgrade. Its side facades face the streets of Dobracina and Dositejeva. Unlike the building in Queen Natalija Street, this building was conceived in a modern spirit. With its reduced and pure forms, this building next to the Aleksandar Nevski Church designed by Jelisaveta Načić, the first woman architect in Serbia, shapes to a great extent the urban image of this part of the city. Milica Krstić persistently and consistently struggled for the affirmation of women in architecture. In addition to her duties in the Ministry of Construction, she was also active in other fields, such as writing articles for publication and art critique. She also held lectures on the topic „Technics and Culture“. In 1937, she was in Paris at the International Congress of Architects and the International Congress of Housing and Town Planning. Milica Krstić also exhibited her designs in important exhibitions of that time, amongst which the exhibition entitled „Women artists of Small Antanta“ in 1938 stands out. In this exhibition, Ružica Ilić, Danica Kojić, Desanka Jovanović, Jelena Mirić and Jelisaveta Načić also exhibited their works.

The first generation of architects was followed by a younger generation of women architects who graduated from the Department of Architecture at the Technical Faculty of the Great School in Belgrade. Amongst them were: Danica Kojić, Vidosava Ignjatović, Bogdanović Zanka, Zečević Anka and many other (Djuric – Zamolo 1996, 1 - 89). The women who graduated from the Great School managed to win a struggle for the important and responsible positions in the most renowned professional institutions such as: the Ministry of Construction, Ministry of Transport, Belgrade Municipality, technical services of municipalities across Serbia, technical departments in banates, leading design offices, etc. Many of them successfully cooperated on designs of the then leading names of Serbian architecture: Dragiša Brašovan, Momir Korunović, Milan Zloković, Petar Bajalović, etc. They also cooperated on designs of the Russian architects who fled from Russia to the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes after the Russian Revolution: Nikola Krasnov, Vasilije Androsov, Ivan Rik and other. Several women architects stand out among them. They left the profound traces in the Serbian architecture in the period between the two world wars, both by their

significant and voluminous body of work and by their persistent struggle for the professional affirmation of women and for gender equality in Serbia.

Danica Kojić from the younger generation of women architect who acquired degree from the Great School after the First World War occupies an important place in Serbian architecture. Working in the Ministry of Construction that was responsible for the school buildings design in Belgrade, Montenegro and Macedonia, she also designed several small school buildings in Serbia. Danica Kojić passed the state licence exam in 1928 and acquired the title of an independent architectural designer. She met architect Branislav Kojic in the Ministry of Construction whom she later married and left the Ministry. She was tightly linked to the design and professional activities of her husband until the end of her life. In 1928, the spouses opened a private design office at 15 Dobračina Street in Belgrade which operated until 1941. At the beginning, they drew up and signed designs together. Danica was also engaged in the administrative work of the design office, elaborated the designs, produced bills of quantities and made preliminary calculations. As an excellent draftsman, very soon she turned to interior design. In the period 1927-1938, she designed interiors for a series of the public and residential buildings (Kojic 1976, 17-19; Toseva 1996, 109 – 121). Danica Kojić was also socially engaged, primarily in the popularization of art and affirmation of the architectural profession. She was a member of the Club of Architects of the Belgrade Section of the Association of Engineers and Architects of Yugoslavia (UIJA) and an active member of the „Cvijeta Zuzorić“ Association for Providing Help to Fine Artists. She participated in several congresses together with her husband, exhibited her works with the „Zograf“ Group in the exhibition in Osijek, as well as in the abovementioned exhibition „Women Artists of Small Antanta“.

The abovementioned first generation of women architects who acquired degrees in Serbia until the beginning of the Second World War left an indelible trace not only in the activities of the Department of Architecture of the Ministry of Construction, Belgrade Municipality or private design offices, but also in overall Serbian architecture of that time. However, the art of building and planning in Serbia until the beginning of the Second World War was still completely in man's hands. After the victory over the fascism and after the partisan movement, a new period of Yugoslav history began. This was the period marked as the beginning of the massive and great social, political and economic changes. These changes were reflected not only in the political, ideological and social spheres, but also in the urbanisation of Yugoslav rural environments and emancipation of people, as well as in industrialisation and in one's own involvement in building the socialist society of the war-devastated country. The participation of women in the National Liberation Struggle (NOB) was of extreme importance for the post-war social activities in the reconstruction and industrialisation of the country, where the need for „bringing in the women in the economy“ was crystalized as an important task.

## Role of Women in Serbian Architecture after World War II

In the genesis of the relationship towards the women professionals, the situation has somewhat changed in the period after the Second World War when the position of women was legally equalized with the position of men. (Božinović, 1996, pg. 229). In the area of architecture as predominantly male profession, there were much more women who were in important positions: leading positions in the urban planning and design institutes of the People's Republic of Serbia (PRS) or in main bureaux and construction companies, where they performed different jobs in the domain of their profession, starting from design, supervision of building construction, through the work in the audit and competition commissions, as well as in other professional commissions. Compared to the period between the two world wars when only a small number of women dealt with teaching, research and architectural heritage protection, their number increased in the period after the Second World War. Amongst them, the following women stand out as excellent architects and organisers of jobs: Jovanka Jeftanović (Belgrade, 1912-1994) who worked in a design bureau together with V. Maksimović and Dj. Lazarević until 1941 and, after the WW2, in the Urban Planning Bureau, Urban Planning Institute (1945-1948) lead by architect Nikola Dobrović (Vukotić – Lazar 2002, 60-84; Manević 2008, 170) and Urban Planning Institute of Serbia (until 1950). Soon afterwards, in 1955, Jovanka Jeftanović established "Projektbiro" together with architects M. Mitrović and R. Tomić where she worked until retirement in 1968. This extremely energetic and talented woman architect of manifold interests in urbanism, architecture, interiors and memorial buildings, drew up a series of master plans for the cities in Serbia (Kragujevac, Krupanj, Arandjelovac, Loznica, Obrenovac) and built many buildings, mainly hotels. She also designed interiors for the buildings she designed („Palisad“ and „Lovac“ hotels in Zlatibor, „Kragujevac“ and „Šumarice“ in Kragujevac, etc.) Palisad Hotel in Zlatibor is amongst a very successful designs materialized in the spirit of regional architecture.

Olga Divac (Beograd, 1921 – Beograd, 1998) was a very influential woman architect in her profession. She worked in companies „Novi Beograd“ (1950-1953), „Komgrap“ (1953) and „Beogradski sajam“ (Engl. “The Belgrade Fair”, 1953-1958). Her works left a significant mark on the City of Belgrade (parks, pedestrian subways, professional work). She managed the construction of the Youth Centre (1959-1961), worked in the Belgrade Directorate for the Development of River Bank, Riparian Areas and River Basins (1968-1973) and in „Hidrozavod“ company until retirement in 1962 (Maneвић 2008, 96). Velisava Vela Dimitrijević (Zagreb, 1921) was the first woman architect – scenographer. She designed and supervised the execution of works on objects for decor of numerous films amongst which the decor objects for the film “HOJA! LERO!” in Belgrade and Promajna stand out. She also designed interiors, such as the interiors for „Novi Dom“ department stores (Belgrade, Ivangrad, Priština, Sarajevo, Split, etc.) (Milasinović Marić et al., 2010, 82-83). None of these architects have got a place they deserve in professional periodicals because, although women could work equally with men, their equality was declarative in nature, while in reality the practice was different and still favoured men. This was the time when much more men than women dealt with

design and architecture, because architecture, as a job, brought both a solid income and certain social recognition, which was as a rule intended only to men, even in the mixed architectural teams. This is particularly obvious in the sphere of responsible design and authorship, i.e. signature that is put on the materialized design or realized project. We could observe that, in the period after the Second World War all the way to the beginning of the seventies of the twentieth century, the women architects were declaratively equal, but in fact discriminated: they were technical draftsmen in most cases and, in the sphere of architectural practice, they elaborated designs of other architects or dealt with administrative and organizational matters.

Woman architect Milica Šterić (1914-1997) was a special person, the exception that confirmed previous views. She was one of the founders and a long-time director of the Architectural and Structural Department within the famous construction company „Energoprojekt“ (Bogunović 2005, 1104-1106). Milica Šterić had a decisive and strong character that was additionally supported by the powerful company, and she was also a person with a clear political determination. Together with her design team, she built a number of different types of buildings all over the world and in the then Yugoslavia. Her architectural poetics was in keeping with the time and ideas of the CIAM, as well as with the leftist spirit. She was completely dedicated to building up the country, particularly its industry and infrastructure, as well as to the affirmation of the architecture role in building a new ambience for the new (socialist) man. The „Energoprojekt“ building was her most important design (1960). It was a novelty for the Serbian architectural space both by its structure and by the material used. This was one of the first high-rise office buildings designed under the influence of international style, with a metal and glass modular facade and curtain wall as a major component of architectural expression (Bakić 2011, 144).

Woman architect Ivanka Raspopović (1930-2016) is one of the interesting and intriguing examples of that time. She was a designer in the „Rad“ and „Srbijaprojekt“ construction companies. She built her most important buildings together with architect Ivan Antić (1923-2005). Although she equally signed two designs of extremely important buildings of the Serbian architecture, the masterpieces: the Museum of Contemporary Art (1960-1965) and the „October 21“ Memorial Museum dedicated to the victims of fascist terror in Šumarice, Kragujevac (1948-75), Ivanka realized her professional designer's carrier in the shadow, without exposing herself and her great achievements, unlike Professor and Academician Ivan Antić who accomplished remarkable architectural achievements that are evident in his body of work, both in the domain of the profession and in the domain of social affirmation. The reason why Ivanka Raspopović did not want to make herself more visible lied in her modest character and dedication to her work, as well as in the general (patriarchal) spirit that prevailed in the society. When considering a share of each of these two architects in these deeply conceptually conceived works, a possible share of woman's hand could be recognized in the segments of fine poetics and significance of form. In every interview, both Ivanka Raspopović and Ivan Antić underlined an absolute equality in creating these masterpieces (Milasinović Marić 2005, 7-13, Jovanović 2013). Actually, if we

compare the Museum of Contemporary Art or the „October 21“ Memorial Museum in Sumarice with the overall body of work of Ivan Antić, we observe that the structure, pragmatism, rationality, purposiveness of the form, as well as his excellent and appropriate use of materials dominate in his own designs that affirmed him in the world of architecture, while, on the other hand, in the works he created together with Ivanka Raspopović, the architectural forms reached the very aesthetic essence, spirituality, poetics and symbolism of an abstract sign in space, which Antic once again achieved in the „25 May“ Sports Centre at the foot of the Kalemegdan Fortress.

In further genesis of the place of women architects in society, in the early seventies of the twentieth century, a series of teams of architects composed of married couples emerged. They built their careers working together as a team where they achieved equality in authorship, as well as the professional. The circumstances, specificity of their relationship and activities of each of these teams are different. Their architectural poetics spring out of their individual sensibilities, but also out of the very character of architecture that requires a full commitment and dedication.

A married couple, Ljiljana Bakić (1939) and Dragoljub Bakić (1939), have tied their architectural career to „Energoprojekt“, the „Architecture and Urbanism“ sector, which had large projects in Africa and in Belgrade, and where they were chief architects who accomplished important and recognizable works: Congress Centre and Sheraton Hotel, Harare, Zimbabwe (1983-85); the „Pionir“ All-Purpose Sports Hall (1973-4) and the Ice Hall (1977-78); „Višnjička Banja“ suburban settlement (1978,80, 86) and the „Nova Galenika“ (1975-76) large residential settlement in Belgrade, as well as many others. Their architectural language is characterized by a tendency towards the structuralistic, expressive and brutalistic statement in architecture (Milasinović Marić 2010, 468-9). The „Pionir“ All-Purpose Sports Hall is their most important jointly designed building in Belgrade. At the time it was built, the building was a unique multi-functional space which technical possibilities enabled both the holding of sports events and the holding of rock concerts, congresses, festivals, etc. Both authors achieved full equality within the Bakić's team. In addition to her architectural activities, Ljiljana Bakić also wrote articles for publication. She published a valuable study, the book entitled „The Anatomy of B&B Architecture“ (2012), in which she also gave her view of her own and Dragoljub's rich careers, along with the contextualization, analysis and description of architectural scenes in Serbia and in the world that influenced their architectural language (Bakić, 2012). It is clear that this author's couple achieved important results both because of their own poetics in harmony with the spirit of time and because of the combination of different man's and woman's sensibilities.

Milenija (1941) and Darko (1940) Marušić are another team of architect, a unique phenomenon on the Serbian architectural scene. They are architects who have had intimate and professional ties since their faculty days and who have over time developed a common poetics based on a strong mutual respect. Born in Valjevo, Milenija has tied her professional career to the Institute of Architecture and Urban & Spatial Planning of Serbia (IAUS) from 1965 until today. Darko, born in Omiš, Croatia, after being employed in the IAUS, went to work at the Faculty of

Architecture of Belgrade where he has built his career as professor, from a teaching assistant to full professor (Bogunović 2005, 954-957). They are both completely dedicated to architecture and also professionally and socially strongly engaged. They cherish each of their projects with equal passion and love, but also as their own architectural poetics which they are developing based on a dual, plural code, each wishing to leave his or her own trace in their joint works. Out of their rich body of work, we will single out: „Cerak Vinogradi“ settlement in Belgrade (1981); "Cvečara" group of family houses in Belgrade (1993); mixed use residential and office building in Novi Sad (1999); mixed use residential and office building in Bulevar kralja Aleksandra in Belgrade (2000); Petrol Station in Belgrade (2003); and the Metals Bank office building in Novi Sad (2008). Each of these buildings is a result of a studious and thoughtful idea for which they have received some of the prestigious professional awards. All of their buildings look like being against the hasty pace of modern life and they are the result of a long, hard and slow thinking about space, shape, function and meaning, all in the spirit of the neo-rationalist postulates of the European postmodern architecture that started with the thinking of Aldo Rossi and his book „The Architecture of the City“ (the revival of the idea about the street, square, smaller urban ambiances, etc.). The subtlety and visual effects, manifold meaning, aesthetics and richness of sensations are characteristics of their architecture and method of work where the duality is emphasized as a basis on which the architects erect their edifices made up of communication, respect and delicate interweaving. This architectural team has also achieved a full equality, both in architectural expression and in social recognition.

The late 19th century brought numerous changes both political and social, as well as structural ones. The state institutions and the state or public companies were no longer the most important investors, but the private investors and foreign capital also became important. New parameters were established, the professionalism was devaluated, architectural space became a polygon of the fight for the job, while architecture was considered as „goods“. The youngest generation of the women architects grew up in such atmosphere of general destruction. They acted from the position of employed women, independently, within a team or in their own bureaux. These were the capable, educated and decisive women who, paying no attention to the well-established views of their mothers and grandmothers, social obstacles or man's lobby in the world of architecture, bravely conquered space in the world of architecture freely entering the arena of the eternal fight for the realization of projects and preservation of the authorship of work, as well as entering the fight with investors that constantly needed to be educated and to which basic postulates and the logic of modern architecture also needed to be explained.

Amongst them, women architects Ksenija Bulatović (1967) and Vesna Cagić Milosević (1970) stand out. They often work as a team building many buildings, designing the interiors and winning the awards at different architecture competitions. Their works have entered in the focus of the profession when they received a prestigious award given by the daily „Novosti“ for the Best Architectural Work in 2008 (Kadijević, 2009, 203-212 ). Both authors deeply respect the fact that

every place bears its own spirit, characteristics and specificities to which architects should be particularly sensitive and which they have to recognize in order to achieve the continuity with the area, history and memory. Their common characteristic is that they consider architecture not only as an utilitarian activity, but they also deal with architecture in a multi-layer way, through scientific observation and practical work, as well as by designing the buildings based on architect's credo that a new structure has to summarize the essence and importance in order to achieve the spatial and temporal context. They jointly built several buildings: two office buildings in Takovska Street (2003 and 2007-14); office building in Bulevar of Zoran Djindjić (2008); the building of the Government of the Republic of Srpska in Banja Luka (2007); reconstruction and interior of the „Fontana“ cinema in New Belgrade (2011), etc. They also work independently. In her own „Cubex“ bureau, Ksenija Bulatović has independently materialized many designs with her associates, while Vesna Cagić, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Architecture of Belgrade and President of the Association of Belgrade Architects, has materialized several notable designs. Although different by their character and sensibility, their professional cooperation is excellent, and their results are visible. Regarding the issue of women's position in architecture today, they both perceive the real situation that is still discriminatory in spite of improvements relative to the previous times. The pragmatism, thorough work, comprehensiveness and focus on architecture is obvious and recognizable in their works (Milasinović Marić 2015, 6-15).

In this brief overview of the women's position in Serbian and world architecture, which is only a sketch and in which only some of the typical examples have been highlighted, we will also mention Jelena Ivanović Vojvodić (1962) as the last in the series of the women architects. She founded the „Birovia“ Bureau together with her husband Goran Vojvodić who is also a successful architect and professor. Jelena is also an independent woman architect, professionally and socially engaged, and Professor at the Megatrend University in Belgrade. Within her wide range of fruitful activities, this female author has signed numerous designs and won several professional awards. Out of her most important works, the following should be mentioned: Villa in Temisvarska Street; Djoka Jovanović's family house and summer house in Bigovo, Montenegro (2004, 2010, 2010 with V. Milunović); „Eurocentar“ office building in Makedonska Street in Belgrade (2003 with M. Bojović and S. Litvinović), and a number of other buildings that all reflect the sensibility for the contemporary functional architecture. She draws inspiration from the regional and from the local, and continues to cherish the accumulated knowledge she has gained in Prizren, the town from which she originates. To Jelena, architecture is her life, while she looks at her job of architect in a positive way, as an activity that improves the quality of people's lives. In her interview which she has given to the authors of this text, she has noticed that in the 21st century, women still face discrimination in their career in architecture, while different positions in the society are still not reachable to many successful women architects. The complexity of the profession, great work, painstaking process of materializing the works, as well as the complexity of psychological, interpersonal relationships are still today the obstacles to the full affirmation of women in architecture. In addition to all professional challenges, modern women are also in

the conflicting and paradoxical situation. On the one hand, their role as a pillar of the family and social life has been constantly confirmed, and, on the other hand, there are numerous attempts to push them from the mainstream of social life and to deny their importance and role in the society (Šiljaković, 2005).

## Conclusions

All examples herein indicate a continuous changes in women's position in architecture that have taken place simultaneously with the formation of modern Serbian state and turbulent time, 20th and early 21st centuries, which is still unfavourable compared to the status of men in the same profession. Still, a change for the better is noticeable: it is evident that much more women are dealing with architecture, so that architecture is no longer a predominantly man's profession. We come across the names of women architects that have had the opportunity to express their architectural attitudes and affirm their own poetics. Furthermore, much greater independence, decisiveness and attempt to preserve and foster their own selfhood in spite of the necessity of teamwork is also noticeable. We can also notice their high professionalism and pragmatism, which affirm women relative to investors who still prioritize men. In spite of positive changes, there is an evident tendency of professional repression of women, as well as the tendency of preventing their full expression and affirmation in society. It is obvious that we live in the world of architecture that was designed by men for centuries and that women, with their specificities, poetics, feeling for materials, colours, essambles, structures, have not yet said what they think about the space, as well as that this is a stimulating challenge about which one should think.

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