WOMEN’S ISSUES IN SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Summary

This paper is a study of a male-female relationship between Orthodox believers and about women in Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC). The author is a member of a SOC and with a realistic attitude towards women she views through the prism of anthropological. In the study she does not examine what is believed into, but what people actually do.

Keywords: female, Belgrade, spirituality, male-female relations, SOC

Introduction

The author was interested in how women see themselves in SOC, how they see other women, whether they are equal or inferior? Other people outside of SOC, consider that women believers are subordinate, slaves of God, slaves of Apostles, slaves of the whole patriarchal community; and I wanted to know what they say about it. Although we have only anthropological studies from a distance about women in SOC, the author lives with this ‘tribe’ and in first-hand she will talk about the data that she has collected in the fieldwork in Belgrade. The first part of the research refers to male-female relationships, while the second part deals with the life of SOC. Questions that I have tried to give answers are: Are women now free in SOC? Are they unclean? To what extent are the limits of respect of women being exceeded? What is the essence of Orthodox feminism? Are women still more eager than men? And finally, whether women are ready to fight for their role of deaconess or priestess?

Methodology

To understand women and their testimonies I will use a narrative-biographical approach. The sample consists of 10 interviews of the women who have undergone the process of integration into the religious community and experienced
metanoia. Interviews with the addition of recording conversations were conducted in February 2016. The author recorded the conversations among 10 women of different age, different professions and different backgrounds. The average duration of each test is for about an hour. The oldest respondent was 80 years old and the youngest was 31. The participants were divided into three groups to facilitate systematization of attitudes. The first group includes young women between 30 and 50, the second group are women aged 50 to 70, while the third group consists of old women from 70 to 80. The results of the analysis will show the discourse of a true believer including and their narratives.

Theoretical Framework

Dusan Bandić (Bandić 1985: 23) studied the male-female relationship through binary oppositions such as a man who is clean and a woman who is unclean, then that the right male side is happy and left female is unhappy. The author did not examine what has been believed but what has been done or has been avoided to be done (Ibid: 24). The sexual act can be viewed in two ways: as what connects or separates male and female (Ibid.) The author points out taboo determinations where the male and female attitudes are at a respectful distance (Ibid.) It is further stated that a woman is ritually unclean and can represent a danger to a man (Ibid.) Often a woman is prevented of access to certain jobs, rituals, entertainment, etc. (Ibid.) Physical limitation applies to a ban on movement of a woman during the forty days after the birth, when she can not leave a house and a garden because she is unclean, or dangerous (Ibid.) It is known that a woman is related to domain of a household, and a man to public sphere (Ibid.) When women do men’s work they perform the male roles and by taboo society defends itself from such aggressions (Ibid: 29) Lidija Radulović noted that the forefront faith returnees are women and they are more eagerly than men (Radulović, 2010a). They are turned towards the activities such as art, learning and care and are therefore more spiritual than men (Ibid: 41). They are since childhood gentle, obedient and attentive, and thus develop a predisposition to religious values (Ibid.) The author studied pilgrimage suggests that women generally have visions in which they saw the Virgin Mary, Saint Petka or some other Saints (Ibid: 43). In her research men note that women pray for them (Ibid: 45). In her second paper, the author notes that an ideal woman is a mother, and that women without children are called by derogatory names (Radulović 2008: 160). The woman is represented as the mother who, above all, has an educational role that corre-
sponds to her intuition and gentleness, unlike a man who does not have the fine and delicate feelings as a woman has (Radulović 2008 161-162). The author believes that Church supports women’s inequality because a woman is not for a community service, but for a family life (Ibid.) Bojan Žikić and colleagues have studied violence and rape against prostitutes by police officers (Žikić et al. 2008). They do not pay them and rape sex workers and transvestites confiscating their money (Ibid.) In addition to punches they even threaten that they will take them to the police (Ibid.) Miroslava Malesević (Malesević 2007) in her book Woman dealt with aspects of social position of women in Serbia. At the beginning, the author deals with civil feminism and feminist journals that were read by women between the two world wars and with the influence of feminist ideas in a patriarchal environment. Feminist Association has launched its own magazine that resolved all the issues that lie at the heart of women, and what make their survival difficult (Ibid: 15). Women at that time were only limited on a house and they were treated as minor children who were allowed to do male work (Ibid: 21). The magazine considered the inferiority of women, vulnerability of particular social groups, educational system, motherhood, literature, art, etc. (Ibid: 18-19). The magazine fought for economic independence, the right to work and education, independent decision-making and access to all professions and emancipation of society as a whole (Ibid: 26). Moreover women sought for premarital purity both for young men, as well as for girls, and introducing responsibilities of early marriages in order to protect young people from immorality, strict monogamy, legal ban on prostitution and the introduction of penalties for prostitutes (Ibid: 34). The author then analyses 8th March – Women’s Days and believe that women are equal only on that day, given that discrimination takes place at each step (Ibid: 41-42). In Belgrade March 8 was celebrated in 1914 for the first time, three years after that it was celebrated in other major world centers (Ibid: 44). Eighth of March was seen as the initiation of women in the status of proletarians (Ibid: 49). Postwar celebrations include the feminine brevity which encourage them to enter equally into new tasks and duties (Ibid: 53). In the postwar years women are imposed on traditional roles again (Ibid: 60). In the next chapter the Day of prodigal life, the author studies Revenu- a custom of association in food and drink, and a joint participation in cost sharing (Ibid: 73). In Vojvodina, Revena is a day that is prepared in women’s own honour (Ibid). Revena was held on Clean Monday, as the period of leaving out meat and the beginning of Easter fast (Ibid: 75). In the next chapter in the mother and the daughter in law relationship of the wedding ritual begins with the entry into
a new house of a daughter-in-law. The door-step of groom’s house is the last frontier that must be crossed in order for a bride to go in there and to belong to the new family (Ibid: 91). Mother in law welcomes a daughter in law and symbolically refers her to her new task, handing her own fertility and accepting her as her own child (Ibid: 93). In the last chapter of *Menopause- the last mystery of blood* it is talked about women of the third age (Ibid: 105). Some women defy to age by clothing, make up and attitude, while the other group of women think that ‘the game is over’ (Ibid: 114). Disorientation is seen for these two contradictory attitudes of being an old woman: an old woman, and a beautiful, attractive young woman who will remain so until her death (Ibid: 116-117). Women in the country go to the hairdresser only for a purpose of some big event, do not wax themselves, do not polish nails, do not know about sunscreen creams, a makeup is considered improper, even after the first year of a marriage (Ibid: 123). In the next chapter *Diet-mass female neurosis* author talks about overloaded market with weight loss products, although the price of a product exceeds the cost of the average wage (Ibid: 128). Women are hungry, try out a diet in order to come close to the figure of movie stars, models or other heroines of mass culture (Ibid: 129). Malešević notes that a woman also starved in previous periods when a good piece of meat was given to a men (Ibid). Today, girls also want to lose weight approaching to the ideal of more boyish body than the maternal one (Ibid: 138). According to Naomi Wolf, Malesević considers that a diet is a political sedative against incorrect women’s bodies (Ibid: 139). Results are as follows: High women go slouching, low in high heels, big are dressed like being in mourning, the tiny ones are inflated as snake in order to look bigger and other more ‘disguised’ women (Ibid: 141). Chapter *Advertising fairy tale about a healthy spirit in a slender body* deals with the false illusions offered by teas, herbs and various preparations for weight loss that look like a fairy tale (Ibid: 150). Standards of beauty declared the border of perfect figure as a fashion trend and therefore a huge number of women do not feel happy in their own bodies pursuing a given social structure (Ibid: 152). In the next chapter *Visiting happy family with the magazine Nada* the study refers to the relationship of the celebrities within their happy and harmonious family life. The most numerous are variants of the famous men married to anonymous women, followed by popular couples and finally are married women stars to unknown men (Ibid: 160). An anonymous woman has left her profession and is engaged in the house, while a man is devoted to his career and is ‘a do-nothing’ in the house. She dresses, cooks, welcomes, farewells, advises him etc. There is a very small number of
families where a wife is employed and all members do all the work in the house (Ibid: 163). Although rare, there are modern husbands who help. The following couples are both media stars. This woman even though has a career, stage and fun, she is also a housewife (Ibid: 167). Men do not even know how to boil an egg if there is no one to cook it they stay hungry (Ibid). Only one honourable exception considers that that is his house too (Ibid). Hobbies of a wife is beauty, care about flowers, embroidery and sewing, while men deal with: hunting, fishing and billiards (Ibid). The third pair are a star wife and an anonymous man. The man supports the woman, also her family does, and her mother is here to stay with the children when necessary (Ibid: 170). If she divorces, she invests more in her career (Ibid). In chapter big and small graduation the author talks about growing up in a primary school in Belgrade. According to research which the author read it is shown that puberty is accompanied with the loss of self-confidence so that girls do not believe that they can full-fill their dreams (Ibid: 181). There is hardly not a girl who likes to be original and stylishly dresses and who loves to buy what no one has (Ibid: 187). Being fashionably dressed like characters in American music videos and fashion magazines for girls is the right style that involves expensive brands (Ibid: 188). Socialising is a value that is appreciated both in ourselves and in others (Ibid: 189). When it comes about girls boys have two opinions: the first one is sexist context and they believe that girls are weak and insecure, and only quarrel with them, and the other one is a knight style which considers girls as fair sex reluctant to quarrel and aggression (Ibid: 191). It is understood that girls socialize with boys, because they gives them status, not because they want sex or satisfaction (Ibid: 205). In the next chapter Dreams of the future: how boys and girls see their gender roles girls want to be supermodels. On the other hand, female characters as role models in school are almost non-existent. There are just Desanka Maksimović and Marie Curie (Ibid: 222). In the last chapter Being Orthodox in Identity of Serbian Youth author returns to her primary school, which used to be equipped with the latest teaching materials, and now is completely impoverished. Today, gender identity of girls harmonizes with religious ideas (Ibid: 241-242). The psychologist in that school has objected to a lecture for pupils on protection against AIDS, believing that protection should be faith in God and sexual abstinence, not condoms (Ibid: 243). All girls believe that into a marriage should be entered as a virgin, fidelity is unquestionable, and that a creation of offspring is a primary goal of a marriage, although a lot of girls enter into sexual relationships around the age of 18 (Ibid: 247). Ljiljana Gavrilović studied divorce of spouses and assignment of the
children after marriage to a wife in which she is still being discriminated (Gavrilović 1985). Women are considered to be the other sex, and are related to the private domain, thus they are excluded from the distribution of power (Ibid: 11). In Belgrade area, in 90% of cases children are given to mothers, while in Novi Pazar male infants are exclusively given to fathers (Ibid: 12). In Belgrade, the parents are equal in making money and taking care of their offspring (Ibid). If you are divorced and the court granted children to the father, environment disapproves, a mother who allowed a father to take care of a child is considered as a bad mother (Ibid). In the second case, the children are given to the father, even if the father does not work and the mother is employed (Ibid: 13). As marriages of poor families who live in rural areas are known to be rather unstable there are also cases that a new wife takes care of children from several previously failed marriages of her husband (Ibid: 14). The author believes that both cases are discrimination against women and men, and that Centres for social work should be more involved in dealing with these in favour of children (Ibid: 16). Lidija Radulović in her book Sex / Gender and Religion criticizes the concept of culture / nature, public / private, and body / spirit, thinking that better things are always provided only for men (Radulović 2009: 64). In patriarchy, in which a man governed, a woman can only have ‘the power of the shadows,’ or secret influence on her husband, brother and son’ (Ibid: 151-152). The author studied discourse of virginity and anti-sexual attitude in Orthodoxy (Ibid: 154). Virgins preferred to chose martyrdom rather than to be dishonoured (Ibid). The Virgin Mary achieved her ideal of virginity with her immaculate conception and a marriage that is not sexually consummated (Ibid). In the image of the Virgin Mary two ideals exist: a virgin and a mother (Ibid: 155). Virginity is a moral norm in Christianity on the basis on which premarital and extramarital sexual relations are prohibited since their purpose is procreation, not delight (Ibid). Orthodox discourse of motherhood is linked solely to a marriage and condemns the illegitimate birth (Ibid: 199). Apart from children, a marriage is accomplished and blessed with fullness of a human being (Ibid: 200). In a definition of marriage rules it is stated that a marriage is a sacrament, where the newly-weds are associated in spiritual and physical relationship for the full life community and birth and upbringing of children (Ibid). Church excludes sexual intercourse when a person is not approached as a person, but as a fact or a means of pleasure (Ibid). Those who avoid conception are identified as rakes (Ibid). Senka Kovač who was studying old women claims that they very rarely dye, makeup and use creams, because their finances do not allow them (Kovač, 2010).
Ethnographic Materials

Each of these examined heroins had their own problems and did not make peace with the situation as it was and therefore sided towards church. Frustrated by partners in their marriages, relationships, war, rape, vegetarianism, diet, not finding the meaning of their lives, they turned to the faith. Wives were tortured in marriages where husbands were atheists, and in such marriages there was sadism and women were beaten. Older women had no temptation that are now happening to younger women. Asked whether there was sadism in their environment such as in their families, schools and marriages 80% of participants gave positive answer. Asked if there were maniacs who attacked them, women stated that they were on the street, but as well and in the church. Older participants stated that these things did not use to happen before, while the female of the first group are constantly exposed to this discomfort: follow-ups, touches and attacks even in front other people. Participants note that there are two types of women: kind one who they socialize with and the other one, unkind who they escape from. One of the questions very inconvenient was whether anybody ever tried to rape them. Half of the participants were raped (50%), some in marriages, some in a relationship, and some by maniacs. The first part of the questionnaire was concerned with a male-female relationship and gives very sad results especially for the second age group in participants between 50 to 70. Young females over the age of thirty are virgins, have not yet entered into a marriage and gave examples from their parents home, while the women in the second group gave examples from their own marriages. When asked who keeps the money, the most positive examples of couples were those who have a shared fund, and that each of them has its own pocket money and that they discuss about everything; 40% of participants have a shared fund, while 20% do not have any pocket money from their husbands who do not give them money, while the remaining 30% is unmarried or divorced and they have their own money and finally 10% in which each of them keeps their money. Women who do not have the money or they never receive or obtain it from their husbands, state it with a great difficulty. After a divorce, children are generally assigned to mothers, even though they are not employed (Gavrilović 1985) so that they have very serious problems in schooling their children. Men do not give money, just sometimes buy things for children. When asked what they think about the fact that women do not have a job today, the older participants of the second and third group believe that it is better for a woman not to have a job, while the
ones in the first group think that it is better for a woman to work. Those participants who have a job think that it is better not to have it and those who do not have a job think it is better to have one. Only a few participants gave realistic answers. When we touched the topic of gender role opinions were divided, although if they are subordinated in their marriages it is not in accordance with Orthodox Christianity. Older women gave priority to men, while some younger and some older women considered themselves to be equal to men and that they even should be preferred because they give birth. When asked whether they are equal to their husbands the oldest participants stated that a husband is always right, the second group of participants explained that they are limited by their husbands, while the youngest respondents struggle for their views. Although mothers believe that children should not be distinguished between themselves, some men still discriminate their daughters considering them not sufficiently realistic as was noted by anthropologist Miroslava Malešević that women are considered more infantile than the men (Malešević 2007). Men who maltreat their wives and daughters do the same thing with their mothers. Women are dissatisfied with their fathers, and they choose men who are in contrast with their fathers, so that both new and old generations are unadjusted to women. Only one participant (10%) thinks that men are too weak towards women. When they compare the marriages of their mothers, grandmothers and godmothers all is about that the whole house rests on a wife, and although a husband is kind and gentle, he does not participate in house chores. The participants of the third group have never divorced, while 30% of women from the first and second group is divorced. A husband’s behaviour is just within home care and if there is more love between spouses marriage functions better. However, all participants are against the condition that a woman is a slave in a marriage. As Church propagates virginity, I asked them whether this applies to boys too, and interviewees all but one stated that it is necessary to all. One participant married to a male virgin, which showed that the virginity is connected with men too, not just with women. Controlling sexual intercourse by sexual taboo is an acceptable thing. Changing sexual partners does not fit into our tradition and is associated with paganism. One of the questions was what the participants think about a woman who is related to the domain of a household and about a man who is connected to public sphere of society. The attitude of acceptance and sabotage was 50% -50%. Those women who work and function within the society believe that it is outdated, while women who do not have jobs feel that this system is still functioning. It is well known that women are more eager than
men in Church. Asked who first went to church in most answers it was a woman, a daughter or a mother. Participants generally have a priest monk as a spiritual leader and are more connected to a monastery, while men mostly have a parish priest and go to local churches. The participants stated that they pray and fast more than their husbands and it turned out that women fast on water and keep `three days`, while men fast on oil. Some women said that they keep the entire fast while men fast only for one week. On a question whether men do jobs around the house I mostly received answers that they do not work (50%) or that they must constantly be reminded at least to wash the dishes (30%) and positive examples when they consider that that was their home too (20%).

When it comes about pain provoked by husbands it is 90%. Participants explain that it is what is it and that it is mainly a father or a husband who condemns or understands them. They feel pain mentally, emotionally, physically or financially. When they recollect the time of dating with other partners, apart from one who does not know the real number, they state that they did not have a lot of partners. One of the participants refused a finance because he would not give her to work. Participants believe that it is better not to date before marriage, as they do not have a positive experience about that. All of them replied that they do not read feminist journals or inform about them, and some believe that they are not good for a family. When they were asked whether the men around them are more knights or sexist opinions were divided for knights 60%, sexist 30% and neutral 10%. The oldest participants had their first sexual intercourse in marriage (23, 27), the second group had sexual intercourse and mutual living in emotional relations, while the youngest respondents, either virgins, or promiscuous or divorced. One participant is a virgin at the age of 34, one was 18 years old when she experienced the first experience, and the rest of them after the age of 21-23. Asked whether they would chose martyrdom rather than be dishonoured participants stated that they would agree on torture (80%). Some of them said openly that they are not for martyrdom (20%). According to the testimony of one participant she was an excellent student and she was maltreated by her husband who was poor in all spheres. Another participant had been raped by her acquaintance who was a police officer, he was mocking her while the course of raping about her birth, as she was conceived with grapes given to barren by her parents. The maniacs who maltreated these women by hurting these victims actually wanted to desecrate the sacred in them, they were both deviant-believers and atheists. What these bullies with a police record hate are: purity, virginity and Holy Conception.
Life in the Serbian Orthodox Church

The second part of the questionnaire related to the very life in SOC. The first question was what they think about a women serving in SOC. Apart from the youngest all participants said they do not agree that a woman should be a priestess. A part of them agreed that women can be deaconess and the youngest one said that it would be acceptable for her. Some of the participants were from in the church since their childhood (40%), while others have experienced some kind of metanoia and they later sided with the church (60%). Metanoia happened during the contact with church fathers when they ceased to smoke, to wear makeup, wear pants and the like. Participants answered that they do not celebrate March 8th, but other people still buy them gifts. When I asked them whether they mind standing on the left unclean side interviewees responded that they it was all the same where they were, and that sometimes they stand or sit on the right side if there was no space on the left. Only one participants replied that women are to blame for their position. The women are glad that they separated from the men. They explain that they have always needed to prove themselves in a male society that they are below the average (60%). When asked about fasting, participants have begun to fast one week at the beginning and one in the end of fast period and slowly throughout the whole fast. Some of them, fast and the monastic fast on Monday. Since they hold the fast they do not need a diet, so they do not have this mass female neurosis (90%). In addition to their female jobs they say that they do and men’s work. When men are lazy, women work for them. The deviant believers feel courageous and note that they like to drive and to repair electricity. They tidy a house, and if someone helps it is always a woman a daughter or a woman that they pay for, so that men neglect their part of a job. Older participants mostly have a hobby like sewing, knitting, crocheting, middle-aged among them like to help other people while the youngest either visit monasteries, write or listen music. Although Miroslava Malešević (Malešević 2007) as female objectives described nature, private sphere and a body, participants mostly chose the male attributes such as culture (30%) and public spheres of society (10%) and the spirit which prevails over the body (100%). The power of the shadow and influence on men is widespread so that they give friendly advice or a invisible prayer. These 10 participants, whether they are virgins (30%), mothers (50%) or nymphomaniac (20%) explain that they are fulfilled in Church. Mothers say that their lives are too materialistic and day-to-day, virgins are trying to please God by doing, reading and praying, while the nymphomaniac has fun as much as she can. On a
pilgrimage they always go with other women, their daughters or female friends. They shared their experiences with me about having had a vision of saints (40%). About menstruation, dirt and not taking Communion their opinions were divided. Some priests do not give Communion while the woman is in a period, while the others give. Opinions are divided both among priests and women. The proportion that a women should not take Communion is 80% against 20% of those who think that they should take Communion in those days. On a question how they cure a feeling of grief participants answered that they go to a priest to confess themselves (20%), as well as through conversation and meetings with their friends. Going out with their friends always cures sadness and it is time good for joy and husbands usually are not involved. As Ruth is an ideal relationship between a mother-in-low and a daughter-in-low and even though they should communicate within a mother and daughter relation, it is not situation in reality although both of them go to church. Among 60% of those who have a mother-in-law only 20% communicate well (33.33%) compared to 40% (66.6%) who are in relationship just to be polite. Miroslava Malesević said that women hesitate between the ideal of a victim mother and a dressed up-grandmother (Malesević, 2007), therefore I was wondering what the attitude of the participants was in accordance to it. Between these two ideals a dressed grandmother (60%) won, then follows a victim mother (20%) and a neutral one (20%). In accordance with women’s beautifying I asked them whether they do it, whether they makeup, smear a polish, wax themselves, take care of their appearance and what clothing style they have. The clothing style is generally modest and simple, without any extremes such as short skirts, but participants sometimes wear trousers too. Some of them dress elegantly, and some outrageously. Older participants said they did not go to cut their hair, while mainly some of them go to the hairdresser 4-6 times a year, except one who goes every six months, and another one who is public person who goes to a hairdresser once a month. Older women do not wear makeup, while participants mostly use invisible makeup. Older participants generally do not dye their hair, while the youngest dye. Participants of middle age and younger wax themselves (60%), but not the oldest ones (40%). According to nail polishing the relation was 50% -50%. The same results were shown with creams with protective factors. When asked what they think of women who stoop their backs, of low ones in high heels, of fat ones dress like they are in mourning, of short and thin ones inflated like a snake in order to look bigger and other disguised women (Malesević, 2007), the participants responded that disguising is a devil thing. The participants are very ambitious and believe in fulfiment of their goals. They said that
they achieved everything that was beneficial for them. Participants were very sorry that there are not many successful women presented in schools, apart from Desanka Maksimovic and Marie Curie, mentioning that the reign of men is still continuing. The participants state that they were offended many times in words like ‘toothpicks, pussy, slut, cow, beady fool, old woman, maverick, water heater, turkey, snotty, nerd, stupid’.

I’ll be your slave in evil: I don’t wanna - I don’t think so!

Sadism continues to flourish so that 80% of them had discomfort at school, at work and home by men. Description of such a man is pre-potent, full of complexes, socially awkward in society, etc. deviant. Those are mostly alcoholics and children of alcoholics. Many participants were victims of sexual abuse in their primary relationships or marriages some were raped, and one respondent was raped by a policeman with whom she did not want to be in a relationship. We see that the rate of rape is up to 50%. Some young participants were attacked by a maniac in the church, more than on the street. They noted that maniacs move away when they see that they were in the company of friends or their mothers. We see that the patriarchy without church has a deviation and that so women who doesn’t go to church can allow her daughter to be raped to her husband without any guilt (!) Participants of medium group have mothers who are always on the men’s side, regardless of whether they are wrong or right. The law should prohibit rape and put such people on life imprisonment. Only one participant reported her rapist and the police immediately found him. I think that even men who cheat and exploit girls who fell in love and did not understand what kind of man they fell in love should be put in jail. Studying this male-female relationship within this examples we see that some of the women are constantly without money and that their husbands have never bought anything to them for so many years being in a marriage (!) Such men behave arrogantly and women feel as if they are begging from them. Men do not even pay money for their children, whether they are divorced or not and rarely buy them something. An ideal of a mother included within a church is that a woman do not have a job, and Church accepts that this is a winning combination. Although they stated this, most of my participants have jobs and are very successful in what they do. If we look at the wives of priests they are almost all employed and very modern women. Those that are not this become victims of the house, since the husbands or their sons do not clean anything behind them. Although women are considered to be equal, men do not treat
them that way. There are very few real women, others are a little enthusiastic or not perceive circumstances well because of the harassment which they were daily exposed. Based on studied it can be concluded that the primitives are still on the male side, and that the modern ones are always on the female side. It is interesting that these ‘big believers’ honour the Virgin Mary and do not respect their own wives and daughters. All in all, men inhibit them in developing their own talents. None of the participants did not say that their husbands were a great support in everything. Most of them raise their children alone, while men are busy with their work. Young participants fight for their attitudes! Older participants note that today women must know their place (!), but they do not state that husbands also must know where their place is? If women are dominant, they will eventually be abandoned. Men discriminate their daughters too considering them unrealistic, although everything is great in their lives, who are opposed to men, who have a lot of failors. Although the material is divided both on sons and daughters. Only 20% of participants said that the priest stood on their side, and criticized the men and what they were doing. Women do not only subordinate to their husbands, but also to their sons. They sometimes violate church regulations only to be conducted by the male or the satanic such as preparing meat to male members of the family during the fast. Young women are dissatisfied with their fathers too, and elect men who are opposed to their fathers, although this is not a winning combination, then divorce. Although virginity is needed to all, only one of the participants married to a virgin, which shows that men also hold virginity. Controlling sexual intercourse by sexual taboo is an acceptable thing. Changing sexual partners does not fit into our tradition and is associated with paganism. Sexual intercourse is seen as a spiritual and physical relationship, and for that meeting a person is to be prepared, since the body is considered as a temple of the Holy Spirit. From the study we see that 50% of women is attached to household domains and that inhibits their promotion in a career, but housewives are more connected to church than working women. Usually daughters first go to church and than their mothers. And generally they go together on pilgrimages, while their husbands and brothers are rarely taken with them. Women are every Sunday on Liturgy, while men come occasionally. These women deeper and more honestly fast and more often confess and take communion than their husbands. About 80% of men with a lot of hardship work minimally at home. An even greater percentage of women about 90% suffer emotional pain at home, which is why they go to church. One of the participants did not want to marry a man who told her that she would be sitting at home, and she replied that she had not studied for nothing. Unfortunately, today, these
woman are very rarely informed about feminism: neither read about it nor radio has some relevant programs. They even believe that feminism is not good, so that they have a totally distorted picture of what in fact it is(!) Even being subordinated in the house, they responded that their men are knights (!) Only one respondent who keeps to herself said that they are too weak. Examining the sex intercourse we see that the boundary has moved from the age of 21 to 18, and we see that there are fewer and fewer marriages. What is positive is that the participants would choose martyrdom rather than to be dishonoured, so here is demonstrated their masculine heroism. Many were attacked by atheists or believers- maniacs.

SOC’s Women

The second part of the interview is devoted to issues such as being a Orthodox woman in the church today. Orthodox woman today means not being a priestess or deaconess, the most convenient is to be a nun. As monasticism is rare, the best is a role of a mother, while there prevails an opinion that fathers have failed. Today in church fathers usually let children to their mothers, there are rare examples of men who lead, look after and lead children to take the Communion. Participants do not understand this kind need to be something in the service, apart from young theologians who are for an attitude to bring into Church in order of deaconess (Golić, 2013). Very few women grew up in Church (40%), while the remaining number of women was baptised in adult age (60%) and only later started learning Faith. Yet only in touch with the spiritual fathers they changed their mind: they domesticated, ceased to wear pants, makeup and smoke. So here a priest replaces a weak man who they have at home. The participants achieved their freedom just in Church, so to laugh atheists who claim that they are slaves. Unfortunately, urbanisation has broaden, so that for example March 8 is not celebrated not even in the cities. Even though they stand on the left side participants are still glad that they are separated from the men, so that even in the Church they are hidden from maniacs. Yet women seek for protection from other women rather than from men. Women fast so they do not need a diet. In addition to their duties, women have an obligation to clean after men, since they want everything to be neat, but men do not care for the house. Indeed it turns out that a woman is a pillar of the house and a pillar of society, the only alternative masculinity is asceticism where men all do for themselves, and where women go to have deeper religious experience and relaxation and come into contact with their spiritual fathers. Older women have hobbies that are related to their houses, while younger
are more connected to monasteries than the older. The ‘power from the shadow’ mainly refers to a pray, since men do not listen to what women say. They fulfil their life by going to church and struggle for their spirituality in contrast to men who come just occasionally. In addition to chores, participants try to pray, to fast, to read popular theological literature and to progress in their religious life. The pilgrimage is always a moment to visit strong religious Orthodox priests and to forget about everyday life from which it is not possible to escape. They go with their daughters and friends, rarely with their husbands. Some of the participants have had visions of Virgin Mary, Jesus, the apostles and Saint Petka. They see it as a warning or a consolation for things which are difficult for them to get over. Only 20% of women take Communion during a period, and the remaining 80% believe that women are unclean and that during these days women should not be in the church. Women cure their wounds by visiting monasteries, or socializing with friends. None of them find cure with her husband and sons. Women are hard to agree with their mothers-in-law, since they are more rural and there is intolerance to all problems which are urban. Although they vote for ‘a dressed up grandmother’ predominant is appearance of ‘a victim mother’. In accordance with this are clothing and appearance. Participants are trying to achieve all their goals and they are very sorry that in schools there are no more successful women who would be role models for young girls. They were many times insulted and they stated the expressions which were heard by themselves. Some have been insulted and by other women.

**Conclusion**

In the field, were found traces of the Old Testament attitude about impurities of women (Bandić 1985). In addition, the luckless left side is still associated with women, who were allegedly guilty by themselves for being associated with negativity, which in turn is linked to the Old Testament ancestral sin. Also in this paper I do not study what is believed, but what is done. Although it is known that women were previously associated to domains of a household, and a man in the public sphere, women generally feel that it is better for them to be mothers. Nevertheless, most of them still work, believing that men are unfortunately unreliable. Women do and men’s jobs, so that the society here forgot to protect them from excessive aggression (or it intentionally exploit them?) In the field, it has been confirmed that women are still more eager than men (Radulović 2010a), they fast longer, and it is always on water, unlike men who fast
on oil and do not hold a three days fast without food and water and are therefore are less spiritual. In the field, were found data that the participants had visions of Jesus Christ, Virgin Mary, Saint Petka and others saints. Wives continue to pray for their husbands, where there is a crisis of male identity Aleksandra Pavičević quotes in her presentation. ¹ Although they accept the ideal of a wife and a mother, 40% of the participants live as white nuns and can not be called in derogatory names because nuns are respected more than mothers. I think that Church does not support inequality, but it is a bit behind the times. Although religion is opposed to sadism, participants complain that there is no one to protect them from maniacs, and that even the priests are silent. One of the participants had been raped by a police officer who ridiculed the way she was conceived by her parents by holy grapes from Athos and while conducting this criminal act he was mentioning Saint Vasilije Ostroški, and that all distanced her from church for a short time. The participants are uninformed about orthodox feminism ², and I think it would be good to educate them since they suffer less when they change their attitude. As previously feminists were demanding virginity (Malesević 2007), so it is still the same they demand it from ‘male’. Even today, women are reduced to a house and treated as minor children even by rural priests. Participants do not celebrate March 8, although they get a flower or a gift. Modern Reven today do not include sit-ins in the house, but go out into the café as a break from the ‘house arrest’. Mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law can not agree themselves but they are decent, although both go to church. Participants are more urban than their husbands, so that they are therefore more urban than their mothers-in-law, and it is hardly to bridge that gap. Women in the church are not dress up, considering that the game is over (Ibid: 114) While they were mainly for a dress up grandmother, and not as a mother sacrifice, all of the participants look like a mother victim. What can be seen by appearance is that they are always neat and clean, but not dressed up with makeup as it would be appropriate for female citizens. The only thing they do not have is the extra weight, thanks to the fast, not to neurotic diets. If by Naomi Wolf a diet is a sedative against defective body (Ibid: 139), we must ask ourselves what are then correct bodies-thin as mortified, and is the premise true that the whole world is one big camp where my participants are tortured? They are aware that this is the devil’s playground and that it comes from the black devil. Their hobby is mainly work that is done in the house, except for

¹ Religion and secular moral (seen 3.5.2016) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VW6avJbSxas
² Which is opposite to satanic feminism
20% of them who are engaged in humanitarian work. And women like primary school pupils have to prove themselves the whole life that they are equal to men, who are, after the evidence less than a poppy seed, as was quoted by one participant. My respondents had sexual relationships after the age of 20, while Miroslava Malešević (Ibid.) writes that today girls enter into them at the age of 18, so that the borders of maturation is moved. Women continued to be granted the children after the divorce, even though they themselves were not provided. Participants gave priority to nature versus culture, and private versus public, but when it comes to the spirit they gave advance it over the body, which masculine refuted the claim that the woman is more physical than spiritual (Radulović 2009: 64). The power of the shadows is widespread and women affect on their brothers, fathers and husbands especially when it comes to church, so that they follow women in their spirituality. And today we can trust the words of Nikolaj Velimirović from the Prologue of Ohrid, that martyrs even today suffer and that they would choose martyrdom rather than to be dishonoured. The participants’ model is Virgin Mary, and therefore they live a holy life of a mother or a nun, and two participants are nymphomaniacs do not live the life that is proper for women in church. Although illegitimate marriage is condemned in church, children conceived in it come to church. Today, women in SOC hardly dye their hair, make-up and polish their nails, but the reason is not of a material condition, but they consider themselves as to be the most beautiful by natural beauty ideal (Kovač 2010).

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ŽENSKO PITANJE U SRPSKOJ PRAVOSLAVNOJ CRKVI

Rezime

Rad se bavi proučavanjem muško-ženskih odnosa pravoslavnih vernika, kao i žena-ма u SPC. Autorka je član SPC i na realan način sagledava odnos prema ženi kroz antropološku prizmu. U njemu se proučava ne ono u šta se veruje, već ono što ljudi čine.

Ključne reči: žensko, Beograd, duhovnost, muško-ženski odnosi, Srbska Pravoslavna Crkva