

## A CASE STUDY OF RETRADITIONALIZATION AND CLERICALIZATION OF THE CROATIAN SOCIETY: “FEMINIST THREAT” AT THE GOVERNING POSITION OF A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

### Studija slučaja klerikalizacije i tradicionalizacije hrvatskog društva: „Feministička prijetnja“ na upravljačkoj poziciji institucije visokog obrazovanja

*ABSTRACT: A case-study from a governing position of a higher education institution in Croatia will seek to demonstrate processes of dynamics of governance, manipulation and patriarchal power relations towards professional and feminist engagement and resistance to the authoritarian imposition of patriarchal norms and expectations by personal case study with autoethnography method. This is a case of professional and personal working experience in the top-administration of a higher education institution in Croatia, where was expressed a whole range of manifold forms and abuses of power, public insults and defamations in an attempt to maintain the patriarchal power system, value system etc, further imposing a more rigid form of patriarchy, even more “cemented”. In this process various actors, individuals, groups, institutions, various social influential groups have been involved. We shall examine especially repressive approach in an attempt to eliminate one person from her workplace in a higher education institution who was labelled as a secular and “feminist threat” who publicly expressed her opinion on the perspective of a non-transparent hidden and later attempted networking of incompatible types of institutions with different religious versus scientific principles, values and legal foundations as well as patriarchy interests.*

**KEY WORDS:** autoethnography, case-study, clericalization, gender, power, retraditionalization, university

*APSTRAKT: Studija slučaja na upravljačkoj poziciji institucije visokog obrazovanja u Hrvatskoj nastojat će pokazati procese dinamike upravljanja, manipulacije i patrijarhalnih odnosa vlasti prema profesionalnom i feminističkom*

*angažmanu i otporu autoritarnom nametanju patrijarhalnih normi i očekivanja osobnim istraživanjem slučaja pomoću metode autoetnografije. Ovo je slučaj profesionalnog i osobnog radnog iskustva u upravi visokog učilišta u Hrvatskoj, gdje se izražava čitav niz mnogostrukih oblika i zloupotrebe moći, javnih uvreda i klevete u pokušaju održavanja patrijarhalnog sustava moći, vrijednosnog sustava itd., dodatno namećući čvršći oblik patrijarhata, još više „cementiran“. U ovom procesu sudjelovali su različiti akteri, pojedinci, skupine, institucije, različite društvene utjecajne skupine. Razmotrit ćemo posebno represivan pristup u pokušaju uklanjanja jedne osobe sa njenog radnog mjesta u visokoškolskoj ustanovi koja je označena kao sekularna i „feministička prijetnja“, a koja je javno izrazila svoje mišljenje o perspektivi netransparentnog, skrivenog i kasnije pokušanog umrežavanja nekompatibilnih tipova institucija s različitim vjerskim i znanstvenim načelima, vrijednostima i zakonskim temeljima, kao i patrijarhalnim interesima.*

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: autoetnografija, klerikalizacija, moć, retradicionalizacija, rod, studija slučaja, sveučilište

## Introductory Theoretical, Methodological and Political Framework

This is at the same time personal autoethnography and feminist self-narrative of one case study about last years of my life that coloured my life as a whole, but at the same time very striking role model of eliminating feminist thought and movements from „important“ state and political spheres of interests on example of the experience of vice-dean position of one of the Croatian Faculties – Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb (FHSS, UNIZG). What happens when one woman, feminist<sup>2</sup> and secularist „on function“ at the same time has her own political opinion – publicly – against patriarchal and rigid positions of Catholic church interests, supported by men’s governing positions at the university and in other spheres of society?

The aim was to show that through personal experience certain mechanisms have been introduced by which individuals or groups of interest can use the system and public institutions to occupy and expand the space of personal power, which is precisely constituted by these social relationships (Foucault, 1990). Foucault has already shown, and neofeminism confirmed the diffusion

2 From 2002. until 2013., the author introduced 3 feminist courses at Croatian master study of sociology, FFZG, UNIZG, one at doctoral study and one course at master study of sociology at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Split, as well as she founded special Gender unit at the Department of Sociology, FHSS. She also participated and was the head of several research projects about important nacional Croatian sociological questions concerning gender discrimination in Croatian society, the position of women at the labour market in Croatia and national attitudes about reproductive rights and status of women in reproduction in Croatia, sexism and religiosity in Croatian society. Important topics publications: Galić, 2004; Galić, 2006; Galić, 2008; Galić i Geiger, 2006; Galić i Nikodem 2006; Galić i Nikodem, 2009; Relja, Galić, Despotović, 2009; Galić, Buzov, Bandalović, 2009; Galić, 2011; Galić, 2012; Galić i Klasnić, 2012; Adamović, Galić, Gvozdanović (ur.) 2014; Galić, 2014;

of power relations through all social relationships, and then through gender relations of power too (Kalanj, 1993; Galić, 2002). Foucault was categorical in regard the body as a “place” for “power games”. Although he was one of the first theorists who realized that where there is power, there is resistance, there is little room in his work devoted to forms of resistance in totalitarian and authoritarian institutions such as prisons, hospitals or schools (universities) as educational institutions (Westwood, 2002). In such relationships, power also enters the gender relations that make up the “power places” spoken by Foucault. In this context, the personal experience of woman in a leadership position of one faculty is also a place of power (a privileged access to decision-making and available information), and also a place of experience with senior persons in the leading positions of deans and rectors who create their own space of power in order to try to achieve certain private interests with the help of a system that should serve the general good rather than its instrumentalization for private interests.

### Methodology of the Case-Study

Autoethnography is „an alternative method and form of writing“ (Neville, 2003: 89) with different approaches that can be characterized in terms of different relationships between the personal and the wider social and cultural world the writing seeks to enquire into. Ellis & Bochner (2006) have classified these differences as „evocative“ and „analytical“ approaches, where evocative autoethnography foregrounds the writer’s personal stories and analytical autoethnography connects to „some broader set of social phenomenon“ (Ellis & Bochner, 2006: 429). The experiences of autoethnography as an assessment and learning tool in sociology emphasises also Peta S. Cook in her study with students as very useful method for special qualitative issues (Cook, 2014: 269–282). Ellis (1997) outlines Anderson’s (2006) contribution of two forms of autoethnography, evocative and analytical autoethnography. The former is a descriptive, free form style of literary writing that uses emotion in the aim to evoke empathy from the reader. The latter, analytical autoethnography, although may also induce emotive responses, it is mainly focused on connecting self-experience to the critical analysis of social structures, processes and social forces (Anderson, 2006; Cook, 2014: 271). Cook points on autoethnography as a case study approach that is „informed by personal observation, experience and reflection“, as well as social theory and research and ask „why not we respect our own experiences as well if we respect the experiences of our participants“? (Cook, 2014: 270–271) According to Clough, autoethnography „allows the sociologist to deconstruct and contextualize their own experiences as well as that of others“, that „turns the eye of the sociological imagination“ (Clough, 2000: 179, Clough, 2000) The same opinion deals Liz Stanley thinking that „critical self-reflexivity allows the researcher to speak personally by focusing on their lived experience in direct relation to the social context“ (Stanley, 1993: 41–52). And as Tamy Spray says „autoethnographic performance makes us acutely conscious of how we “I-witness” our own reality constructions“ (Spry, 2001: 722), as the author of this paper witnessed to our reality constructions. Interpreting culture through

the self-reflections and cultural refractions of identity is a defining feature of autoethnographic performance (Spry, 2001).

The autoethnography as a valid research and feminist method within the sociology is used in this paper because feminist perspective shows the meaning of the woman's experience within a broader social and cultural frame concerning personal and professional position to which woman-author was exposed and gained that experience with her body and mind through the process of discovering meaning of comprehensive process of gender power experience in higher educational institution.

In this case study of autoethnography as feminist method, autoethnography is an active demonstration of the „personal is political“ principle and feminist critical writing which is „performative and is committed to the future of women“ (Ettorre, 2017: 15). By using autoethnography the author describes and interprets her experience, emotions, and encounters with self and with persons on leading positions at the university and faculty in gendered and political power relations. Through this process of reflexive narrative approach that is used is possible to construct and describe power relations and political manipulations behind the scene. Feminist approach too was useful when reviewing the data because the author was most interested in understanding the gender based experience and how it is related to patriarchal structures at the faculty and university. Many researchers emphasize validity of autoethnography as a qualitative research method based on writing and reflection that allows researchers to explore personal experiences through social, cultural or political contexts (Kelley, 2014). It works best when the researcher seeks to gain a cultural understanding of self and others (Chang, 2008: 327). As Chang notes, in this approach, the researcher is both the subject and the researcher where he/she uses this autoethnographic method to answer questions relating to an experience that is not well understood or lived by others (Chang, 2008: 327). In this case, autoethnography demonstrates the potential to speak back (Denshire, 2012) about professional life under prevailing conditions of power and gender relations in contexts of professional experience at the governing position of Croatian faculty. In general, then, autoethnography is a research approach which draws upon the researcher's own personal lived experience, specifically in relation to the culture (and subcultures) of which s/he is a member, as gendered relations and patriarchal institutional structures are (Allen-Collinson, 2012: 4; Ettorre: 2017).

## Political Framework

Croatia is one country with a prevalently Catholic population.<sup>3</sup> The Catholic Church in Croatia is part of the worldwide Catholic Church that is „under the spiritual leadership of the Pope, Roman Curia and the Croatian Bishops' Conference“ (<http://www.hbk.hr>). Its administration is centered in

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3 There are an estimated 3.7 million baptized Roman Catholics and about 20,000 baptized Greek Catholics in Croatia which make 86.3% of the population according to the 2011 census. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic\\_Church\\_in\\_Croatia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Church_in_Croatia))

Zagreb, and it comprises „5 archdioceses, 13 dioceses and 1 Military Ordinariate“. Current Croatian cardinal is Josip Bozanić, Archbishop of Zagreb. During ex country Yugoslavia, between 1941. and 1991., in which Croatia was part as a constitutive socialist republic with its own Constitution, the Croatian bishops were part of the Bishops' Conference of Yugoslavia.

In 1946, socialist regime confiscated property of the Church and in 1952 officially banned all religious education in public schools. That year the regime also expelled the Catholic Faculty of Theology as one of its constituent units from the University of Zagreb, to which it was not restored until the political and democratic changes in 1991.

Catholic Faculty of Theology (CFT) is a specific academic and church institution with special treatment according to Statute of the University of Zagreb, whose personnel in politics, dealing leaders, program design and affirmation, financial policy and organization of the faculty are being considered on the university level, but also take into consideration the opinion and seek confirmation from the relevant ecclesiastical authority in Vatican, according to Croatian Bishops' Conference (<http://www.hbk.hr>).

The position and activity of the Catholic Faculty of Theology within the University which are regulated with respect to the international treaties and contracts between the founders and the University, with the consent of the relevant state and church authorities. The founder of the Faculty is the Zagreb Archdiocese.

The Faculty is also, as a high church institution, subject to the Holy See and is aligned with the provisions of canon law, the Apostolic Constitution of *Sapientia christiana*, of the Faculty Statute, which is approved by the Holy See and according to the general acts adopted by the Faculty itself.

It is written in the Statute of the Catholic Faculty of Theology that „*The purpose of the Faculty is to nurture, to research and to systematically and comprehensively present the Christian Discourse, to advance the knowledge of its truth through the philosophical-theological sciences upbringing and education of the diocesan clergy, members of the institution of consecrated life, members of the association of apostolic life and Catholic lay people*“. (Statut Katoličkog bogoslovnog fakulteta, 2008).

Catholic Church in Croatia, apart from being known for its great demands for the return of property confiscated during the socialism, is well known for „Vatican contracts“<sup>4</sup>, which enable it to supply large material resources and long-term policies to influence educational institutions at all levels, as well as on the media. Catholic Church is very active in Croatian social and political life. From 1991 until now The Church has implemented a number of conservative spirit actions in order to promote its values such as: non-working Sunday, punishment of the crimes of the socialist era, introducing religious education from pre-school institutions to schools and higher education institutions<sup>5</sup>, protection of

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4 There are several similar contracts with the „Holy Chair“

5 .. according to „Vatican Contract“ that Croatian state signed in 1990s with the state Vatican, as the return service to the Holy See for the Vatican recognition of Independence for Croatian State in 1991 at the beginning of the Homeland War in ex Yugoslavia.

marriage as the union of a „man and a woman“ (2013 referendum), opposition to abortion (campaign: „*Protecting human life from conception to natural death*“), opposition to euthanasia, opposition to natural methods of family planning and the treatment of infertility, and opposition to artificial birth control methods.

This rise and rush of ever greater influence of the Catholic Church in Croatia has been going on since the beginning of the 1990s and grew of religious education in schools and preschool institutions, in view of the introduction of religious education on all levels in education institutions, all according to international Contracts that the Government of the Republic of Croatia in the mid 1990s concluded with the state Vatican in the areas of „education and culture“, in „legal issues“, on „the care of Catholic faithful, the Armed Forces and the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Croatia“, on „economic issues“, „Catholic religious education in public schools and religious education in public preschool institutions“.

Catholic religious or religious education in public schools is performed by persons whom the diocesan bishop gives a confirmation of the canonical mandate (*missio canonica*). According to the Vatican in the field of education, public schools do not choose the teachers to perform religious education in schools, as they choose for other subjects-matters in schools, but „*the diocesan bishop determines a suitable person for performing religious education or religious education*“, according to Vatican’s contract „about Catholic Religion in Public Schools and Religious Education in Public Preschool Institutions“ (Ugovor između Svete Stolice i Republike Hrvatske o suradnji na području odgoja i kulture, 1996). Also, according to the same Contract, „The *missio canonica*“ confirmation for teaching of Catholic religious confession or religious education will have an effect when the diocesan bishop does not revoke. In other words, a school, say, cannot do much if teacher is inappropriately behaving towards children, if someone discriminates or sends a message of harassing, racist or even fascist content.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, religious instruction largely depends on the choices of teachers, whereby the diocesan bishop has the right, by his decree, to revoke the canonical mandate (*missio canonica*) for teaching Catholic doctrine or religious education due to „the correctness of the teaching and the personal timidity“. This is stated in one Vatican’s contract on performing religious education in public schools and religious education.

## Chronological Narrative Perspective

Between 2012 and 2016 I was vice-dean for science research and international cooperation of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb (FHSS, UNIZG) elected by the Faculty Council. I was, of course, very surprised that any dean wants for his collaborator a person with feminist background and strong opinions in Croatia, because I was in that time

6 In Croatia these days is actual a case of one religious teacher who has magnified war crimes against Serbs and called for killing of certain politicians and politicians in Croatia who are against fascism in one primary public school in Zagreb.

associated professor, teaching few courses about women's movements, gender and society at the Department of sociology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. But in that time I was very naive thinking that it will be nice opportunity for some new kinds of research and cooperation that I wanted to do. First two years of my work on that position it was during mandate of the Dean 1 (today Rector of the University of Zagreb)<sup>7</sup>, and last two years it was during part of mandate of the Dean 2 (established by lobbying of the Dean 1 and his collaborators, as we presume), who was suspended one year earlier, before the end of his mandate that should last 3 years in continuo, "because of his advanced age".<sup>8</sup> My mandate should last three academic years too, until the autumn and October the 1st, 2017., but was abruptly interrupted one year earlier, on October 3rd 2016., by the Senate of the University of Zagreb, which made his first illegal replacement of one vice-dean in his work-history, just because the person (me) had expressed her opinion on a public meeting – the student's forum („on Clericalization of Higher education in Croatia"<sup>9</sup>).

I have expressed my concern about the Contract on unification of the Catholic Faculty of Theology and our Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences concerning integration in „double major studies“, that has been signed secretly by ex Dean of the FHSS (Dean 1), now Rector of the University of Zagreb. I was seriously concerned because the realisation of that Contract should be provided at the expense of our Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and its students, since by that Contract our students would be discriminated in applying for their study, during studies and in getting employment. Namely, conditions and legal approach to that two faculties was not equal, as well as was not equal the reciprocity of study programs, neither do the possibilities for getting jobs in public schools for graduated students and neither the responsibilities of faculty authorities above, since FHSS is in the ownership of the State Croatia under „civil law“ and Catholic Faculty of Theology is in the ownership of foreign state Vatican and under „canon law“ (where women are not equal with men). At the same time, international Contracts of Vatican state is presented and officially accepted in Croatia as the law even „above“ Croatian Constitution. How is that possible, it is the question that goes beyond this paper and I will not write about it.

However, it was meaning also that FHSS was opened equally for everyone who fulfilled final secondary-school examination and entrance examination, but

7 The intention of this paper is not to name names, but to explain the structure of institutional management, so we will mark both of deans as Dean 1 and Dean 2, instead of writing their names.

8 Although it is actually impossible to suspend a person who has already been retired because a person who has a retirement age for requirement should not be suspended, but should be retired. However, in the case of a specific dean (Dean 2), the Rector has resorted to his „suspension“ just to have „justification“ for removing an unwelcome vice-dean from the administration (me personally) with the supposed „termination of the mandate“ of all vice-deans, so the same people at the same session have been once again named by the Rector as „forced administration“, except me. Otherwise, if the Dean 2 have been normally retired as he should have been, the Rector could not undo the unwanted vice-dean by the legal procedure.

9 Link on student's forum, where I was speaking in 92nd minute, and after again in 115th minute: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jwzwoyuHn0>

Catholic Faculty of Theology sought an extra condition – that of the parish's confirmation, what was not possible to fulfil for some students of FHSS in the first place. Also, Catholic Faculty of Theology wanted for their students to get more than twenty different studies on different Departments that is possible for study on FHSS, as the second major, from History, Art History, Philosophy, Sociology, Pedagogy, Psychology, many language departments (Croatian, Slavic, English, German, Portuguese, Spanish, Scandinavian, Dutch, Arabic, Jewish, Chinese and Japanese, Hindi), linguistics, information sciences and other departments. At the same time Catholic Faculty of Theology offered for students of FHSS only one study as the second major study – „religion pedagogy and Catechesis“, i.e. „confessional religion“ for teaching in public schools. It was meaning that their students can easily enter and get plenty of possibilities for study at FHSS, but students of FHSS can get only one study of confessional religion on Catholic Faculty of Theology. In my opinion, is not reciprocal enough. The crucial problem with that type of combination would be in possibilities for getting jobs in public schools and it would beat the expense of FHSS students, what would put them in unfair position. Why? Because in Croatia jobs for confessional religion teachers are not getting through process of announcements in public schools, and schools do not choose that teachers by themselves, as it is the process for other professors and teachers in all other public-school subjects. In the case of confessional religion teachers, their choice of cadres is not conducted by public schools, but by Catholic Church in Croatia (private religious institution), and public schools do not have any power to influence or change that staff if they are not working their job correctly and well for example. Only Church can change them if it wants and only Church can give them so called „canonic mandate“ for every new school-year, of course if they live according to Christian principles of Catholic Church expectations. But, for example, if some teacher of confessional religion get divorced, he/she would never get again „canonical mandate“ (*missio canonica*) ever, or if he/she get a child out of an official marriage. From religious teachers is expected to have a virtuous life in accordance with the Catholic doctrine and its worldview.

In long-term perspective, with that kind of contract between two faculties such teachers could take up most of the subjects in public schools studying at the FHSS, and besides religious education they could also teach a good part of other subjects (foreign languages, Croatian, history, Croatian, philosophy, etc.), and The Church would put them in public schools. At the same time, the number of teachers who do not have a „canonical mandate“ and which the Church did not send in public schools would drop, although the school itself can select them on the basis of the competition and announce, but in concurrence with the Church, public schools loose. Does it seem fair and correct? In my opinion, not, especially if we know that religious teachers are not paid by the Church for their work, but by money from the state budget. But people in Croatia on average are not at all informed about that kind of actions and processes that are going on very far from public eyes, because interests of Catholic Church in Croatia are fighting as well very far from public eyes.

So, the first Dean (1) secretly (i.e. without the knowledge of the members of the Faculty Council) signed that special kind of Contract with the Catholic Theological Faculty, while Faculty Council of the FHSS knew nothing about the concrete Contract. He requested from the Faculty Council (FHSS) only very general support on “cooperation” with the Catholic Faculty of Theology, but not for a such special contract integration (on mutual double major studies) and he never presented it to the Faculty Council members (FHSS) that concrete Contract, nor did our colleagues at the faculty know anything about it. It was before he had received the votes for the Rectorate and he received the votes to become Rector just because it was good „deal“ with the Catholic Church. That is why he was supposed to “return” the service to the Church by signing for a Church wishful Contract on joint double major studies with an important faculty (FHSS) in Croatia which educates half of the required teaching staff for public-school subjects.

### How did that Happen?

After I accepted that elected vice-dean position by the vast majority of voices in Faculty Council in 2012 on the proposal of Dean 1, I was in a good faith and found it as a good chance for working on new centralized research Centre for all kind of gender research at the Faculty, widening international cooperation and some other ideas. The first Dean (Dean 1) didn't have much hearing for that Centre for research, but he was working very hard on his own promotion to become Rector of the University of Zagreb. At the end of his efforts, he succeeded and became Rector in 2014 thanks to the votes of the Catholic Church. At the same time he was the Head of the „Old Catholic Church“ that has some different protocols and regulations concerning formal conditions for leading that Church.<sup>10</sup>

But before his recognition as a Rector of the University he secretly signed (without permission of the Faculty Council) that Contract on integration of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences with the Catholic Faculty of Theology to allow students of the Catholic Faculty of Theology to get more additional school-subjects for teaching in schools, with the possible number of combinations of studies at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences that are offered by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences for its students in more than 20 different professions and studies. At the same time, the students of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences could receive only one additional profession – religious pedagogy, i.e., teaching of “Catholic catechism” in schools. In addition, the criteria for enrolment were not the same, as the Catholic Faculty of Theology requires additional ecclesiastical documents with the recommendation of the pastor, which the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences does not seek at all. Consequently, students who are not believers or students of other faiths would be discriminated because they could not even register on Catholic Faculty of

10 For example, the Head of that Church can be married and have children, in contrast to the Head of Catholic Church and its clerics.

Theology. At the same time, a selection procedure for teachers in schools of „catholic religion“ subject is not conducted by schools and state of Croatia, but by the Catholic Church. It means that state public schools cannot even choose a staff for teaching the subject of „Catholic religion“ but must only accept what the Church choose. Likewise, schools cannot dismiss teachers of „Catholic religion“ who do not perform their job properly. Of course this means that schools would be gradually squeezed out concerning their teaching staff and powerless to choose their own teaching staff for education of pupils, and the overall control over the election of staff and school management would be taken over by the Catholic Church. This, of course, is long-term and far-reaching project, which has great ambitions for clericalization of the whole society.

In Croatia, The Catholic Faculty of Theology is consisted of the state's and secular „faculty components“ and exclusively of the church component which is under the direct supervision of the state Vatican and has different system of law – „canonic law“, under which women have not the same rights as men. In The Statute of the Catholic Faculty of Theology is written exactly that institution is based on „canonic law“ that is totally rigid patriarchal law. In other secular and state faculties we have civic law at all universities in Croatia as well as in society as a whole.

In the beginning of my vice-dean function and position, almost the first two years I didn't know anything about getting votes for Rector position „with the little help“ of the Dean's 1. friends – churchmen – but as his rector mandate became closer, I realised more and more how actually he become The Rector. During his Dean's mandate while he was still working his last 6 months before going to rector's office, our ex Dean 1 made that very unprofessional and meanly thing – secret signature on that kind of contract about special kind of unification – between Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and Catholic Faculty of Theology – would give all benefits to Catholic Faculty of Theology and to Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (FHSS) nothing except more damage for our students and harder getting employment etc. They would gradually expel our graduated students from public schools. And in future perspective – that would lead to clericalism of the whole society because Catholic Faculty of Theology educate teachers of confessional religion, Catholicism in Croatia, and by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences they would get the other profession in some other field of science, what could be perspective for getting better job positions in schools for religious staff, and worse for nonreligious.

„Double major“ or „twofold studies“ between 2 so different faculties has been signed by the Dean 1 without permission of the Faculty Council that is official body for that kind of support. Even he didn't inform officially anybody at the Faculty about his secret actions. Only people who knew and heard for his intention were 2 ex vice-deans and me, but we were on the opposite sides in supporting it. I was the only one person in that deanery against that contract in that moment. I was the only one who has not been called on the meeting organized for that purpose to persuade our dean on the „usefulness“ of that contract what was trying to convince the dean of the Catholic Faculty of Theology (CFT) and our Dean 1 agreed and promised to sign a contract. In the meantime, he was preparing

himself for the rector's elections and soon became a rector with a promise to the Catholic Church that he would push up that contract and will force the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences to accept the supervision of the Catholic Faculty of Theology and through it also the supervision of the state Vatican.

After the Dean 1 was elected as the Rector of the University of Zagreb, he finally succeeded to install a new Dean, (Dean 2), a man of 69 years old who was very good choice for implementation of the „Contract“ (on integration of Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences with Catholic Faculty of Theology), as ex „communist staff“ who worked as a specialist in social pedagogy. The first thing Dean 2 did in his mandate was disabling sending collective e-mails to all employees at the faculty at the same time, as well as to all students. He was chairing the sessions of the Faculty Council very authoritatively referring to women colleagues as “female heads”. This is a very offensive phrase for women in this region (and of course everywhere), which means the woman is „too stupid to figure something out“. Of course, he always seemed to have no idea of any contract that the former Dean (Dean 1) had with the Catholic Faculty of Theology, as neither other members of the Faculty Council, because such a contract text had never been presented in front of the Council and nobody saw it. But a fellow assistant at the Department of Philosophy managed to get the text of this Contract so that one colleague who was the head of the Department for Philosophy then sent me that contract text and we were shocked together when we were reading what the Contract was saying. Than the first time I actually saw the whole perspective of the damage that was written in that Contract on account of FHSS.

The colleague went to the Dean 2 immediately and demanded from him the statement of the Faculty Council about this, and very soon the vast majority of the members of the Council rejected that damaging Contract. However, the Dean 2 stated that we „*must have something to sign*“ and set up a “commission” for bargaining with the Catholic Faculty of Theology, headed by him and 2 vice-deans who supported that Contract with Catholic Faculty of Theology.<sup>11</sup> After that, the commission negotiated a „new“ contract text for a 1 next year, again without informing Faculty council about anything, and after a year, Dean 2 announced that “*a new contract text is finished*” and „*finally it has to be accepted now*” because „*we have already discussed it quite a lot*“. I was surprised by this approach and wondered if this text could be seen and read somewhere? He replied me with a threat, shouting and with a finger pointed to my face: “*If you have anything against that contract, I will ask for your resignation!*”. It was on 12th February 2016. On the next Faculty Council Session, 7 Departments sent to the Dean their complaints on the new text of the Contract saying that it is not acceptable for our faculty, and other colleagues at the Faculty Council meeting wanted to discuss more about it, but the Dean 2 refused to give them any opportunity for discussion. After that, students decided to take their own meeting for discussion, and organized 31st of March 2016 a big event allowed by the Dean 2, named „*On Clericalization of a*

11 To my colleague, head of Philosophy department and me Dean 2 said he would not take us because we are „too much radical“, of course, against it.

*Higher education in Croatia*“. I went to the meeting too and said there what I was thinking was important for our students and faculty about differences between our faculty and Catholic Faculty of Theology.

On that mentioned student meeting I was talking about the differences between the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Catholic Theological Faculty in a way of governance, responsibilities to different states and supervisions, different systems of rights and unequal criteria of women's equality to men according to these rights systems and risks in entering to integration with that institution for students and professors for the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Namely, there are huge differences between two faculties in many aspects: 1. FHSS is in the ownership of Croatian state and is based on civil law. 2. Catholic Theological Faculty is based on canonical law where women don't have the same rights as men. 3. FHSS has a Dean as the highest had of institution who is civil person, responsible to the Rector of the University of Zagreb, but Catholic Theological Faculty has a person above the Dean, so called „Big Chancellor“, who is a Church person, responsible directly to the state of Vatican, and in this case it is a Croatian Cardinal Monsignor Josip Bozanić, Archbishop of Zagreb. It is of course written in the Statute of Catholic Theological Faculty. 4. Difference in systems and kinds of laws that are applicable in 2 faculties is also additional reason to be unsecure, especially for women's rights in a case of accepting that Contract.

### After that, Nothing Was the Same

After 31st March 2016 – my life changed and I lost anonymity, security, and of course confidence to some people that seemed to be my colleagues until recently and become „victim“ of political circumstances of some groups of political interests. I must point out that I do not feel myself as a victim, but the label of „victim“ is attributed to me from involved and interested sides for easier elimination from any kind of chances to fight, although I was ready for fighting. From one side that are openly confronted groups around Catholic church leaders in Croatia that include our last Mr. Rector too, but on the other are newly appeared groups of people (I call them „vultures“) who are waiting only for their moment to jump. They are also very capable to pretend to be very advanced in concrete circumstances, but also they can wait for some other circumstances if it will get them better chances to survive and to grow even more on the social scale or in the management structures of the faculty, at the University or in wider state politics.

At the next meeting of the faculty government, the Dean 2 told me that „he had made his decision to dismiss me“, although this is not legal without the decision of the Faculty Council. But even though he proposed it to the Faculty Council, The Council did not support it, but gave support to me as the Vice-dean.<sup>12</sup> However, the Dean excommunicated me from all the services and jobs in

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12 But at the beginning of the Faculty Council session, Dean 2 first dismissed my attorney (That's why Attorney Chamber filed him an objection), and then there was a debate lasting for 3 hours, in which Dean 2, the other vice-dean and a few members of the Faculty Councils

deanery for the next 6 months, when Senate replaced me illegally from the Vice-dean position. Meanwhile, the informal group of Council members and those who fought against the Dean 2, against Rector and clericalization of the faculty had organized the “*Initiative for the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences*” and in the next six months worked and requested voting about that Contract with the Catholic Faculty of Theology. Finally the Contract was dismissed at the Faculty Council session in June 2016., as well as started the beginning the Dean’s 2 dismissal on session in July 2016. But then the Dean 2 interrupted that session and tried to report me and another colleague professor to the Criminal Court „for the continuation of the session“, but it failed because it was totally legal movement in accordance with the Statute of the Faculty. However, at the beginning of October 2017, on 3rd of October 2016., the Senate of the University of Zagreb finally made a decision about “*suspension because of ages*” of the Dean (Dean 2), and said that „*all vice-deans mandates have to be stopped*“ at the same session on October 3rd 2016, because of Dean’s 2 suspension. The Dean 2 was than 70 years old, and has had to be retired by his ages. But, at the same session Senate of the University of Zagreb named the same people as the „performing officials“ of vice-deans on the same places, all them except me only and one of them as the „performing official“ of the new Dean (of the FHSS, UNIZG).I was excluded from the continuation of the new faculty government, apparently because I was too loud to speak and spoke in favour of the faculty, without interest of Catholic Church. Of course, they didn’t say it openly about the discrimination on the basis of the public opinion. Before his retirement, last Dean 2 has presented a number of insulting and untrue insults and defamation against me in the media. After all, I am now in the process of conducting 2 court proceedings, 1 against the faculty, because I was illegally abolished from the Vice-dean’s position and another against the former Dean (Dean 2) who scolded me and tamed in the media, since I was not a “good woman’s head who is listening to male decisions” but contradicted them.

The time, course and the political circumstances of the Croatian society have further strengthened certain processes of retraditionalization that have begun to evolve since the beginning of the transition and are in fact unstoppable in the wider and today, occupying key areas in the settings and missions of the highest levels of educational institutions in Croatian society. Subversive attempts of feminist resistance although sporadic and isolated, appear from time to time and seek to redirect the currents of patriarchal power and develop the awareness of critical resistance and knowledge, but remain excluded or eliminated while pseudoliberal goals under the mantle of “democracy” and “the common good” are set up as models of repeated perpetuation of the same system, fuelling certain fully privatized and fragmented but highly recognizable capitalist or even feudal patriarchal interests.

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publicly attacked and insulted me by providing a series of falsehoods about me and my work. I was forced to listen all of that, and Dean 2 did not want to give me the possibility to say something until almost the end of the session. It was so humiliating and disgraceful that one of our fellow professors, a member of the Council, said that he was “*ashamed in front of these children*” (thinking of students), and the Council members spontaneously stood up and left the Council.

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