

“I’m a feminist, do you hate me?”: Constructions of Feminism by Sajsi MC

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Abstract

The paper focuses on the public persona of a popular female rapper from Serbia, Ivana Rašić, performing under the stage name Sajsi MC. As she openly calls herself a feminist, my goal will be to shed light onto how feminism is constructed in her discourse and music, taking into account the specificities of the post-socialist Serbian society and the transformation of the market (and life in general) into a neoliberal one, as well as certain strategies of the popular music industry. Given that she is active within the music market, and is involved in the creation of various products offered for consumption to audiences in the region, my goal will be to understand how feminism, as a category and a label, is envisioned, appropriated, reimagined and renegotiated within such a context, and how it is used by Sajsi MC as a strategy for positioning herself within the local music industry.

KEYWORDS: Sajsi MC, feminism, postsocialism, Serbia, neoliberalism.

When it comes to the subject of “women in hip hop” in the context of Serbia, we can detect certain constants familiar from stories about women in global hip hop as well: there aren’t very many of them, their quality as “rappers” has often been questioned, many have accused them of using their sexuality to “attract attention”, and they have, for the most part, introduced what they call “women’s experience” into a genre dominated by men. Ivana Rašić (b. 1981), better known as Sajsi MC, is one female rapper who has managed to build a platform that reaches wider audiences. That is, she managed to build a style that resonates with hip hop fans, as well as those who otherwise don’t follow the genre. Her professional career started in the early 2000s, and is mainly recognized by her “free” exploration and open discussion of issues of femininity, feminism, sexuality and empowerment. As

a woman working in a predominantly male context, she does not shy away from speaking about being active in a field defined by male standards and how this influenced her career. She not only explores ways in which her body and sexuality can be constructed and represented through various products of the music industry (advocating always for sex-positive feminism), but she also considers herself an advocate for feminism and women's rights, someone who will stand against discrimination. Accordingly, my goal in this article is to shed light on how Sajsi MC constructs and employs the label of feminism to position herself on the regional music market by—perhaps paradoxically—speaking predominantly to the strata of well educated, “elitist” audiences.

I view these various constructions, and employments of categories and labels (like feminism) within the context of post-socialist “remaking of persons from socialist to capitalist subjects” (Verdery, 2005: 35), in which the focus of the fight for women's rights—as was the case in Western, liberal countries as well—moved from examining the socio-economic position of women towards discourses of identity politics, human rights, discrimination and social justice. Put differently, given that Serbia, as a former Yugoslav republic, experienced the development of the fight for women's rights differently from the U.S. and Western Europe—for instance, it wasn't happening in the context of liberal capitalism (Zaharijević, 2017; Čakardić, 2015)—I attempt to map how Sajsi MC constructed and employed the label “feminism”.

Feminism as a label/category

Among the starting points of my thinking on the subject, is the fact that today “women's rights”, or “feminism” (understood in numerous ways), has become omnipresent, appropriated by public figures, governments, stars of the entertainment industry. I refer here to how, for instance, “powerful and high-profile women [are] publicly identifying as feminist” (Banet-Weiser, et al., 2019: 5), how hashtags like #metoo or #feminist are becoming widespread on social media and how merchandise that proclaims one's belonging to the movement is readily available. I refer to how women are told to become strong and independent and told to “lean in' at the company boardroom” (Arruzza, et al., 2019: 1). “Feminism” is, in the other words, accessible to a wide public, a word we hear more and more often in various public discourses. As Jennifer Keishin Armstrong noted, it has become something of a “job requirement for female pop stars” (Billboard 2017). Focusing on popular music as a field of inquiry, my goal is to understand how these requirements constantly re/shape the content of this label, and what feminism is for different actors within the industry. More narrowly, I'm interested in understanding the practices of constructions, reimaginings and consumptions of feminism within the neoliberal (music) market, that is, in relation to the Serbian popular music market and its diverse modes of operation.

My outlook on Sajsi MC is influenced by the writings of authors who focus on how the category of feminism is constructed and used in neoliberal contexts and ideologies, how such a category is employed in the formation of contemporary femininities, as well as commodified and mediated via different artifacts of popular

culture and the media (for example, Angela McRobbie 2004, Rosalind Gill 2007, 2017, Michele Lazar 2006). These authors also attempt to understand how various signifiers of mainly liberal, second-wave feminism (empowerment, sexual liberation and freedom of choice) are being employed today by the mainstream media, the entertainment industry, advertisers and so on, and with what consequences to feminism as a political movement.

Most writings on the subject examine what Rosalind Gill called "postfeminist sensibility" (Gill, 2007) (1), which explains the process by which certain signifiers of (second-wave liberal) feminism, like sexual liberation, empowerment, and freedom of choice, entered the mass media and popular culture, and have become a kind of common sense for how (desirable) femininities are envisioned within neoliberalism (Gill, 2017: 609–610). These writings draw on the idea that, in the past three decades, such omnipresence of feminist ideas accomplished a non-feminist goal: it depoliticized them (by creating a kind of faux-feminism [McRobbie, 2004]), and turned them into a strategy for selling entertainment, beauty, fashion and health industry products, taking away its transformative potential as a political idea that targets systemic inequality. These authors also operate within an Anglo-American context, or are highly influenced by it, assuming a more-or-less clear definition of feminism and its history within liberalism, which enables them to speak about feminism "becoming" entangled with neoliberalism (Fraser, 2013), and losing the power it once had. Given my own position, which is "outside" this context (but surely influenced by it), I will not use the term "post-feminism" to refer to positionings of feminism within the music market. For my outlook on the subject at hand, then, it is significant that the signifiers of liberal, second-wave feminism can, for one, be "taken" from their original context and employed as, say, a marketing strategy (2). Furthermore, they can also be, depending on the situation, emptied of particular meanings (and history), and infused with new ones, and are, as Tisha Dejmanee noted, "applicable to whatever issue, product or behaviours need to be sold to women, as dictated by social, cultural and economic conditions" (2015: 120). Given the context in which Sajsi MC lives and works, I look at concrete examples that speak to these ideas, bearing in mind the specificities of the now-complete "transition towards neoliberalism", which marked the last three decades of Serbian history. I attempt to understand her construction of the category of feminism in light of her strategy of positioning herself (and ultimately, the products she sells) on the music market of a region whose economy, politics, culture and healthcare are being devastated by what Atanasoski and McElroy call disaster capitalism (Atanasoski and McElroy, 2018: 273).

Post-socialist context

The post-socialist context and life after the breakup of Yugoslavia has been widely discussed in the last decades. Most authors emphasize "the disastrous consequences of the introduction of neoliberal capitalism and the deep socio-economic transformation this entailed, resulting in drastic inequalities between a tiny layer of the newly rich, diminishing middle class and the increasingly populous poor strata" (Horvat and Štiks, 2015: 23). Other than using "post-socialism" to refer

to a “time after socialism,” in which Eastern European societies began their transition away from socialism and following other writers who explored it in detail, I understand it also as a conceptual tool that offers a “rich place from which to theorize the perils of liberalism” (Atanasoski and McElroy, 2018: 281). My position, in other words, takes into account numerous problems that arose with the introduction of neoliberal reforms into once-socialist societies, and view the construction of the category of feminism (with its current ties to neoliberalism) from a critical standpoint.

Despite most politicians and public discourses still employing the term “transition” (mostly framed in the movement towards a “better life”), we can say that today, “post-socialist Eastern Europe is fully incorporated into the capitalist world with a semi-peripheral role”, a role which implies “the availability of cheap and highly educated labour in proximity to the capitalist core, quasi-total economic dependence on the core and its multinational banks and corporations, and, finally, the accumulation of debt” (Horvat and Štiks, 2015:28). Within such a context, feminism has largely been “transformed into a theory of representation and identity” (Čakardić, 2015: 323), with “patriarchy” often being approached separately from its ties to capitalism. This is something I analyze further within public appearances and music performed by Sajsi MC. In such a framework, feminism has become (or has perhaps reaffirmed its position as) a rather elitist discourse, which, for the most part, ignores the structural change that needs to occur in order for women to achieve individual freedom, empowerment and live up to their potential.

Such an individualized approach to women’s emancipation has, in addition, been adopted by groups traditionally opposed to feminism. For example, various tokens of feminism (Dević, 2021) have also been adopted by the New Right in Serbia, which has seen a growing number of women join its ranks. As Ana Dević remarked, this presence “is portrayed as a freedom harbinger as if acquiring social and political agency for women became possible and started with the advent of capitalism and political pluralism in the postsocialist, post-Yugoslav era” (227). Thus, it is important to further stress that the conditions of disaster capitalism described above have also been marked by the public’s rejection of the socialist past which is, more often than not, used as “source of blame for current conditions of austerity, corruption, and ‘backwardness,’ rather than the violence and failures of disaster capitalism” (Atanasoska and McElroy, 2018: 288). Throughout this process, much of the history has been re-written, or buried in piles of false information, and with it, the history of the women’s movement and feminism in Yugoslavia. Despite there being some work done on preserving and promoting this history, mainly focused on the work of the Women’s Anti-Fascist Front (Antifašistički front žena, AFŽ), the most important women’s organization, active during, and in the first decade after WWII, or the conference *Drug-ca Žena, – žensko pitanje: novi pristup?* (Comrade Woman – The Woman’s Question: A New Approach?) held in 1978 in Belgrade, the subject is mainly approached as a kind of historical artifact, and not as a legacy that can be used to formulate contemporary feminism’s response to disastrous material conditions that women in Serbia mostly live in. What is typical for the feminist movement in post-socialist times, then, is a kind of moving away “from the social and economic position of women towards the academic and depoliticising transformation of other social movements and

subpolitical groups", a shift marked by "a break with the socio-materialistic feminist practice formed in Yugoslavia [...] in favour of a focus on human rights, identity and juridical solutions" (Čakardić, 2015: 322). Without claiming that pursuing these aspects of the fight for women's rights isn't important, I would argue that in doing predominantly that, such feminism and its propagators in post-socialist Serbia have generally failed to address the concrete socio-economic conditions that shape women's lives, as well as the problems that arose for women during the transformation of the market from socialist to neoliberal. (Čakardić, 2015: 322–335). The above-mentioned context surrounding the economy and the fight for women's rights, as well as the adoption of "tokens" or "signifiers" of feminism by various, and very different (political) actors, is thus of great importance for my understanding of Sajsi MC. In my analysis, I try to think outside of a context that negates or ignores class and other bases for inequality brought about by neoliberal transformations and use that vantage point to understand Sajsi's feminism.

Construction of feminism in Sajsi MC's public persona and music

Ivana Rašić is, as I mentioned at the start of the text, an artist based in Serbia, who performs music mostly associated with rap. Her pseudonym, Sajsi MC, is a word coming from a popular argot of Serbo-Croatian, which was popular among certain subcultures in Yugoslavia, but became more widespread during the nineties, known as *šatrovački*. In it, the syllables of a word exchange place, so "zdravo" (hello), becomes "vozdra", and the word "sisaj" – meaning "suck it" – becomes "sajsi" (pronounced as sai-see). Ivana Rašić began her career performing in a band formed around her called "Sajsi" and added the denomination MC when she acted alone. Given that she now performs primarily as a solo artist, she always uses the pseudonym Sajsi MC, although in most cases, she is just referred to as Sajsi.

Among the constants of her musical career is, on the one hand, an "unconventional" approach to writing song lyrics—which don't rhyme and are mostly not structured as is common within the genre—as well as an elaborate play with signifiers of "the feminine", female sexuality, and experiences, which earned her the label of a feminist that she readily embraced and promoted. She also frequently comments on current politics, is critical towards the current regime, and is often approached by media that promotes "democratic values". For the public, her name is mainly associated with the "F-word", what she understands as feminism, and a large number of interviews with her touch on this label and why it is important for her as well as for society. Sajsi often emphasizes that her entire career as a "pioneer of woman's rap" (*Wannabe* magazine, 2018) was helped by feminism, which proved to be a "source of strength not to give up and to accept the expected role, but to create the role for myself, that's how I became a rapper, that's how you can become whatever you want" (*Wannabe* magazine, 2018). This quote touches on an important feature of how feminism is constructed in her music—as well as more generally—as a source of individual power, and strength, as a means of achieving uniqueness. In that light, she also explains her specific approach to rap.

What she perpetually stresses in her public appearances, is that her career began by her crashing gigs and performances of other rappers and fighting them for the mic (HellyCherry, 2016). She also often reflects on the fact that people kept telling her that what she does “isn’t rap”, because she wasn’t approaching the lyrics she wrote as lyrics, but as poetry (4). Her personal success is, as a rule, attributed to her ability to “just keep doing her own thing”. Describing her “uniqueness” that she had to fight for, Sajsi remembers:

I began by writing poetry, and wanted to make something “bigger than life” out of that, to have it “enter among the people”. That was only possible with rap music, because I don’t sing. For ten years, I “pushed” my songs into rap, although everyone was telling me that this isn’t possible, that there are rules. I liked that something isn’t a must [...] In the long haul, things turned out well, I built a style – when you hear a song, you know it’s me. In the end, the entire scene came to accept, “This is her thing”.

(Grazia, 2022)

Thus, one of the constants in the music Sajsi MC performs can be tied to this construction of uniqueness and artistry, and her attempts to always reimagine herself and the music she performs. It is, in other words, a highly individual approach to music, as well as to emancipation. The style of her music changes with each new song or album, as each one bears the signature of the producer/beat maker that collaborates with her. However, she is always involved in the making of the music, trying to “organically” combine music and lyrics. Most of her songs are hybrids of hip hop, pop, dance, EDM, and sometimes folk sounds, and are often comprised of segments that are sung (by her sister, Tijana Rašić) and others that are rapped. She performs her music primarily within the context of the urban culture of Serbia, often using urban Belgrade slang and English phrases. Urban Serbians represent the primary audience she speaks to, and the audience that relates to her music—they learned and adopted her slang (Grazia, 2022), as she says. In other words, she openly directs her message towards the privileged, well-educated listeners, concentrated primarily in urban surroundings.

Sajsi MC usually writes her lyrics in first person, often because they are inspired by something that happened to her, but also because she insists on a personal interpretation of events, on giving a woman’s perspective of life, and on helping men understand women through her lyrics (Danas, 2021). It could be said that she employs one of the strategies of *écriture féminine*, or a strategy that is similar to, say, herstory, or other discourses that focus on interpreting life through a women’s perspective, diving into women’s personal experience of life. In one interview, for example, she spoke about lyrics she wrote, that still don’t have music (and aren’t published). The song:

speaks about a reincarnated Muslim singer living inside me, whose tongue was cut out, because she is a singer. My body is dying, and she has to continue reincarnating. She begs me to help her not to end up in a male body, since male arms cut out her tongue in the first place (Danas, 2021).

By putting herself in different women's roles, she aims to achieve a kind of connection with the listeners, but also to make her criticism harsher—in cases when she adopts the figure that should be criticized. For instance, in "Mama" (Mom, 2012), she puts herself in the role of a spoiled teenage girl (named Tiffany) who wears expensive clothes like fur coats. This is a girl whose parents are powerful and who hates and makes fun of the poor kids who don't wear designer clothes or shoes. Through such identification, she also constructs the figure of an empowered woman, always performing a kind of power femininity, constructing a woman who has "something to say" and many things to criticize, an intellectual who is questioning the world around her. The song "Papa" (Pope), from which I borrowed the title of my article, is an example of this kind of criticism, ironically adopting some roles and affirming her belonging to others. At the very beginning, she says, "I'm a feminist, do you hate me? I'm a lesbian, come on, hit me", continuing to proclaim that she is a priestess, the pope, a young stateswoman, Madam President and so on, adopting various roles of power in order to perform her own empowered self.

A similar kind of "theatricality" is visible in her visual presentation (6); there is a careful design of her visual image, constructed through an appropriation, and often renegotiation, of different figures of femininity—dominatrix, stripper, saint, wife, bride, among others. Of course, she works within the gender norms of the music industry, with an emphasis on some of the "feminine attributes" that circulate within the music industry. Sajsi, namely, performs what could – at the first glance, indeed – be labelled as traditional femininity, (almost) always wearing high heels, short skirts, strong makeup, showing off her slim figure, long dark hair, and never shying away from partial nudity and offering her followers "eroticised" content (7). Her strategy is not entirely new for the music industry—she takes the norm and attempts to push it beyond what she sees as a given boundary, stepping into the field of "provocation" or "excess". In a 2019 interview for the online podcast "Tampon Zona", Sajsi defined the situation by saying,

feminine sexuality came to a certain border, you do not cross that line because that is either vulgar or dégoûté. It is a model that was imposed, how a man sees a woman [...] your role is to be desirable for men, to be an object of worship. This is a see-saw, there is a saint and a... well... sinner. Every form of widening of that is always, like, ouch. (Tampon Zona, 2019).

She further explained her own opinion on the matter in a different online show (Balkan info, 2019) of a more obscure variety, in which the hosts and their guests mostly engage in discussions about aliens, reptilians, the deep state and conspiracy theories (8). The host of the show (a man), insisted upon the fact that she is, in fact, provoking male attention (which is completely natural) by "exposing" her sexuality, and insisted that she should explain why she does it. To that, Sajsi said: "I expose myself in accordance to my sexuality, I'm a sexual being and I express my sexuality. I won't excuse myself to anyone, as this is was made possible by the women who fought for that before me" (Balkan info, 2019). She clearly formulated a sex-positive attitude, affirmed in contemporary popular culture, within the discourse of choice and empowerment central to the construction of her femininity and sexuality (9). To further emphasize her point, she added: "I don't think about men only looking

at me as a thing. I give both the intellect and that (sexuality)”, concluding that men can also try listening to the lyrics, or don’t have to look/listen at all. It could thus be said that Sajsi here adopts a kind of “break the system from within” idea, as she seems to be counting on the attention that will be given to her if she freely expresses her sexuality, but she also attempts to widen that role, among other things, with an “intellectual” aspect. That is, she widens it with the need to offer various forms of criticism through her music. In doing so, she reframes the “expression of sexuality” into her own personal power, by stating that she does not care if men objectify her or not (10).

Put differently, she promotes and openly discusses the strategy of “not hiding” her sexuality, and performing a kind of “heterosexiness” (Dobson, 2015: 49–76) which she interprets as being personally liberating and empowering—and thus feminist. She constructs her femininity in line with many other pop music stars, but readily accepts the label of feminism and attempts to affirm its core values as understood within a (neo)liberal framework.

She thus taps into what is mainly understood as feminism in contemporary, post-socialist Serbia’s mainstream discourses on women’s liberation and gender equality. She was often recognized for her feminist work by various organizations and representatives of the civil sector, who develop and represent a similar form of feminism rooted in individual empowerment and enrichment. She was celebrated as a rapper who introduces important feminist issues to wider audiences in a positive context, sharing the message that all women can be as strong and liberated as she is. In 2017, BeFem feminist collective (11) recognized her work with an award for a feminist initiative in pop culture. She is listed as one of the guest lecturers at the “School of Media Literacy”, organized by the Social Margin Centre (12) (she gave lectures regarding feminist activism in popular music), and she was one of the “godmothers” of Belgrade Pride in 2021, which, like many other LGBTQ+ organizations, operates within discourses of human rights and identity politics.

As mentioned before, almost every interview she gives contains a question regarding feminism. Commenting on her need to promote it, Sajsi said: “Feminism is an ugly word among Serbs. There is a mass ignorance when this subject is in question” (*Wannabe* magazine 2018), which is why she decided to embrace the tag. Speaking about the song “Papa” in this context—the song in which she declares herself to be a feminist—she says, “I took feminism, which is understood as something very bad by most people, and I made it into a word which is a fucking hurricane that will change the society” (Danas, 2021). Other than a means for personal change, feminism is something that should be “natural” for all women (and men): “every woman is essentially a feminist if she lives in this society, she naturally needs to strive to be in solidarity with other women, understand her own position in the society and find a way to fight for herself” (Tampon zona 2019). She often comments on women being against feminism just as much as men, and notes that this is also because “they don’t have so much insight into social sciences, and are familiar with the pejorative, wrong, crooked meaning of feminism”. In other words, Sajsi MC seems to understand feminism as being tied to academia, saying that for her, “a kind of rebellion and fighting for justice, understanding what isn’t fair, started in elementary school, and culminated when I was able to put everything

together and define it at the university, because this is also taught at the Faculty of Political Sciences [where she studied international relations]". In that sense, she does recognize her own privilege, noting that having a university degree does help her with writing, although "this can be understood as somewhat snobby or elitist" (Danas, 2021). However, for her, this approach to feminism is the one that needs to be promoted and brought closer to women, to help them achieve their best selves.

Final remarks

What the selected examples reveal, then, is that Sajsi MC adopts and promotes a kind of feminism that is defined primarily through its connection to (neo)liberalism, emphasizing individual achievements, personal development and individual empowerment. This kind of feminism is accepted and affirmed by various organizations of civil society, NGOs, organizations that focus on education, as well as formal government institutions that are in charge of "policing" gender equality in the country.

As postfeminist authors have shown, such an approach to women's rights is very much in line with the broader workings and demands of neoliberalism, the imperative of self-surveillance and "bettering oneself", as well as performing the figure of a powerful, emancipated, (sexually) liberated woman. In the context of Serbia, however, such constructions of feminism and the use of it as a label should be understood through the lens of post-socialism, and the (often forceful) re-envisioning of the market and individual lives of the people living the "transition". In a society marked by failed privatizations of the industry, as well as public resources, adaptations of laws and the market to the needs of "foreign investors", as well as a general draining of the country's resources, feminism directed primarily towards identity politics seems detached from the reality of life (13).

In that sense, Sajsi MC's advocacy for feminism should, on the one hand, be welcomed and applauded, as she is one of the very few celebrities in Serbia who embraces the label. Most women will speak of their own empowerment, assert their entrepreneurial abilities (for example, as businesswomen), and speak against violence or sexual harassment and for gender equality, but will shy away from the label. In doing so, she also does important work in affirming the idea, and bringing issues of the feminist fight closer to the audiences who listen to her music. And yet, she remains locked away in an "urban bubble", as her music, as well as the feminism she promotes, targets primarily the educated, more-or-less privileged audiences that are able to relate to her "poetic" lyrics or somewhat eccentric image and appearance. It is also important to note that, "through" the music market—in other corners of the world, but in Serbia is well—various signifiers that could be tied to the feminist movement became detached from this history, and this is visible in the case of Sajsi MC as well. By adopting those signifiers that circulate in the music industry and other public discourses, negotiating them and reimagining them, she performs a kind of desired femininity that is in accordance with the demands of the neoliberal market. In that sense, a connection between such power femininity and feminism isn't necessary, especially within the local music industry. By using the label, Sajsi MC puts her work, sexuality, various transgressions and

empowerment in the context of mainly liberal feminism, which then enables her to position herself on the market as an artist who is critical of patriarchy and of regimes that promote it, as well as an intellectual engaged in politics and critical thinking. However, within such surroundings, feminist discourse is tied firmly to liberalism, failing to recognize its shortcomings and its role in further promoting systemic gender inequality.

Endnotes

1. Alongside “postfeminism”, the authors also focus on what Catherine Rothenberg labelled “neoliberal feminism”, or “popular feminism”, as described by Sarah Banet-Weiser (Banet-Weiser et. al., 2019).
2. Authors have focused, for instance on understanding how “feminism sells”, that is, exploring the inner workings of “femvertising” or female empowered advertising (Windels, et al., 2019), or on how “power femininity” is constructed via beauty commercials (Lazar, 2006).
3. Within the contemporary music industry in Serbia, there is another prominent female hip hop artist appearing under the name Mimi Mercedes (Milena Janković, 1992). Generally speaking, she adopts a similar strategy within hip hop, dealing with issues of sexuality, gender roles, and others, yet she absolutely refuses the label of feminism, insisting that it is an outdated category that can’t be useful for women in contemporary Serbia (among other things, because it originates in the liberal, capitalist West, and she is anti-capitalist), but emphasizes the need to overcome gender roles and empower women.
4. Sajsi’s approach to the written word and lyrics is one of the reasons why I do not focus too much on the lyrics in this article. As they are highly dependent on the local slang, symbolism and specific word play, too much of the text would be dedicated to quotes and explanations, as well as translations that do not do justice to the original.
5. Her music is available across various platforms like YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvnun2Oh4x-BAZTkxaq--TA> (Accessed: February 1 2022); or Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/artist/45IEFIHD9y1Ltrlw2CLzV1> (Accessed: February 1 2022).
6. Among the most recent examples is her marriage to the audience, that took place during a concert and only days after she got married in real life. She changed onstage into a “revealing” wedding dress/nightgown, and promised to love her fans until death does them part. The act came after the immense interest of the public in her wedding—and the fact that she got married at all. It is also an example of Sajsi MC’s strategy in dealing with criticism, or addressing comments from the public. Instead of (only) responding to them via established channels, like the media or her social media accounts, she responds through her art, which usually provokes more public attention.
7. Her Instagram profile gives a good sense of the visual image she nurtures: <https://www.instagram.com/sajsimcofficial/?hl=en> (Accessed: February 1 2022).

8. The show, called Balkan Info, is becoming more and more famous, precisely because seemingly everyone is welcome to share their opinions about everything. Despite it being generally oriented towards right-wing politics (with the majority of guests promoting ideals like nationalism and traditional family values), it also featured guests that advocate for different ideas as well.

9. Here, she performs what Rosalind Gill would call "sexual subjectification", a situation in which "sexual objectification can be (re-)presented not as something done to women by men, but as the freely chosen wish of active, confident, assertive female subjects" (Gill, 2007: 155)

10. A similar result is achieved through her pushing the boundaries of accepted expressions of female sexuality, through different overstatements. One example for such a strategy is visible in the lyrics of the song "Punani" (slang for "vagina"). In it, she raps in explicit terms about her vagina as a source of power. For instance, "Moja pussy ima ukus kao delirijum tremens/Alava i balava/Ne preskače desert" [My pussy tastes like delirium tremens/Gluttonous and drooling/She doesn't skip dessert"], and later concludes, "Ne vrti se svet/Okolo novca, moja bejbe/Svi znamo da samo pussy/Pussy svet pokreće" [The world does not revolve/Around money, baby/We all know that only pussy/Pussy moves the world].

11. According to their website, "BeFem is a feminist cultural center that, ever since 2009, through programs of media production and creating new media policies, education, networking and festival contents, has been re-examining and promoting feminist politics, culture and art, as well as empowering, motivating and activating new generations of feminists, and stimulating exchange and cooperation at local, regional, and international level." (BeFem, 2019)

12. "Association 'Social Margin Center' is a voluntary, non-party, non-governmental and non-profit association, established for an indefinite period to achieve the objectives in the field of human and citizen rights protection and the improvement of the position of marginalized social groups." (Social Margin Center)

13. A kind of feminist movement is currently being shaped in Serbia around issues of sexual assault and harassment, as more and more women are stepping out in public with their stories. However, the main focus of commentators is predominantly placed on "patriarchy" as a trans-historical category, blaming the failed state and its non-working institutions for not protecting women.

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