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CHARACTERISTICS OF INTIMATE PARTNER FEMICIDE IN SLOVENIA

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ABSTRACT

Based on the analyzed cases in the research sample the author demonstrates that intimate partner homicides of women in Slovenia are distinctly gendered criminal offences and that Slovenia does not differ significantly in this respect from other countries. In Slovenia as well as in the majority of other countries almost half of homicides of women are committed by a former or current spouse or intimate partner. The analysis also shows that the basis of these acts are strong traditional or patriarchal attitudes of perpetrators on partner relationships and gender roles and especially male feelings of the ownership of their female partners.

Keywords: intimate partner violence, violence against women, femicide, male sexual proprietariness, Slovenia

CARATTERISTICHE DEI FEMMINICIDI PERPETRATI DA PARTNER INTIMI IN SLOVENIA

SINTESI

Sulla base dei casi analizzati nel campione della ricerca, l'autrice dimostra che gli omicidi di donne perpetrati nelle relazioni intime in Slovenia sono reati distintamente di genere e che la Slovenia, da questo punto di vista, non si distingue significativamente rispetto ad altri paesi. In Slovenia e nella maggior parte degli altri paesi, quasi la metà degli omicidi di donne sono commessi da un ex coniuge o da un partner intimo. L'analisi dimostra, inoltre, che alle basi di questi atti vi sono atteggiamenti fortemente tradizionali o patriarcali dalla parte dei perpetratori verso le relazioni con i partner e verso i ruoli di genere e, soprattutto, il senso di possesso maschile verso le loro partner femminili.

Parole chiave: violenza perpetrata da partner intimo, violenza contro le donne, femminicidio, possesso sessuale maschile, Slovenia

INTRODUCTION

In Slovenia violence against women in intimate relationships, until the last decade, has been considered an exclusively personal and private matter, something that was hidden behind closed doors and as such not discussed and debated in public. Family had been strongly protected by state institutions during the socialist period as well as after the fall of the old regime. Yet the state did not attempt to protect the vulnerable individuals in the family (children, women), rather the family was considered a homogenous social group and thus failing to recognize the differential positions of power and authority (Antić-Gaber, Dobnikar, Selišnik, 2009). At an institutional level, social services and social welfare professionals largely treated the problems of violence in the family as a kind of “private problem” and attempted to keep the family together (Antić-Gaber, Dobnikar, Selišnik, 2009). They did not focus on the needs of subordinate and often vulnerable individuals (children, etc.). It was not until the 1990s, with the rise of feminist groups and NGOs that raised the issue of violence against women, that the state began to address the problem as a social issue and to alter responses to violence against women in the family and in the private realm. The first important steps toward the changes and institutional responses to domestic violence in Slovenia were made in the mid-1990s with the establishment of the first shelters for women and children victims of violence. From 1999 until today, there were also some important legal changes¹ which aimed to deal more effectively with domestic violence (Filipčič, 2009). Despite the changes in institutional responses and cultural orientations, we propose that the cultural legacy of male dominance and authority constitutes a significant context that must be considered in the explanation of violence in intimate relationships.

Here we employ a context specific approach to explain and draw on theoretical perspectives of feminist theory and critical studies on men and masculinities to situate our findings on femicide in Slovenia.

After a history of significant neglect, the efforts of feminist activists, different NGOs within Slovenia and European and global efforts to end violence against women have resulted in significant progress in addressing violence against women in the private sphere in the last 15 years (Antić-Gaber, Dobnikar, Selišnik,

2009). Nevertheless, the problem of intimate partner violence and femicide² is still underestimated and under researched in Slovenia. According to statistical data and current events in Slovenia, intimate partner femicide³ is an urgent issue. Statistical data indicates that between 2000 and 2011 almost half of murders and attempted murders of women (92 or 43%) were committed by male individuals who were listed as »former spouse or intimate partner«, »intimate partner« and »spouse«. Data about male victims is completely different. It shows that men are, in most cases, murdered by individuals listed in categories »no relationship« (30.84%) and »acquaintance« (23.38%). Individuals listed as »former spouse or intimate partner«, »intimate partner« and »spouse« were perpetrators in 7.05 percent (Ministry of the Interior, Police, 2012).

Although the offense of murder and manslaughter of women or as we name it here femicide in Slovenian crime statistics represents a small proportion of violent crimes,⁴ we argue that they certainly need special attention, because the crime of homicide is one of the most serious crimes known to humanity, as Falk (1990, xi), state “*the only possession any of us truly have is our lives*”.

Primarily based on qualitative research on intimate partner femicides and attempted femicides, this paper considers the main characteristics of intimate partner femicides in Slovenia. We argue that intimate partner femicides are basically a reflection of an extreme manifestation of male power and control over women and should be understood in the larger context of the unequal power relations between women and men in society. Intimate partner femicides are not the acts of otherwise non-violent men, rather in most cases, are deliberate acts, characterized by a long period of violence and abuse against murdered partners. Men murder or attempt to murder their partners after a long period of prior »intimate terrorism« (Johnson, 2008), manifested as psychological and physical violence along with other forms of abuse and exploitation.

Theoretical perspectives and methodology

There are a number of, often overlapping, theoretical accounts that offer explanations of violence against women and intimate partner femicide, but in this paper, we rely on those that at their core empha-

1 First legal change was the amendment to the Criminal Code enacted in 1999 and the second major amendment followed in 2008 (for more see Filipčič, 2009, 116–119). The third important legal change was the adoption of a special act on the prevention of domestic violence, the so-called Domestic Violence Act in 2008. In addition, the last important legal change was made in 2015 with the ratification of the Istanbul Convention.

2 With the term femicide we name »the killing of females by males because they are females« (Russell, 2001, 3). We use the definition of Diana Russell because we stress the importance of the political meaning of this term.

3 For the purpose of this article under the term femicide we include the criminal offences of manslaughter and murder.

4 In 2011, according to the Slovenian Police report, the entire Slovenian criminality consisted of 88,722 cases. Of these, 44 cases were completed manslaughters or murders and attempts of manslaughter or murder, which is 0.049 percent of the total criminality (Ministry of the Interior, Police, 2012).



Figure 1: International Days for the Elimination of Violence against Women 2018 (Archive Društvo Ženska svetovalnica, Pristop).

size gender inequalities in society. The key theories that deal with the issue of intimate partner violence and femicide through the gender perspective are feminist theories and researches, which emphasize gender regimes in institutions, global gender order and the nature of power relations in society as the main sources for these crimes.

Dobash and Dobash (1983, 1998), for example, illustrate that studies on violence against women, which attempt to separate this issue from social structures and social inequalities, and mainly focus on individual characteristics, do not provide an adequate explanation of interpersonal violence by men against women. This is because violence against women occurs in a wider context, consisting of responses of institutions and the general cultural and social beliefs or views on the relations between men and women, marriage and family, parents and children, duties and obligations and where the perpetrators of violence use violence for consolidation of their power and domi-

nation. According to feminist researchers, power, domination and men's sense of entitlement are the key elements, which have to be investigated in order to achieve a sound understanding of male intimate partner violence against women.

While supporting feminist theory in the attempts of explaining the causes of violence against women, we also believe that there is no single theory for the explanation of this complex issue. We therefore construct our conceptual framework combining sociological feminist theory (Dobash and Dobash, 1979; MacKinnon, 1989; Yllö, 1993; Dobash and Dobash, 1998; Renzetti, Edleson and Bergen, 2001; Yodanis, 2004), a theoretical framework of critical studies on man and masculinities (Hearn, 1998; DeKeseredy and Schwartz, 2005; Connell, 2005; Kimmel, Hearn and Connell, 2005; Messerschmidt, 2005; Hearn and Pringle, 2006), and the concept of male sexual proprietariness (Wilson and Daly, 1992a, 1992b; Wilson, Daly and Wright, 1993; Wilson and Daly, 1998;

Browne, Williams and Dutton, 1999; Serran and Firestone, 2004)⁵ in order to achieve a more complex explanation. We think that a range of theoretical approaches must be utilized to overcome the limitations of each of them. We also believe that these approaches are not contradictory, but complementary.

As noted above, the problem of intimate partner violence and femicide is still underestimated and under researched in Slovenia. Researches, partially related to this topic, were primarily done in the field of criminology (Voglar, 1997; Sterle, 1999). These research reports primarily utilize quantitative analysis and consider demographic characteristics, motives for the crime as well as psychopathological aspects of family homicides and/or homicides in general. From these studies we can only get a general insight into the crimes of family homicides or all homicides in general, which is not enough to advance our understanding of the very complex characteristics and dynamics of intimate partner femicides. By contrast our research focuses on the gender-specific contextual and interaction dynamics associated to the murder of an intimate partner, which indicate that these crimes should be understood as a specific manifestation of unequal gender relations.

This analysis is based on the review and qualitative analysis of 24 criminal records from all the District courts in Slovenia (in total 11 courts), for the period between 2000 and 2011. These criminal cases were homicides classified as manslaughter or murder and attempted manslaughter or murder according to Slovenian legislation. We decided to include cases of attempted femicides because an initial review revealed there were few differences between femicides and attempted femicides regarding the severity of violence. In the cases when victims survived, the perpetrator only stopped because of intervention (sometimes physically) by a third person or because the perpetrator was not able to finish the intended act. In all the analyzed cases perpetrators were men and victims were women and in all cases the perpetrator and the victim were current or former intimate partners.

In the analysis of criminal records, we applied the context-specific approach proposed by Dobash and Dobash (1983). In investigating violence, they explain the specific nature of the event (including the origin of the conflict, obtained injuries, time, location and response of the community) as well as the dynamics of the “preparation acts”, the conflicts of interest in the relationship, etc. should be analyzed

in the broader social context of aspirations and expectations of the individuals and the community. A complex explanation of the “final act” is reached only if we examine the entire context in which the action(s) occurred. If the offense of murder is taken out of context and only the final violent act examined, the whole picture of what happened cannot be seen. We therefore identified four significant levels in which conditions for intimate partner violence are created. These are institutional, ideological, interpersonal and individual:

With the in depth examination of the context we tried to extract the main characteristics and dynamics of intimate partner homicides and find what connects these crimes at the individual level, partnership level and social system level. At the individual level, we were interested in demographic, social, psychological and personality characteristics of the victims and perpetrators. At the partnership level, we studied the characteristics of the relationship between the victim and the offender. Through the context of the relationship between the victim and the offender we tried to find out the basic and special prominent features of these relations. We attempted to figure out whether the relationships were characterized by any type of violence (intimate terrorism or situational couple violence) (Johnson, 2008), and what forms of violence were present (psychological, physical, sexual, economic, stalking).

At the social system level, we were interested in different aspects of the social context or the environment in which the victims and perpetrators lived. We wanted to find out how institutions (local or state) as well as people in the micro social context of the perpetrators and victims (as family members, neighbours, close friends, etc.) reacted (helped the victims, trying to prevent it) to the violence of the perpetrators.

Below we will present the key characteristics of intimate partner murders of women in Slovenia, obtained on the basis of analyzed court files. The data display will follow a qualitative overview of key features and findings that will be supported by literal quotes and individual cases.

MALE DOMINATION AND MULTIPLE FORMS OF LONG-TERM VIOLENCE

In the majority of the examined cases (21 out of 24) one can find “a history of intimate partner violence” that Johnson (2008) calls »intimate terrorism«,⁶ which

5 Part of a wider debate that due to space constraints is not discussed in this article are also the psychological explanations (Dutton, 1995, 2007; Dutton and Kerry, 1999), which explain personality traits and other characteristics of violent men.

6 In analyzing the context of the events between the defendant and the victim, we pay special attention to the distinction of types of violence after Johnson (2006, 2008), as this distinction is essential for identifying the gender specificity of both previous violence and the offense of murder or attempted murder. The essence of distinguishing the types of violence after Johnson is understanding that some individuals use violence to control their partner, others use it to resist the controlling behavior of their partner, and then there are cases in which violent behavior is not associated with monitoring (Johnson, 2008, 5).



Figure 2: International Days for the Elimination of Violence against Women 2018 (Archive Društvo Ženska svetovalnica, Pristop).

means that a violent partner exercised multiple forms of violence (physical, psychological, sexual, economic violence and stalking) to maintain permanent and/or long term control over his partner while in a female partner's behaviour violence was not identified.⁷ For example, the daughter of one of the perpetrators (a witness in proceedings) said: »Mum never fought back, because when she did, it was even worse« (Case, 20).

Analyzed cases lead us to the conclusion that intimate partner femicides are criminal offences which rarely occur unexpectedly without obvious prior risk factors, such as intimate partner violence, threats, extreme jealousy and stalking by the perpetrator. A man usually murders his intimate partner after a long period of prior »intimate terrorism«, which is usually manifested as physical violence along with other forms of abuse and exploitation.

This type of violence is clearly associated with the disproportionate distribution of power between the

perpetrator and the victim and creates an environment that Kirkwood called "the web of abuse". Eyewitness statements show what the characteristics of this kind of violence contain. The daughter of one of the female victims stated:

[...] my dad beat my mum often since the beginning. [...] Now I remember a situation when I visited them approximately one month before today's proceedings. I saw him sitting at the table. He was wearing a jacket and shoes. Mum served lunch to him and asked him to take off his jacket and shoes. He gave her a 'terrible look'. Then she went under the table on her knees and took off his shoes, then she took off his jacket and he did not even stand up [...] (Case, 14).

It is important to note, that in one-third of the cases (7 out of 21) male partners did not use physical

⁷ The presence of violence was confirmed by the surviving victims and by witnesses. In some cases, it is also possible, although less frequently, to find confirmations by institutions such as centers for social work, the police, physicians and psychiatric institutions, which have, in the past or prior to the event, dealt with the couple or family due to the perpetrator's violence.

violence prior the criminal offence, but used different forms of psychological violence, such as extreme jealousy, stalking, harassment, controlling and possessive behavior, verbal violence and humiliation. It is important to highlight that psychological violence should be considered as dangerous as physical violence.

Analysis also shows that victims had failed to recognize some of the forms of psychological violence and its danger. When a male partner was physically aggressive towards his female partner, witnesses and victims who survived reported his violent behaviour. When a usually psychologically violent male partner was not physically aggressive, witnesses and/or victims who survived talked less about psychological violence than about jealousy that escalated into an outburst of anger. Interesting and telling is that neither the victim who survived nor the witnesses defined such behaviour as violent or especially problematic.

A significant risk factor of a femicide or an attempted femicide is a direct death threat (Campbell et Al., 2003; Podreka, 2013). A review of criminal records indicates that a perpetrator in most of the cases (19 out of 24) issued death threats against his partner and intimidated her many times before.

In addition, data about stalking demonstrate the inevitability of these murders and possessive attitudes of the perpetrators toward the victims. In almost two thirds of the cases (15 out of 24) the perpetrators stalked the victims in various ways. Dutton (1995) reported that extremely jealous and violent partners often become stalkers after the termination of the relationship. Our analyses undoubtedly confirms this assumption, since the survivors and witnesses in all cases clearly reported that they were unable to escape from the violent partner after the termination of the relationship, and that the violence continued with various forms of harassment or stalking. One survivor stated:

I thought that by leaving him I was done with him, but I still saw him coming in the bar where I worked and in our residential building [...] I think he slept in the basement of the apartment for a week and called me a few times [...] at that time he also started with threats [...] once we even met in the lift of my residential building and on that occasion he pressed me forcefully, actually threw me into the wall of the lift and demanded the keys of the apartment [...] (Case 20).

Data about the consciousness of the perpetrators at the time of the violence shows their rational intent to assault or kill their partner. Our analysis shows that only 3 out of 24 perpetrators were found not responsible for the crime, according to the conclusions of the court. That supports the conclusion that in most cases

the perpetrators were conscious of their actions during the offense and they intended to use serious and in some cases lethal violence. The fact that in almost half of the cases the judges concluded that the offense was planned clearly confirm that intimate partner femicides are not the acts of otherwise non-violent or mentally insane men, but are in most cases deliberate and rational acts, characterized by a long period of violence and abuse against murdered partners.

Male sexual proprietariness

The analysis of the characteristics, motives and dynamics of intimate partner femicides are mainly connected (according to court conclusions) to extreme jealousy. The latter is a consequence of the feeling of »proprietariness« *over their partner and it is expressed through domination, control and possessiveness* which clearly confirm ideals of male dominance and the female subordination.

The examination of the psychological profiles and personality traits of the perpetrators show that they are a heterogeneous group of individuals, but what almost all of them have in common are very strong traditional, patriarchal attitudes towards partner relationships and gender roles. These men perceive their partners as their property and in their perception, their partner has no right to resist his demands. Their partner's resistance is perceived as a direct violation of their rights, which can be protected by all means, even with the most extreme (murder). For example, in the final hearing one of the perpetrators stated:

Now a question arises, what is the cause, who is guilty, who led me, such a good man, to the imprudent/injudicious state. The only answer, that I know, is that my former wife is guilty for everything. If she had behaved as a wife should behave, everything would have been all right [...] In many countries, adulteress, like my wife is, would be stoned to death, but I as a Christian forgive her for everything [...] (Case 21).

From their psychological profiles and personality traits we can assume that they are not strong and self-confident men but men that use the most extreme forms of violence when they feel they are losing power and control in a relationship. This is proven also by the fact, that in addition to the history of intimate partner violence, the analysis of the cases indicates a strong correlation between intimate partner femicide or attempted femicide and the decision of women to end a (violent) relationship and leave her (violent) partner. In just over a half of the cases (13 out of 24), the female partner was in different stages of leaving her partner or the relationship ended a long time ago (couple of



Figure 3: International Days for the Elimination of Violence against Women 2018 (Archive Društvo Ženska svetovalnica, Pristop).

months, even more than a year). The analysis shows that the risk is immediate not long term as most femicides occurred a few days after the announcement of ending the intimate relationship or a few months after divorce. Nevertheless, we have to be careful when calculating risk time. It can also take more than a year after divorce. On the other hand, we have to emphasize that only a minimal proportion of divorces end with homicide or attempted homicide. However, this data is very important, because it suggests that women who experience violence need special protection and attention also after they (announce their intentions to) leave a violent relationship.

In all the cases in our sample, the end of a relationship was initiated by a woman, usually due to her partner's violence. Moreover, as confirmed by the courts, the inducement to commit a criminal offence was a woman's decision to end a violent relationship. When courts classify the motive for the criminal offence as »jealousy« and/or »revenge« it is meant that the perpetrator did not want to accept that the victim actually left him. The perpetrator's extreme jealousy was

stimulated by the fact that a female partner wanted to end the relationship or divorce the violent partner and/or her new relationship. It is important to point out that all the perpetrators were extremely jealous, possessive and controlling even before the critical incident. Thus, it would be wrong to understand the motive of jealousy as something separate, as a result of a specific situation. On the contrary, it is a possessive and violent man's reaction to the loss of control over "his woman". When a female partner left her violent and extremely jealous partner, the partner's violence was transformed into stalking (reoccurring pursuing), manifested as monitoring, harassment (phone calls, letters), waiting in front of her workplace, house, harassment of her relatives, vandalism, death threats and physical attacks at times with the intention to get her back. After he realized that, she will not change her decision he used lethal violence against her. This is clearly indicated in the next two citations from two of the final hearings:

The Court concludes that the defendant had a

motive, as according to the testimony of relatives it can be assumed that the accused saw the victim as his possession, that he was very jealous and that when he saw she was finally leaving and not coming back, he decided to kill her rather than let her leave him (Case 10).

He committed a crime in order to release anger, rage, wrath, which was stimulated by the fact that his partner demanded a divorce and found a new partner (Case 13).

This is demonstrated also by the analysis of the motives. Namely in more than a half of the cases (14 out of 24) courts concluded that the motive for the crime was associated with »arrogance and jealousy«. A more detailed contextual analysis of motives is shown that the perpetrators used lethal violence as a response to the strong position and resistance of their partner, which is a reason to call them “male sexual proprietariness” (Wilson and Daly, 1992a).

Dobash and Dobash (1998) also note that male perpetrators of intimate partner violence kept the belief that women in a relationship do not have equal rights with men to contest, negotiate and discuss. These men understand women controversy as annoying and as a threat to their authority. Violence is used as a means for the confirmation of their authority and for silencing the female voice in everyday events (Dobash and Dobash, 1998, 167).

We contextualize men’s violence against women in intimate partner relationships, with the discourse of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2005; Messerschmidt, 2005). Male violence could be understood as the ultimate expression of a man’s perception of his power over his partner and the confirmation of his own hegemonic masculinity, but at the same time, it can also be an expression of frustration due to failure to achieve this ideal and awareness about losing his power and control in the relationship. According to our analysis the deadly violence used by the perpetrators against their partners, was primarily connected with the latter. The men in our sample used deadly violence against their partners mainly as a means of repositioning themselves and their own authority, both in relation to their partner, among their friends and in the wider society from which they want to get confirmation of their manliness. As it is believed among them that, a real man has to be able to keep his woman for himself. In this context their testimonies also show that violence was not experienced as an expression of their power, but rather as an expression of their powerlessness.⁸

CULTURAL CONTEXT, IDEOLOGICAL PATTERNS AND MALE DOMINATION

As these severe crimes cannot and should not be understood as isolated, sudden and un-expected acts of otherwise peaceful male individuals, we think that they could only be fully explained if they are investigated as a part of a complex intersection of factors on different levels where cultural context and ideological patterns maintain male dominance and the subordination of women play a special role.

Although we demonstrate the significance of these social and ideological patterns, we also suggest that intimate partner femicides do not have one unitary cause. There can be many pathways resulting in femicide and they can be different. With the help of a contextual-specific approach and an ecological model, we conclude that the context of intimate partner femicides involves the intersection of factors at the individual level, partner relationship level and social system level.

Our analysis, as well as various international studies (Campbell et al., 2003; Campbell et al., 2007; Aldridge and Browne, 2003), indicates that individual perpetrators’ personal circumstances, e.g. unemployment or social deprivation, youth victimization because of domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse, mental and personality disorders, represent important risk factors for intimate partner femicides. At the same time, the perpetrators’ psychological profiles and their personality characteristics indicate that the above-mentioned individual factors are not principal reasons for intimate partner femicides. We reached this conclusion after examining the perpetrators psychological profiles and personality characteristics, which significantly reflect their traditional gender relationship values, social values and high tolerance for violence. As we stated before, it seems that these perpetrators are, in general, not self-confident males and they use the most extreme form of violence when they feel they are losing power and control in a relationship with “their women”.

Intimate relationships with personal exchanges, interactions and daily conflicts form a specific context, where violent incidents can occur. A broad social and cultural environment, which reproduces the ideology and system of male dominance and traditional gender roles in a society and/or local community, plays an important role here. In conflicts of interests, when a woman questions her partner’s power and dominance and does not behave according to the expected traditional values, some men feel the right to discipline and punish their partners with the use of violence, which

⁸ These findings are consistent with the findings of some other international studies (Wallace, 1986; Hearn, 1998; Anderson and Umberston, 2001; Arin, 2001; Fuller, 2001; Dobash and Dobash, 2015), which also note that the use of violence by men in intimate relationships is strongly associated with a purpose towards the establishment of power and control in the relationship, especially when such a position is questioned.

can lead to homicide.

Although today we live in a world with less gender inequality, at least at the formal legal level, we still witness a male dominated culture, »*a world gender order that mostly privileges men over women*« (Connell, 2005, 260). Connell (2005) nevertheless admits that there are some local exceptions, but explains: »*there is a patriarchal dividend for men collectively, arising from higher incomes, higher labour force participation, unequal property ownership, greater access to institutional power, as well as cultural and sexual privilege. [...] The conditions thus exist for the production of a hegemonic masculinity that embodies, organizes and legitimates men's domination in the world gender order as a whole*« (Connell, 2005, 260–261).

But off course, nowadays, at least in so called »Western cultures«, gender inequality cannot be understood in terms of the old patriarchal ideology, which was maintained and supported by legal norms, regulations, and repressive measures. At least in western cultures, where gender equality at the normative level is achieved, the system maintains much more sophisticated and less visible discrimination, in a way that operates beyond our awareness.

This is the context in which we need to understand the intimate partner violence and femicide, because they are basically the result of the belief of some men to have the right to control, dominate and possess their partner. As Jacqueline Campbell (1992, 111) stated: »*The tradition of male ownership of women and male needs for power are played out to horrible conclusions. The message of femicide is that many men believe that control of female partners is a prerogative they can defend by killing women*«.

We would therefore like to stress that when trying to understand and explain (which does not mean justify) intimate partner femicides, it is therefore very important not to avoid the issue of male control, pow-

er, domination and possessiveness, which we believe, represents the core source of these crimes.

CONCLUSION

From the analyzed cases in our sample we can confirm that intimate partner homicides of women in Slovenia are distinctly gendered criminal offences and that Slovenia does not differ significantly in this respect from other countries as well as when personality and social characteristics of perpetrators and victims and it causes, inducements and dynamics of these crimes are considered. In Slovenia as well as in the majority of other countries, the number of female victims is disproportionately higher than the number of male victims and almost half of homicides of women are committed by a former or current spouse or intimate partner.

If we try to summarize the most significant characteristics of these severe acts in Slovenia we would put forward the following: These are "predictable" acts of males towards their female (ex)intimate partners or (ex)wives as intimate partner violence (including death threats and stalking) was, in most cases, present for a long period of time. These are acts of those male partners that cannot bear a feeling of losing control over "their women" in a private context as in their local communities and private settings males are still predominantly understood as the ones that still have to have a dominant position at home and in wider society. Our analysis does not support the explanations that are often heard either in court rooms or in media that behind these severe acts stand "a man's great love" and "jealousy"; we instead claim that the basis of these acts are strong traditional or patriarchal attitudes on partner relationships and gender roles and especially male feelings of the ownership of their female partners.

ZNAČILNOSTI INTIMNOPARTNERSKEGA FEMICIDA V SLOVENIJI

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POVZETEK

V prispevku avtorica predstavi in tematizira značilnosti intimnopartnerskih umorov žensk v Sloveniji. Proučevanje je zasnovano na teoretskih temeljih razumevanja nasilja nad ženskami, ključne ugotovitve pa avtorica črpa iz obsežne empirične raziskave, ki jo je izvedla na osnovi analize primerov intimnopartnerskih umorov ter poskusov umora žensk v Sloveniji med leti 2000 in 2011. Analiza primerov pokaže, da so intimnopartnerski umori žensk pogosto »napovedana« kazniva dejanja, ki se le redko zgodijo iznenada, ne da bi bil pred tem prisoten vsaj kakšen vidnejši dejavnik tveganja, kot so intimnopartnersko nasilje, storilčeve grožnje, izrazito ljubosumje in zalezovanje. Moški namreč partnerko praviloma umori po dolgem obdobju predhodnega »intimnega teroriziranja«, ki se najpogosteje manifestira kot fizično nasilje, to pa praviloma spremljajo tudi druge oblike zlorab in izkoriščanja. Zato avtorica zagovarja stališče, da so intimnopartnerski umori žensk izrazito spolno zaznamovana dejanja, vzroke za nje pa moramo iskati v širšem družbenem sistemu spolne neenakosti in drugih družbenih neenakosti, v katerem se moška dominacija s sistemske, družbene ravni prenaša tudi na individualno raven, na raven odnosov, in v katerem si nekateri moški pridružujejo pravico do nadzorovanja življenja svojih partnerk.

Ključne besede: intimnopartnersko nasilje, nasilje nad ženskami, femicid, moško spolno posesništvo, Slovenija

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