

“Constraints and Limitations of Women's Right to Vote in Time of Crisis: Interwar Yugoslavia and theoretical solutions on women's right to vote in Slovenia”

Irena Selišnik, Department of History, Faculty of Arts. University of Ljubljana

In the presentation I will focus on discourse and political ideas on women's right to vote in Slovenian part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. As Slovenian women in interwar Yugoslavia lost the right to vote in spite great hope after the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians was established, activities to gain the suffrage intensified in the scope of International women's organizations that have branches also in Yugoslavia (International Council of Women and Women's Suffrage Alliance). Through perspective center-periphery organizations we can there for observe some differentiations in regard to pursue the actions for women's right to vote however the greatest differences in regard to how passionate should the suffrage be pursued in Yugoslavia were in the chronological terms between 1920's and 1930's. In that time the crisis of different political ideas became evident and different answers for improving democracy were ascending. Part of that was also reflection on the right to vote as it was/is considered as integral cornerstones of the notion of democracy, critical voices in women's movement and viewpoints emerged that suffrage should not be as important goal as before and skepticism towards democracy became more acclaimed. In that scope we will there for focus on this different ideas how to solve political crisis (and the role of women's suffrage in it) which contained thoughts to incorporate group interests in state governance together with women's interests or that women should through women's association influence as critical public and represent mechanism of control over the state. The paper will be based on historical sources.