Post-conflict reintegration in Central Bosnia: current efforts and affairs

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Post-conflict reintegration in Central Bosnia: Current efforts and affairs

by

Drazen Juric

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Major: Anthropology

Program of Study Committee:
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Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I explore ethno-national resistance to reform efforts aimed at strengthening the national government and reintegrating the system of education in Bosnia-Herzegovina. This discussion stems from ethnographic fieldwork conducted during the summer of 2015, in response to an October 2014 Supreme Court ruling in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina that found the “two schools under one roof” program unconstitutional, and ordered an end to its practice. Fieldwork was conducted primarily in one town in the Central Bosnia Canton, and my goal was to see whether there had been any proposed changes to local schools in response to the 2014 Supreme Court ruling, and if there had not, what local attitudes regarding such a ruling were, along with attitudes about the “two schools under one roof” program, and education in BiH in general. I draw upon discussions concerned with post-conflict reconciliation, ethnic identity, and language ideology to explore the tensions that exist between state-level mandates aimed at reintegration, and the preferences of Bosnia-Herzegovina’s ruling elites. I demonstrate that the power-sharing mechanisms established in the Dayton Peace Accords have enabled ethno-national leaders to resist reforms aimed at a centralized state, which has allowed the “two schools under one roof” program to continue. In doing so, I argue that ethno-national resistance to reform and reintegration efforts further encourages spatial divisions, and allows schools to become private spaces that are used for the reproduction of ethno-national identities rather than as forums for cohesion and the interaction of a common citizenry.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, I explore ethno-national resistance to reform efforts aimed at strengthening the national government in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) and reintegrating the ethnically-divided system of education, and in particular, the “two schools under one roof” program in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (FBiH). This discussion stems from ethnographic fieldwork conducted during the summer of 2015, in response to an October 2014, Supreme Court ruling in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina that said “organising school systems based on ethnic background and implementing curriculums on ethnic principles, which divide children was discriminatory.”\(^1\) The court ruling ordered schools to implement “common integrated multicultural education facilities.”\(^2\)

Fieldwork was conducted primarily in one town in the Central Bosnia Canton, and my goal was to see whether there had been any proposed changes to local schools in response to the 2014 Supreme Court ruling, and if there had not, what local attitudes regarding such a ruling were, along with attitudes about the “two schools under one roof” program, and education in BiH in general. I chose the Central Bosnia Canton as the site of my research largely because it is officially an “ethnically mixed” canton (Bosniaks and Croats) and the “two schools in one roof” program is in effect in this area.

Although I was able to learn shortly after my arrival to the Central Bosnia Canton that no changes to the local schools had been proposed by the Ministry of Education in response to the 2014 Supreme Court ruling, I still found it worthwhile to engage in discussions with participants


\(^2\) ibid.
due to the government’s renewed commitments to work towards European integration. As part of this commitment, BiH’s leaders have pledged to ensure that “access to all levels of education and training is free of any discrimination on the grounds of gender, color, ethnic origin or religion.”

In the chapters that follow, I draw upon discussions concerned with post-conflict reconciliation, ethnic identity, and language ideology to explore the tensions that exist between state-level mandates aimed at reintegration, and the preferences of Bosnia-Herzegovina’s ethno-national leaders. I demonstrate that the power-sharing mechanisms established in the Dayton Peace Accords have enabled ethno-national leaders to resist reforms aimed at a centralized state, which has allowed ethnically-divided education and the “two schools under one roof” program to continue. In doing so, I argue that ethno-national resistance to reform and reintegration efforts further encourages spatial divisions, and allows schools to become private spaces that are used for the reproduction of ethno-national identities rather than as forums for cohesion and the interaction of a common citizenry.

Background

Ethnically-divided education exists in Bosnia-Herzegovina as a result of the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the subsequent Bosnian war of independence. Divisions in education began in 1992, and further developed over the next three years, as the country was territorially and politically divided between Serbs, Bosniaks, and Croats. In the area of this study, the Central Bosnia Canton, fighting between Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims) and Croats (Bosnian Catholics) took place until late February 1994, at which point a cease-fire was adopted and the Washington

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Agreement was signed. The Washington Agreement established the Federation of BiH, which consists of ten independent cantons, and re-allied the Bosniak and Croat forces to defend the territory against the Serbs. It also left in place a decentralized system of education, which led to the creation of independent ministries at the cantonal level. This has resulted in mono-ethnic schools in ethnically homogenous areas, and the “two schools under one roof” program in areas with mixed populations.

The Dayton Peace Accords, signed by the Presidents of Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, as well as representatives of Bosnian Croats and Serbs, on November 21, 1995, brought an end to the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and established the post-war constitution for the republic. The Dayton Peace Accords retained Bosnia-Herzegovina’s international borders, but divided the country into two autonomous entities: the Bosniak-Croat Federation and the Serb-dominated Republika Srpska. The agreement granted control of fifty-one percent of the territory to the FBiH and forty-nine percent to the Republika Srpska. It also created an independent “District of Brčko” in the northeast corner of the country.

The purpose of the Dayton Peace Accords was to bring an end to the violence in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which proved effective, but because the International Community in BiH (the United States, the EU, and Russia) worked to establish peace with the same leaders who led the country into war, what was established was the partitioning of the country along ethno-national lines. Although the agreement brought an end to the military violence, it also resulted in ethnicity being the main factor in Bosnian political identity. This has resulted in what has been referred to

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6 Although the territories are independent entities, their borders are non-sovereign. One reform that was passed in the early 2000s states that citizens of either entity now have full rights throughout the country. "The Constituent Peoples’ Decision in Bosnia-Herzegovina," *International Crisis Report*, No. 128, 16 April 2002.

as an “ethnopolis,” a system of governance where politicians, if they want to be successful, must act as patrons for their ethnic constituencies, and people, if they want to survive, must navigate the ethnic avenues familiar to them. The Dayton Peace Accords also established the Office of the High Representative, an internationally-appointed position and the highest authority in the country, to oversee its implementation. The presence of the High Representative in the country will be discussed more in the next chapter.

As will be detailed in chapter three, education is highly decentralized in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and there are 14 ministries of education. Conversely, in the Republika Srpska, education is highly centralized because of the Serb majority, but in the Federation, the governments of each canton are obliged to transfer control of education to municipal governments in areas where the majority population of a municipality differs from the majority population of the entire canton. Similar to the Republika Srpska, education is not contested in ethnically homogenous parts of the Federation, but in areas where control has been transferred to municipalities, ethnically homogenous schools are able to embrace mono-ethnic curriculums. In the separate curriculums, Croats use textbooks that are developed in Croatia, Serbs use textbooks developed in Serbia, and Bosniaks use textbooks developed in BiH, commonly referred to as the Federal curriculum.

It is reported that approximately 100,000 people were killed during the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and 2.3 million of the 4.4 million inhabitants were displaced. More than half of

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these were internally displaced persons, who remained in BiH. While most of Bosnia-Herzegovina’s schools became mono-ethnic as a result of the territorial divisions, the “two schools under one roof” program emerged in mixed areas due to a legal provision intended to encourage the return of displaced persons to their former homes, which was not as successful as envisioned. One of the reasons for this was that for many displaced persons, there was nothing to return to: no homes, jobs, or schools. For Bosniak refugees from eastern parts of the country, for instance, it was often the case that entire villages were forcefully evicted and destroyed. Similarly, much of the diaspora outside of BiH has not returned simply because there have been more opportunities for life abroad. As can be seen below, the ethnic composition of BiH shifted greatly during the war.

Figure 1. Ethnic composition of BiH until 1991 (Source: Pašalić-Kreso 2008: 358).

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12 Annex 7 in the Dayton Peace Accords grants rights of personhood, including the right to be educated in one’s national language or mother tongue. This led to institutionalized divisions in education.
Figure 2. Ethnic composition of BiH after 1998 (Source: Pašalić-Kreso 2008: 358).

Rather than returning, people have continued to leave Bosnia-Herzegovina, and classrooms have been going empty, according to recent figures.\textsuperscript{15} The preliminary results of the first post-war census, carried out in October, 2013, report that the population of BiH is 3,867,055, with an ethnic composition of: Bosniaks 48.4%, Serbs 32.7%, Croats 14.6%, and Others 4.3%.\textsuperscript{16} In addition, current estimates indicate unemployment is slightly more than twenty-five percent, while youth unemployment is more than sixty percent.\textsuperscript{17} Bosnia-Herzegovina is in a deficit and close to bankruptcy.\textsuperscript{18} Although unpopular, state-level mandates aimed at a centralized government and unified system of education offer the potential for reduced public sector spending as well as European standardization.

\textsuperscript{15} Zelenika, P. (2016, January 28). “U osnovnim školama u FBiH za pet godina 700 učionica ostalo prazno.” Retrieved February 02, 2016, from http://www.vecernji.ba/u-osnovnim-skolama-u-fbih-za-pet-godina-700-ucionica-ostalo-prazno-1055480 -This article reports that the number of students enrolled in primary education in the FBiH over the past five years (2011/12-2015/16) has dropped by 19,705 or 9.45%, resulting in approximately 700 empty classrooms. Figures are from the Federal Ministry of Education in the FBiH.


In the following section, I draw upon discussions that deal with post-conflict reconciliation in areas where ethno-nationalism has played a role, as well as studies on language ideology and ethnic identity, intended to provide readers with a framework for contextualizing Bosnia-Herzegovina. After I read about the October 2014 Supreme Court ruling, an examination of the closely-related literature helped me to parse out the various desires of Bosnia-Herzegovina’s ethno-national leaders, and to find common grounds between the legally separate peoples, which ultimately guided my study. In addition, due to my education in Political Science and Journalism, as well as Anthropology, this review draws on discussions from multiple disciplines.

Currently in Bosnia-Herzegovina, there are three formally recognized constitutive nations or constituent peoples. As mentioned, they are Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats, and as will be explained more throughout this discussion, the majority of each also strongly identifies along religious lines. For the most part, Serbs are Orthodox, while Croats are Catholic. The term Bosniak refers specifically to Bosnian Muslims, whereas the term Bosnian can refer to any citizen of Bosnia-Herzegovina. However, it is important to mention that in post-war BiH, most Croats and Serbs reject the term Bosnian and instead declare themselves Croatian and Serbian. In the past, the terms Bosnian and Bosniak were used synonymously, but the meanings of the two have diverged. Now, Bosnian is also used by people with mixed backgrounds, members of minority groups, and those who reject an ethno-national identification.

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19 This means that they share power equally, regardless of population proportion.
Prior to the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the official language of the socialist-republic was Serbo-Croatian or Croat-Serbian. Within Bosnia-Herzegovina, it was acceptable to say that the language was Bosnian, but it was also understood that the language was only regionally different from the other two. As a result of the war, today in Bosnia-Herzegovina, there are three official languages: Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian. As will be discussed more in chapter three, this has also been an area of nationalist contention, having to do with deeper claims to Bosnia-Herzegovina, and surrounding questions concerning the legitimacy of the Bosnian state. Based on linguistic studies, it can be said that Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian are one language that has standard variants. This is comparable to the case of American English and its accents across the United States. Ultimately, the variants “can be taught together in a single classroom.”

Since the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords, scholars have reflected not only on the international response to the violence in BiH and the post-Dayton process, but also on academic and media coverage of the conflict as it took place. In particular, Gagnon notes that many were quick to portray the reasons for the inter-ethnic violence in Bosnia-Herzegovina as either primordialist or essentialist. Some explanations supposed that the various groups in the Balkans had been in conflict ever since their settlement in the region, and that the most recent violence was just a resurgence of those “ancient ethnic hatreds.” This is problematic because it leads

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22 Although Bosnia-Herzegovina’s state-level constitution does not list an official language, the entity and cantonal constitutions recognize Bosnian, Croatian, & Serbian as separate languages.
24 Wilson, T., Milano, S., Myers, L., Marini, L., Davis, G., Kolker, Andrew, ... CNAM Film Library. (1987). *American tongues / the Center for New American Media presents; a videotape by Andrew Kolker and Louis Alvarez. [No dot version].* ed.). New York: Harriman, N.Y.: Center for New American Media; Distributed in the USA by CNAM Film Library.
27 Robert D. Kaplan’s (1993) book *Balkan Ghosts*, has repeatedly been mentioned as an example that argues the ancient ethnic hatreds thesis. Gagnon (2004) notes that the book was widely read at the time of its release, and potentially influential to policymakers.
people to think that the groups are incapable of coexisting, and that any successes are to be disregarded. It also leads to an assumption that the groups’ identities have not changed over time. Others linked the violence of the Bosnian war to the fall of socialism in the region, and stated that it was an ethnic war for national autonomy. This too is problematic because it assumes that ethnic conflict is a constant, and also produces correlations to earlier periods of violence in the region that are not necessarily factual. Furthermore, by describing the violence as an “ethnic conflict,” it appears distant and unrelated to Western events.

Gagnon counters that these assumptions fail to acknowledge that the violence in Bosnia-Herzegovina was in reality directed by ethno-national leaders and carried out by their forces as a strategy to suppress opposition parties and civilian populations: to effectively demobilize them. He explains that violence was used to instill fear and silence, and to reorganize the population into politically homogenous bases of support. Using a social constructivist approach, which considers social identity as “a process of identification rather than as a static attribute,” he posits that violent strategies were used by the ethno-national leaders to suppress opposition “exactly because” they were unable to rally popular support with ethno-national appeals. By analyzing available polling data leading up to and during the Yugoslav dissolution, Gagnon demonstrates that the population in the former Yugoslavia was more concerned with unemployment and the economy, rather than ethno-nationalism.

Gagnon’s argument was later supported by the well known Slovenian, Slavoj Žižek, in the following quote: “Serbian aggression against Bosnia in 1992 did not spring out of a conflict between ethnic groups. It was purely and simply the attack of Serb-dominated pre-war

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29 ibid.
Yugoslavia against Tito's post-war Yugoslavia.” Amidst the violence and displacement, ethno-national leaders preached assurance and cooperation while they secured control of resources and enterprises from the former socialist republic. By the use of the described strategy, ethno-nationalists appeared the most organized and capable, and the International Community worked with them to bring peace to Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Katherine Verdery, one of the earliest American anthropologists to conduct ethnographic research in Eastern Europe after the fall of socialism, writes, “The end of socialism meant the importing of democracy, but it entered a context that was peculiar in several ways.” Verdery explains that the various nations in the eastern bloc were engaged in restoring older forms of identity from “supposedly democratic precommunist pasts,” and this “created discriminations between people based on ethnonational differences.” Discriminations arose as nations struggled to figure out voting and property rights, but also because citizens were determined by ethnonational identity. Verdery concludes, “The sovereign thus [became] the ethnic collectivity; democracy [became] ethnocracy.” This research makes clear that discussions about citizenship in the former socialist world were intertwined with debates about national and cultural identity, and Verdery emphasizes that problems can arise when discussions are dealing with minority populations or non-citizens’ rights.

This analysis of citizenship is supported by Susan Gal’s comparison of Eastern European and Western ideologies concerning public/private distinctions. Gal writes that in the West, the distinction between public/private is primarily determined by the space being occupied whereas

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32 ibid.
33 ibid.
in the former socialist world, public/private was primarily determined by public(the state)/private(the people) meaning that people, not spaces, constituted what was a public or private setting. She explains that in the West, the distinction between public/private has been foundational for political and economic theory, while in the former socialist world; the distinction is still being determined, and is a matter of language ideology. Gal states that it is useful to consider the distinction between public/private as, a matter of language ideology because language ideologies are never only about language. They posit close relations between linguistic practices and other social activities…and provide insights into the workings of ideologies more generally.35

By considering these approaches, it becomes possible to see how ethnically-divided education in Bosnia-Herzegovina prevents the production of a united Bosnian identity. The “two-schools under one roof” program allows for the reproduction of ethno-national ideologies, and enables students to make public/private distinctions by identifying members of their own curriculum as private people, and members of the other curriculums as public people. The school, which should be a public space utilized for the purpose of educating young citizens, becomes a private space, and can be used to further the practice of othering.

Janet M. Fuller supports this with the understanding that social identity is defined as the socially constructed membership in a social group or category.36 She states that while language choice is not the only means through which social identity is constructed; it is intertwined in other communicative practices, which enable the “performance of identity.”37 Durrani and Dunne write that group identity is intertwined in things such as language, religious beliefs, and

37 Fuller, J. ibid., 107.
the organizations and practices of institutions with which group members engage. They explain that “national identification is relational; it signifies loyalty and attachment to one community and casts others as outsiders.”

Graz University scholar Florian Bieber also points out that nationalist parties stand in conflict with the foundations of a multinational or multireligious state. Bieber writes that the nationalist parties in BiH “cannot and do not seek to represent the whole population,” and only view themselves as representatives of their ethnic constituencies. He reasons that the administrations of multi-national states such as BiH cannot represent the people as one nation-state, and must compromise and delegate. Bieber assesses that the parties claim to protect the national interest, but in reality they only fragment it.

In BiH, the decentralization of education along ethnic lines is a result of the fragmentation of the national interest. Although decentralization may allow for more local control, it does not necessarily guarantee an increase in efficiency or quality. As the work of Akhil Gupta indicates, bureaucracies in systems like these usually function best for those who have political connections, cultural capital, and financial backing. Gupta notes that the state in India is made up of multiple levels of government, in addition to numerous organizations and programs, and demonstrates that the government does not operate as a whole, but rather moves along in a fragmented fashion.

Petričušić and Blondel maintain that as long as ethno-national elites do not encourage reconciliation and an increase of social capital, the rebuilding of trust between the groups will

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not take place.\footnote{41} Furthermore, Kelly Hill asserts that education, if used improperly like in the case of BiH by its ethno-national elites, can become a tool for social division and political indoctrination.\footnote{42} Hill claims that a lack of social cohesion in an environment like Bosnia’s can actually further social divisions and increase prejudice, but she also states that education is still the best means for increasing social cohesion, if implemented correctly.

In the essay “Re-educating the Hearts of Bosnian Students,” Gordana Božić describes some of the challenges that teachers face when dealing with multiethnic classrooms.\footnote{43} While her study is based in eastern Bosnia, and concerns Bosniaks and Serbs, it does serve as an example of students functioning in mixed classrooms. Božić describes a scenario in which Bosniak returnee parents are unable to pay for their children to attend mono-ethnic schools in neighboring Bosniak towns, so they attend the local primary school, which operates under the Republika Srpska program. This program teaches the Serbian written language (Cyrillic) first, and then the Bosnian alphabet (Latin).

Nevertheless, Božić makes evident the necessity for reform in her account of the material being professed to students. For instance, the textbooks have a Serbian interpretation of history, and do not discuss the events of the war the way the Bosniaks know them. A couple of examples include the description of the diffusion of Turkish culture into the Bosnia-Herzegovina during the Ottoman reign, a focus on Serb victories in historic battles, allowing for claims to territory, and a diminished focus on the atrocities of the war.

Her conclusions are paralleled in the description Halilovich provides in his ethnography of displaced and diaspora communities, in which he depicts abandoned and overgrowing villages, renamed streets and landmarks, the aftermath of ethnic cleansing— a conscious serbianization of former Bosniak territory.44 Halilovich notes the generation of students currently partaking in exchange trips across the country, but not learning the actual history of the nation. Hromadžić describes this as the “production of an empty state.”45

As the work of scholars interested in this region shows, genuine reconciliation cannot take place in Bosnia-Herzegovina until there is a consensus regarding the events of the past, which cannot be achieved as long as there is a system that encourages different interpretations, and which ultimately allows schools to become private spaces that are used for the reproduction of ethno-national identities rather than as forums for cohesion and the interaction of a common citizenry. As will be discussed more throughout this thesis, although the government of BiH has made renewed commitments to work towards European integration, and although the citizens of BiH have voiced a united concern over the political and economic stagnancy the country faces, resistance to reform efforts on the part of ethno-national leaders at multiple levels of government continues to encourage spatial divisions.

Ethno-national Desires in the Federation

In this section, I provide a brief analysis of the ethno-national divisions in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but more specifically, the divisions between Bosniaks and Croats in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Although these divisions were most visible during and immediately after

the war, they have remained on display. While Bosnia-Herzegovina’s government has made renewed commitments to work toward European Union membership, and while it can be said that there is a shared concern among the general population over the political and economic stagnancy, ethno-national resistance to reform and reintegration efforts has in some cases worked to encourage spatial divisions.

Croats are numerically the smallest of the constitutive peoples in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Croat nationalism in BiH has deep ties to the fact that Bosnian Croats were not granted a separate entity at the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords, unlike Bosnian Serbs and the Republika Srpska, which functions as an independent political and administrative “mini-state” within Bosnia-Herzegovina. Croat nationalism views Croatia as the homeland and, in the extreme case, seeks to recreate Croatia’s historical boundaries to cover parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Since the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords, the International Community has worked to reintegrate Croats and Bosniaks within the Federation, but it has been a slow process. It can be said that the Croats are more reluctant to reintegrate because, being the smallest of the three, they fear being voted out of power, and do not want a minority status.

In 2001, the Croat Chairman of the Presidency, Ante Jelavić, took formal steps to create a separate entity for Bosnian Croats and the High Representative to BiH at the time, Wolfgang Petrisch removed him from office.46 This caused great upset among Bosnian Croats, but they have not taken legal steps to create a third entity since then. The idea of a third entity was reintroduced in 2006 by then Bosnian Croat leader Ivo Miro Jović, but no measures were taken to implement the idea. Shortly thereafter, Jović was defeated in the election for the Croat

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member of the Presidency. The official who replaced him, Željko Komšić, politically identified as a Bosnian Croat, and as a member of the Social Democratic Party (SDP BiH), rather than the right-wing Croat Democratic Union (HDZ BiH), and therefore was not viewed as a legitimate replacement by many Bosnian Croats who claimed that because the SDP BiH was primarily supported by Bosniak voters, he was falsely elected to represent Bosnian Croats. Bosnian Croats feared that because Komšić was not a nationalist, their constitutive status could be undermined by Bosniak voters. Komšić was re-elected in 2010. Because they are fewer in numbers, Croats see reintegration as favorable to Bosniaks, and nationalist arguments see it as a threat to Croat identity in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Part of that threat has to do with religious affiliations, as faith plays a large role in the identities of Bosnian Croats and Bosniaks. As mentioned, Bosnian Croats are predominantly Catholic and the Church in BiH receives influence and assistance from the Church in Croatia, which receives assistance from the state due to a treaty that was signed between the Croatian government and the Vatican in return for the Vatican’s recognition of Croatia’s sovereignty. Nationalist arguments stress that Croats are a Christian nation, and in more recent years have been concerned with the rise of Islam among Bosniaks.

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47 As will be detailed more in the next chapter, Bosnia-Herzegovina has a three-member Presidency. There is a representative from each of the three constitutive nations.
48 The following article states that Komšić received about four times as many Bosniak than Bosnian Croat votes. However, it also states that he received support in parts of Western Herzegovina that were predominantly Croat: Jutarnji List: http://www.jutarnji.hr/izbori-ubih--nije-tocno-da-hrvati-nisu-glasali-za-zeljku-komsica--u-grudama-je-dobio-124-glasa-893048/ (Retrieved January 17, 2016).
49 Azra Hromadžić (2008) conducted ethnographic research on the administrative reunification of the well known Mostar Gymnasium, and writes: “...integration was understood as forced incorporation into a seemingly equal power-sharing pluralist BiH state, which for most Croats, is experienced as one of Bosniak hegemony.” Hromadžić, A. (2008). Discourses of Integration and Practices of Reunification at the Mostar Gymnasium, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Comparative Education Review, 52(4), 541-563.
When considering Bosniak nationalism, it is important to see that it is fairly similar to Croat nationalism, as far as language and religion is concerned. As briefly mentioned earlier, Bosniaks refer to their language as Bosnian because that is the name of the language of the Bosnian people, but as Serb and Croat nationalists argue, this is also a political move because it makes Bosniaks appear as the “true natives” of Bosnia-Herzegovina. When it comes to religion among Bosniaks, Islam has become more visibly noticeable in Bosnia-Herzegovina since the break up of Yugoslavia.

During the war, the Bosniak-run government in Sarajevo received financial assistance from various Middle Eastern countries. In addition, though the figures are disputed, mujahideen fighters also came to Bosnia-Herzegovina and aided Bosniak efforts, but it is fair to say that they were never under strict control by the Sarajevo government.\(^\text{51}\) Croat and Serb nationalists saw this as the greatest of threats and argued that Bosnian Muslims were trying to turn Bosnia-Herzegovina into an Islamic state, but this was denied by the Sarajevo government. However, as a result of the influx of foreign fighters and Middle Eastern support, a conservative branch of Islam, known as the Wahhabi, came to Bosnia-Herzegovina, and has challenged the more relaxed and traditional Bosniak Islam.\(^\text{52}\)

One of the primary ways that Bosniak nationalism differs from Croat and Serb nationalism in Bosnia-Herzegovina is that it advocates for a centralized form of government, with Sarajevo as the capital. Part of the reason for this has to do with the fact that Bosniaks are the largest of the constitutive nations, and a centralized form of government would mean that

\(^{51}\) Shrader (2003, ibid., 51-52) notes that mujahideen paramilitary groups in Bosnia-Herzegovina, were often at odds with their Bosniak commanding officers because of cultural differences. For instance, Bosniak Muslims consumed alcohol and pork and did not share many of the conservative beliefs that the Mujahideen brought with them.

they would have a majority status. The goals of Bosniak nationalists are more in line with those of the international community, and advocate reform. This is possibly due to the potential for a majority status, but at the same time, the call for a centralized government is tied to Bosniak victimhood during the war. It is reported that 65 percent of the total casualties were Bosniaks, 25 percent Serbs, and 8 percent Croats.53

Research Design

My research interests are shaped by my personal and academic experience. I am a Bosnian Croat from Central Bosnia, who moved to the United States in September 1996, when I was in the second grade. After moving to Des Moines, Iowa, I was privileged with the opportunity and educated in a Catholic school, and did not come into frequent contact with many Bosnians. I often found myself explaining my background to my American peers, and realizing that I did not know enough about the events in BiH myself. Upon graduating from high school in 2007, I came into contact with anthropology at Iowa State University, and began to formulate answers to some of the questions I had concerning Bosnia-Herzegovina.

I have been fortunate enough to be able to visit BiH for approximately a month at a time during 2000, 2005, 2008, 2013, and two months during the summer of 2015, specifically for this project. My journeys prior to this study allowed me to maintain an interest in the culture, as well as to develop my familial and social kin networks in the region. At the same time, these visits allowed me to further my knowledge of the language, which enabled me to engage in discussions with participants on a fairly informal level, as well as closer examine current news and past documents. I chose the Central Bosnia Canton as the site of my research study partly because my

existing networks in BiH are located there, but largely because it is officially an ethnically mixed
canton (Bosniaks and Croats) and the “two schools under one roof” program is in effect in this
area. My goal was to see whether there had been any formal response in the Central Bosnia
Canton to the 2014 Supreme Court ruling, and if there had not, what local attitudes regarding
such a ruling were, along with attitudes about the “two schools under one roof” program, and
ethnically-divided education in general.

When I arrived in the Central Bosnia Canton, I contacted members of my existing
networks and shared with them the nature of my study. Relying on their advice, I reached out to
potential participants, and spoke with individuals who had ties to education in the area, as well as
with recent graduates of the local schools. I visited three schools and one learning center in the
Central Bosnia Canton, and briefly met with the directors.\(^{54}\) When I met with these individuals, I
mentioned my local background, and I also I referenced literature by Bosnian scholars which had
influenced my own study. Upon doing so, my only actual question for participants pertained to
whether they had heard about the 2014 Supreme Court ruling in the FBiH, which upheld a 2012
Mostar Municipal Court decision that found the “two schools under one roof” program
discriminatory, and unconstitutional.\(^{55}\)

I asked only this question in my meetings with participants because it enabled me to
answer whether there was a formal response to the court ruling in this canton (as in proposed
reunification of the ethnically-divided classrooms and curriculums), and because I was slightly
unsure about initiating discussions with participants regarding the divisions in education.

\(^{54}\) When I arrived in Central Bosnia on 5/26/2015, the school year was only a couple of weeks away from being over, so the
timing of my study was not expertly chosen.

Although education reform in Bosnia-Herzegovina is part of an ongoing dialogue among those interested in the development of the country, it is a sensitive topic nonetheless. My general approach to discussions with participants was to link this research study to my personal education and my ties to the area, as a result of which, I was interested in the legislation being implemented as Bosnia-Herzegovina progresses towards European Union membership. This allowed me to address my research design, but to engage in conversations on participants’ terms. I briefly reflect on this approach to discussions with participants in the fourth chapter, in addition to the discussions themselves.

Based on my findings, there have not been any immediate or proposed changes to the divided system of education in the Central Bosnia Canton to reflect the 2014 Supreme Court ruling. In addition, while many of my participants indicated they had not directly heard about the 2014 Supreme Court ruling, they were familiar with the debate at hand. To me, this verified the difficulty of implementing reforms, and led me to re-focus elements of my study to look at the deeper political and financial problems BiH faces.

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis consists of an introduction, three chapters, and a conclusion. As this discussion develops, I narrow in on the specific focus and area of study, which is ethnically-divided education and the “two schools under one roof” program in the Central Bosnia Canton, but initially I provide an overview of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a whole, and present a series of discussions aimed at understanding why there have not been any immediate or proposed changes to reflect the 2014 Supreme Court ruling.
Chapter II presents background information that is necessary for understanding the current socio-economic situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. I detail the State in BiH, and provide insight into recent developments concerning the country’s path to membership in the European Union. In this chapter, I discuss the ethno-national tensions that continue to plague the country, arguing that the political and economic problems have overshadowed reform efforts aimed at reintegration.

Chapter III provides an overview of post-war education in Bosnia-Herzegovina. I specifically focus on the “two schools under one roof” program in the FBiH, but I shine light on other ways ethnically-divided education takes place throughout the country as well. By breaking down the political and administrative side of ethnically-divided education, I demonstrate that reform is difficult to implement, both from the top-down and the bottom-up.

Chapter IV contains a brief survey of the attitudes that Bosniak and Croats in a mixed, semi-rural town in the Central Bosnia Canton have towards the 2014 Supreme Court ruling in the FBiH that found the “two schools under one roof” program unconstitutional. I explore the “two schools under one roof” in this area, as well as local attitudes regarding education reform and reintegration, and find that there have not been any proposed changes to the local schools to reflect the court ruling. In addition, I provide a snapshot of the circumstances students in a semi-rural mixed town in the Central Bosnia Canton face upon graduating from a system of ethnically-divided education. In doing so I argue that the general population is more desirous of economic stability as opposed to ethno-national autonomy, but that nationalist resistance to reforms has enabled divisions to continue.
CHAPTER II: STATE-BUILDING, ETHNO-NATIONALISM, AND REFORM DIFFICULTIES IN POST-WAR BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Introduction

The post-war period in Bosnia-Herzegovina has been described as “a system of institutionalized crisis.”\(^56\) As noted in the previous chapter, the Dayton Peace Accords, although effective in bringing about an end to the violence in BiH, resulted in the partitioning of the country along ethnic lines, and ethnicity as the main factor in Bosnian political identity. Considering once more that ethno-national leaders directed violence in Bosnia-Herzegovina to reduce the population into homogenous bases of support while they secured state enterprises in the ongoing liberalization of the region, it is possible to see there is validity to the phrase “institutionalized crisis,” and that the discouraging state-building efforts in BiH originate out of this premise. In addition, Mujanovic notes what emerged during the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina was a “patriotic mafia,” who preached “national liberation” and “the defense of our people,” but in reality pursued profiteering and privatization schemes.\(^57\) It has been twenty years since the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords, and the lack of significant progress in reform efforts makes it worthwhile to examine the democratic conditions in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In this chapter, I detail the state in BiH, and provide insight into the power-sharing mechanisms established in the Dayton Peace Accords. I describe the post-war reform efforts and show that the Bosnian state remains a fragile one. Although the international community has invested heavily in the country thus far, the failures to cooperate by those in power indicate its presence is still necessary. Bosnia-Herzegovina’s leaders have repeatedly agreed to work

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\(^{57}\) ibid. 107-109.
together on paper, but many reforms designed to empower the national government have yet to be implemented. In addition, rather than open support for reconciliation, BiH’s ethno-national leaders have sought autonomy, and questioned the legitimacy of the Bosnian state.

As a result, I find it necessary to highlight the incompatibilities between the European Union state-building efforts in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the desires of BiH’s ethno-national leaders. At the same time, the ongoing events in the region draw attention to this matter because whether BiH “succeeds” in achieving European Union membership also hinges on the EU’s continued development. In this chapter, I show that resistance to reform efforts has enabled BiH’s ethno-national elites to continue to profit and to serve those who ensure their political power, rather than all of Bosnia-Herzegovina’s citizens. As will be detailed more in the next chapter, this has allowed ethnically-divided education to continue, resulting in the use of schools for the reproduction of ethno-national identities, rather than as forums for cohesion and the interaction of a common citizenry.

Background

Prior to the war, Bosnia-Herzegovina was one of six Yugoslav republics, and was classified as a mid-developed country, with a well-developed educational system.58 Amidst the collapse of communism, Yugoslavia also dissolved, and war broke out in 1991, first in Slovenia and Croatia, then more bitterly in Bosnia-Herzegovina. As the work of V.P. Gagnon shows, the war in BiH was waged by ethno-national leaders primarily based in Zagreb and Belgrade and carried out by their allies throughout the country. Adila Pašalić Kreso notes that a significant population shift took place during the war:

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Not only did the population shift from rural to urban areas, but refugees from certain areas had to flee to areas controlled by people of their own nationality in order to escape the *ethnic cleansing* – in particular of non-Serbian populations – and live in safety.  

This territorialization was meant to facilitate the breakup of the country; areas that Croats occupied were to be absorbed into a “Greater Croatia,” while Serb areas were to remain part of what was left of Yugoslavia. The remaining area, a sliver running north to south, was to remain for Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks). However, as a result of international involvement, a peace agreement was brokered by the United States, one that created a consociational democracy based on the ethno-national and territorial divisions fostered during the war. As will be discussed more in the next chapter, this resulted in the creation of separate ministries of education at multiple levels of government.

Bosnia-Herzegovina is composed of two autonomous entities, the Federation of BiH, further divided into ten independent cantons, and the Republika Srpska. There is also a jointly-administered, but separately governed, “District of Brčko,” located in the northeast. The cantons in the Federation are divided into 79 municipalities, while the Republika Srpska is more centralized in comparison, with 63 municipalities.

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61 The District of Brčko is located near Canton 2 on the map.
The national government is located in Sarajevo, and is headed by three Presidents, three Vice-Presidents, a Council of Ministers, and a bicameral legislative branch. There is also a Constitutional Court, a High Judicial Court, and a State Prosecutor’s Office. The Bosniak and Croat members of the Presidency are elected by voters in the Federation, while the Serb member is elected by voters in the Republika Srpska. The presidential term is four years, and the three members rotate for the main position every eight months, beginning with whoever receives the most votes. The members of the Presidency do not wield tremendous domestic powers, but they do represent BiH in foreign affairs, and appoint the Chair of the Council of Ministers.

The highest governmental authority rests in the hands of the internationally-appointed Office of the High Representative (OHR), who is able to suspend any state or entity laws, and remove elected officials deemed a threat to the security of the state. The OHR reports to the

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62 Patrice McMahon writes: "When the OHR was created, it had no institutional base to carry out its goals. As of January 2003, it had a staff of over 700 and an annual budget of about $20 million. Its growth in numbers matches the increasing powers it has
Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC SB), an assembly of delegates from various national governments. The PIC SB has established a set of objectives and conditions that must be met for the closure of the OHR. One objective was completed when the Parliamentary Assembly in BiH recognized the self-governance of the District of Brčko.

At the entity level, the Federation also has a President and two Vice Presidents, as well as a Prime Minister, appointed by its bicameral legislative branch. The Republika Srpska has a President and two Vice Presidents, but due to the Serb majority, power usually resides in the hands of the Serb President. The Republika Srpska has a Prime Minister and a unicameral legislature called the National Assembly. There is a separate Legislative Assembly and Mayor for the District of Brčko. Within the Federation of BiH, there are ten cantonal governments, and throughout BiH, individual municipal governments.

As mentioned, the government of Bosnia-Herzegovina formally recognizes three constitutive nations/constituent peoples: Serbs, Bosniaks, and Croats, as well as several minority groups. Leaders of the constitutive nations have the power to nullify legislation deemed a threat to their national autonomy through a “vital national interest” veto, which has impeded reform and reintegration efforts. The veto was established to protect the groups from systematic marginalization in the post-war period, but it has been used by ethno-national leaders to preserve the decentralized government and a weak state. For instance, the Constitution of Bosnia-

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63 The PIC’s Steering Board members are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the UK, the US, the EU presidency, the European Commission and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, represented by Turkey.

64 The objectives and conditions set by the PIC are: the resolution of state property; resolution of defense property; completion of the Brčko final award (completed); fiscal sustainability of the state; and entrenchment of the rule of law. The two conditions are signing the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the EU (completed), and obtaining a positive assessment of the situation from the PIC.
Herzegovina, established in Annex 4 of the Dayton Peace Accords, states that only individuals belonging to one of the three constitutive nations are able to hold office in many elected positions, whereas members of minority groups such as Roma, Jews, and self-declared Bosnians are excluded.\(^{65}\)

Even though the European court of Human Rights ruled in 2009 that the country’s constitution violates minority rights when it excludes Jewish and Roma people from standing for either the three-member Presidency or the House of Peoples, ethno-national leaders have used the veto to strike down proposed amendments to the constitution. In the case of Bosnian Croats, the stated concern has been that a non-Croat could be elected as the Croat representative to the Presidency, which could result in Croats being outvoted on important matters. At the same time, it is possible to see that ethno-national leaders have used the democratic institutions available to retain their hold on power while the people who have an interest in changing the current situation are excluded from participation.

**State-building Efforts and Ethno-national Resistance**

In the following section, I analyze the post-war reform efforts in two periods, the first from 1996-2006, and the second from 2006-present. In doing so, I wish to draw attention to the fact that there has been a noticeable withdrawal of the International Community from BiH in more recent years, possibly due to conflicts and matters of interest elsewhere, but perhaps also due to assumptions that Bosnia-Herzegovina is ready to assume self-governance. While the

\(^{65}\) On 22 December 2009, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ordered the abolition of discriminatory restrictions against the Jewish and Roma people. Retrieved April 19, 2016 from http://minorityrights.org/publications/discrimination-and-political-participation-in-bosnia-and-herzegovina-march-2010/. See the following January 2016 BBC interview with BiH Foreign Minister Igor Crnadak for more on the failures to amend the Bosnian constitution to reflect the ECHR Sejdic-Finci vs BiH court case: http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06z1dvh.
international community (the EU, and to a slightly lesser degree, the U.S.) has invested heavily in Bosnia-Herzegovina thus far, a closer look at the successes and failures of the post-war reform efforts indicates that the international presence in BiH remains necessary.

The initial post-war reforms included the transformation of various institutions to coincide with the Dayton Peace Accords, as well as the creation of a single currency and a Central Bank. There were also wide-ranging military, police, and security reform efforts in this period, which were largely successful. 66 In 2005, Bosnia-Herzegovina agreed to work towards a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with the European Union, a plan for membership, but state’s ability to adopt the SAA mandates had been in doubt even then due to the decentralized nature of the government. 67

In 2006, the U.S. and the EU launched a formal effort to revise Bosnia-Herzegovina’s constitution, known as the “April Package,” but it was defeated by two votes in the state parliament. 68 As Sofia Sebastian notes:

While all major Serb parties, both Bosniak parties…and the Croat HDZ BiH stayed firmly behind the April Package, [The Party for Bosnia-Herzegovina] SBiH, the only Bosniak party that withdrew from negotiations in the last stage, and the Croat HDZ 1990 – a [more conservative] splinter of HDZ BiH created shortly prior to the voting of the AP - rejected the package along with other independent MPs. 69

Sebastian points to ethno-national tensions, but also to disputes between administrations within cantons as reasons for the rejection of the package, in addition to misinformation among

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67 Perry (2010) underlines that the number of BiH Ministers of Parliament is “strikingly small:
The Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of a 15-member House of Peoples (upper House) and a 42-member House of Representatives (lower House), and is the smallest bicameral state legislature in Europe. Many functions often held by the state are in BiH decentralized, accounting in part for this discrepancy.” Perry, V. (2010). Fifteen Years of the Human Dimension in Bosnia and Herzegovina — The Ebb and Flow of State-building. Security and Human Rights, 21(4), 279-291. Pg. 282
68 Mujanovic (2014, ibid., 109-111) explains that the purpose of this was to align Bosnia’s state-level institutions with EU and NATO policies, for eventual membership in both.
members of the state parliament who assumed acceptance of the April Package would mean approval of the Dayton-established constitution of BiH, which was not voted on in the state parliament.\textsuperscript{70}

It is perhaps not surprising then, that the second period of reform efforts in BiH has fared less well, and has been met with opposition by nationalist leaders. In particular, then Prime Minister and current President of the Republika Srpska, Milorad Dodik, opposed reforms aimed at a centralized government, and has argued that the 1996-2006 reforms stripped the Republika Srpska of its autonomy. After the April Package was defeated, Dodik claimed that any subsequent reform efforts would have to recognize the autonomy of the Republika Srpska, and proceed from there. This was opposed by the Bosniak leader of the Party for BiH (SBiH), Haris Siljadzic, who called for a BiH without entity-level voting, and a strong state government.\textsuperscript{71}

The SAA was signed in June 2008, but it was frozen the following year because BiH’s ruling parties failed to agree on an amendment to the constitution to reflect the “Sejdic-Finci” court case. However, this was not the only condition needed to unlock the SAA, and further attempts to satisfy the requirements were faced with challenges.\textsuperscript{72} While the SAA was in development, the Interim Agreement (IA) was enacted, which focused on fulfilling the trade-related portions of the SAA.\textsuperscript{73} The Interim Agreement enabled BiH to export agricultural goods

\textsuperscript{70} Perry (2010, ibid., 282) reports: “The BiH Parliamentary Assembly (PA) adopted 239 laws in its four-year mandate from 2002-2006 compared to the adoption of 168 laws by the PA between 2006-2010 (78 laws were rejected in the Parliamentary Assembly from 2006-2010 due to the entity vote provision).” If a law is adopted at the national level, it must also be approved at the entity level before it is implemented. Ibid.

\textsuperscript{71} Mujanovic, J. (2013). Reclaiming the Political in Bosnia: A Critique of the Legal-Rational Nightmare of Contemporary Bosnian Statehood. Theory in Action, 6(2), 109-147. 115

\textsuperscript{72} The 2009 European Commission Report for BiH states: “The overall political climate has deteriorated in recent months and the [constitutional amendment] process has been discontinued.” Pg. 8.

\textsuperscript{73} Other conditions in the SAA required BiH to implement a state aid law, conduct a national census, and close the Office of the High Representative (OHR). The last condition was removed in 2010 by the EU and the OHR remains in function. A state aid law was adopted in 2012, but it was not implemented. The first post-war census was conducted in October 2013, and preliminary results were released. The census is scheduled for publication in June, 2016. It was delayed due to a dispute between the Statistical Agencies of the FBiH and the Republika Srpska, concerning use of the word “Muslim” to refer to an ethnic group. In 2014, the amendment to the BiH constitution related to the “Sejdic-Finci” court case was also dropped from the list of conditions required to unlock the SAA.
to the EU market almost entirely without fees. In 2009, the U.S. and the E.U. attempted to reform the constitution in BiH once more in a series of discussions referred to as the “Butmir Process,” which included proposals similar to those introduced in 2006. The goals of the Butmir Process were to empower the Prime Minister, and disempower the House of Peoples, in order to reduce it to a committee of the House of Representatives. The same year, the European Commission (EC) allocated nearly 90 million euros to BiH under the 2009 Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) program. These meetings added to the level of political deadlock in BiH at the time, which carried over into the 2010 elections, held in October.

As highlighted in the previous chapter, the re-election of Željko Komšić to the Presidency as the Croat representative was additional fuel for discourse, and rhetoric calling for a “third entity” by the Croats and secession by the Serbs persisted. While both Komšić and the Bosniak representative Bakir Izetbegović were reported to be moderate candidates, the parties elected at the entity level, including Milorad Dodik winning the Presidency of the Republika Srpska, were less cooperative, and a national government was not immediately formed. Seven months after the elections, only the government of Republika Srpska was ready, and discussions among the parties attempting to form a coalition in the Federation had stalled. On March 17, 2011, two Muslim parties and a Croat party formed a coalition in an attempt to bypass the parties who had failed to do so, but the electoral commission ruled that they had formed illegally. High Representative Valentin Inzko overturned this decision, which was followed by a response by nine Croat parties who issued a joint statement that said, “Inzko’s move reduced [Bosnian] Croats to ‘lower than a national minority’ and that it favour[ed] the Muslim majority.” In the city of Mostar, considered by nationalists the “Croat capital” in BiH, Bosnian Croat parties

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75 The 2009 IPA Programme was also intended to alleviate the impact of the financial crisis in BiH.
established a Croat National Assembly.\textsuperscript{76}

Meanwhile, the National Assembly in the Republika Srpska started to debate the legitimacy of the state-level judicial institutions, and President Dodik began to call for a referendum to abolish the federal court and State Prosecutor’s Office. He accused these institutions of an anti-Serb bias, and of undermining Republika Srpska’s autonomy.\textsuperscript{77} Eight months after the general elections, the country formed a Parliamentary Assembly, and Dodik announced that the Republika Srpska would seek to challenge several legal developments in Sarajevo.\textsuperscript{78} At the PIC Steering Board meeting in May 2011, High Representative Inzko reported that the political parties were employing zero-sum politics, and that the country was facing the highest tensions since the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords.\textsuperscript{79} In September 2011, the office of European Union Special Representative (EUSOR) was opened, and was assigned with helping BiH progress towards EU membership. This was previously the responsibility of the OHR, now tasked with monitoring the implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords.\textsuperscript{80}

The same year, the International Crisis Group reported that Republika Srpska President Milorad Dodik’s anti-reformist stance was potentially motivated by concerns that state prosecutors would indict him for corruption, or mis-use of office.\textsuperscript{81} And not to single out Dodik, the leader of the Alliance for a Better Future of BiH (SBB-BiH), Fahrudin Radončić, was implicated in a corruption scandal involving the Federation Development Bank. Radončić is the founder of BiH’s largest newspaper, the Dnevni Avaz, and has used the platform to wage a

\textsuperscript{77} Mujanovic (2014) ibid. Pg. 114.
\textsuperscript{79} ibid.
\textsuperscript{80} ibid.
media attack against the federal authorities. Similarly, Dragan Čović, the *current* Croat representative to the Presidency, was sentenced to five years in prison in 2006, for abuse of office during his time as Finance Minister of the Federation. Čović appealed the 2006 conviction, and as of 2011, the case had only just returned to the courts. Croat media sources in BiH have portrayed Čović’s legal troubles as a “Bosniak-orchestrated witch-trial.”

More recently, Dodik has been embroiled in a case regarding financial crimes related to a real-estate purchase in Belgrade, and the State Prosecutor’s Office is currently investigating associated individuals and institutions. The same can be said for Radončić, who was arrested in January of this year for allegedly tampering with a witness in a trial in Kosovo dealing with one of the leading criminals in the Balkans. Although these recent developments are not outright convictions of guilt, they do provide insight into the state of the rule of law in BiH. Similarly, the behavior and actions of elites set an example for the rest of society.

As can be seen, corruption, defined by Gupta as “a violation of norms and standards of conduct,” remains a problem in BiH, and many high-ranking officials are reported to have gained their status and wealth during the course of the war. Reports in 2011 estimated BiH was losing approximately 340 million dollars a year in international and local investment, and this number was predicted to grow in 2012. The EU has attempted to tackle this problem by strengthening state-level law enforcement agencies, but official support and public faith in these remains

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Anthropologists interested in the existence of informal networks have commented that informal networks during socialism were often necessary to gain access to a variety of public goods, as well as entrance to a university or a job. Sampson, in particular, notes that the “same informal relations which inhibit institutions from functioning are those which have enabled Balkan peoples to survive subjugation by foreign powers, authoritarian politicians, and countless wars and betrayals.” It is possible to say that informal networks during socialism were not strictly oppositional to formal bureaucratic institutions, they were somewhat complementary. In addition, anthropological research on corruption reveals that the practice exists in varying forms and to varying degrees; the partition between formal and informal is not strictly dichotomous.

Developmental desires

The successes and failures of the post-2006 reform period indicate Bosnia-Herzegovina is undergoing what Carothers refers to as a “non-linear” transition towards socio-economic democratization. On the other hand, Timothy Donais states that the reform record in BiH “raises questions about the extent to which reforms aimed at advancing the rule of law…can be a cause, rather than a consequence, of broader socio-political change, particularly in contexts where domestic political actors possess robust powers of veto.” While the International Community has worked to strengthen the state-level institutions, it is important to see that

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87 Transparency International’s 2015 Corruption Perceptions Index ranks BiH as 76th out of 168 countries and territories, and reports a score of 38/100 for the perceived level of public sector corruption. In 2011, BiH ranked 91st, which implies there has been some success at curtailing corruption. Retrieved on 19 April 2016, from http://www.transparency.org/cpi2015#results-table.


relatively little has been done to foster a true democratic society.

Perhaps, as David Chandler suggests, there is a mis-match between the goals of the organizations working in BiH, and the interests of the Bosnian society.\textsuperscript{91} Chandler notes that the military and humanitarian intervention in Bosnia-Herzegovina was the first major project since the U.S.-led occupations of Germany and Japan following WWII. As a result, Bosnia-Herzegovina emerged as “a template for new experiments in international administration and external assistance in state reconstruction and post-conflict reconciliation.”\textsuperscript{92} However, as Gagnon states:

There is very little evidence that the wider population supported wholesale adoption of the kind of neoliberal capitalism that would come to dominate Western policy toward the region, with its focus on rapid and widespread privatization of state enterprises at the cost of jobs and social stability, and the reduction or elimination of state intervention in the economy. Their preference ranged from a more democratic and efficient form of the existing socialist system at the end of 1980 to the desire for a social market system, that is, a capitalist economy, but with the state assuring priority goals of social justice and full employment, by the end of the 1990s.\textsuperscript{93}

Nevertheless, international actors such as the Office of the High Representative (OHR), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the UN Mission in BiH (UNMBiH), and numerous international NGOs, including USAID, Save the Children, and Red Cross have worked to promote civil society, largely by providing financial support to local grassroots organizations.\textsuperscript{94} According to Thomas Carothers, local organizations in BiH receiving international support can be divided into two broad categories—democracy NGOs and development NGOs.\textsuperscript{95} Democracy NGOs are devoted to issues such as human rights and the environment, while development NGOs seek to empower the population in order to build a civil

\textsuperscript{93} Gagnon, V. (2004), ibid. Pg. 183 n2.
society and functioning state. Patrice McMahon reports that most of the NGOs receiving international support in BiH are development NGOs, and it is difficult to assess the effects of this strategy on democratization. In addition, organizations allied with the nationalist parties further deter those wishing to avoid ties to them. Figures from 2000 provide a glimpse into the types of organizations present in BiH at the time:

By 1999, over 173 international and 365 local NGOs, intergovernmental organizations, foreign embassies, and government ministries were involved in civil society work, with more than 200 of these groups identifying civil society as a specific category of their work.

In 2000, over one hundred of these groups were reported to be working on women’s issues, which included providing support for victims of violence and displacement, work training programs, and promoting awareness of women’s rights. On the other hand, McMahon reports that while scores of NGOs were created in BiH in the initial post-war period, many have since collapsed, and this has left the remaining organizations competing for international support when they could be working together towards similar objectives. He explains that this is troublesome because it contributes to new hierarchies among communities, with those organizations who are supported at the top, and those who are not at the bottom.

Recent Developments

Bosnia-Herzegovina experienced a series of unrests, beginning in June 2013, and while the country’s leaders have renewed their commitments to work towards EU membership, the unrests deserve a closer look because for the most part they did not arise out of ethnic

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96 Ibid., 214-215.
97 McMahon, P. C. Ibid. Pg. 577
98 Ibid.
100 Ibid.
differences, but out of joint economic struggles. The November 2013 Security Council Report for BiH states that unrests began when the ruling parties failed to pass legislation on national identification numbers, as a result of which ID documents could not be issued for new-born babies:

Frustration boiled over when a three-month-old girl, who later died on 15 October, could not go to Germany for medical treatment because a passport could not be obtained for her. On 6 June, demonstrators surrounded the parliament building in Sarajevo, trapping more than 1,000 lawmakers, government employees and foreign visitors inside until early morning hours the next day.  

The failure to pass legislation stemmed from a dispute between Bosniak, Croat, and Serb lawmakers in BiH’s central parliament. Bosniak and Croat legislators had rejected Serb demands for separate identification numbers, as the goal was to pass a national law ID law. Meanwhile, the Constitutional Court of BiH ordered a halt to the registration of newborns until the dispute was settled. This left all babies born since February 2013 without identity numbers, which meant they could not be issued passports or medical cards. While an ID law was passed in the lower house of the legislature on July 18, 2013, it was rejected in the upper house five days later. A revised version of the ID law was passed on November 5, one that “bowed to the demands of Bosnia’s autonomous Serb Republic.”

Larger protests occurred in February 2014, which swept across the country. The second wave of unrest began on February 5, when residents in Tuzla demonstrated with former workers of five recently privatized and declared bankrupt factories. Protests spread to other large cities in BiH, including Sarajevo, Mostar, Zenica, and Bihac. The reasons for the protests in these areas

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also included high unemployment and political corruption. The May 2014 Security Council Report for BiH states that protestors set fire to the Sarajevo cantonal government headquarters and the Presidency building on February 7, and in total, eighteen government buildings across the Federation of BiH were “razed.”\textsuperscript{104} However, after the initial wave of demonstrations, gatherings were more peaceful.

On February 11, 2014, the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council issued a statement denouncing the violence and destruction of the protests, but called on local leaders to consider the protestors’ legitimate demands. The February protests resulted in the resignation of four cantonal governments, most notably the Tuzla government. The protests also resulted in the creation of forums in public areas of cities and towns in the Federation of BiH, locally referred to as “plenums,” in which citizens continued to discuss the problems facing their communities.

Later that year, Bosnia-Herzegovina suffered severe floods, which displaced more than 90,000 people, and resulted in approximately $2.5 billion in damages.\textsuperscript{105} The floods were followed by an upsurge in grassroots relief organizations, but also both local and international criticism of the government’s handling of the relief efforts.\textsuperscript{106}

Bosnia-Herzegovina held its seventh general elections on October 12, 2014, and a cabinet was formed approximately six months later. Milorad Dodik was re-elected to the Presidency of the Republika Srpska, but his pro-secession party, the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD), was weakened at the national level and was not part of the cabinet for the first time since 2006. Dragan Čović, leader of the pro-third-entity Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ BiH),


\textsuperscript{106} ibid.
replaced moderate Željko Komšić as the Croat representative to the Presidency. In December 2014, the EU Foreign Affairs Council, spearheaded by a German-British initiative, in accordance with a renewed commitment on the part of BiH’s newly elected leaders, agreed to unlock the SAA, and move forward with BiH’s EU membership process.\textsuperscript{107} This turn-around was partly in response to the violent protests the previous year, as well as the floods. While agreements to implement reforms were quickly agreed to on paper, little actual progress was attained the following year. For instance, BiH’s leaders have refused to update the SAA trade quotas to reflect traditional trade with Croatia as part of EU trade, now that Croatia is a member-state. It has been reported that the refusal is out of concern that doing so would negatively impact small-scale farmers.\textsuperscript{108}

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have attempted to demonstrate that there is an incompatibility between the EU state-building project in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the desires of the country’s ethno-national leaders. While Bosnia-Herzegovina’s government has made renewed commitments to work towards EU membership, resistance to the EU goals remains strong, particularly on the part of Bosnian Croat and Serbs nationalists. Ethno-national leaders have used the power-sharing mechanisms established in the Dayton Peace Accords, such as the “vital national interest” veto, to resist reforms intended to empower the national government, and to retain a weak state. The International Community (EU, SB PIC) in BiH has at times used the OHR and the higher courts to enforce legal changes, but the direct international involvement has been criticized by ethno-


\textsuperscript{108} It is worthwhile to note that no agricultural census has been undertaken in BiH for more than 50 years; as a result, there are few statistical indicators on agriculture.
national leaders and targeted in their campaigns for reelection. While the citizens of BiH are once again primarily concerned with high unemployment and the economy, the country’s ruling elites have been more concerned with using their time in the political spotlight, as well as their influence over media and wider resources, largely as a way to distract from important matters while they further their own agendas. Due to the political and economic stagnancy, Bosnia-Herzegovina’s citizens continue to seek opportunities outside of the country.

The history of reform efforts indicates that the solutions to the political and economic stagnancy in BiH are not as simple as creating institutions. However, it remains to be seen if the EU’s approach will be modified. Improvements in other areas of life, including education, must occur if Bosnia-Herzegovina’s citizens are to undergo genuine reconciliation, and if they are expected to compete in the European market. Though the EU has made education reform a prerequisite for membership, and while certain education reform laws have been passed, ethno-national resistance to the implementation of these laws has enabled education to remain divided throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina, and most visibly between Bosniaks and Croats in the Federation. As will be discussed more in the next chapter, this allows schools in Bosnia-Herzegovina to become private spaces used for the reproduction of ethno-national identities, rather than as forums for cohesion and the interaction of a common citizenry.
CHAPTER III: ETHNICALLY-DIVIDED EDUCATION AND RESISTANCE TO REINTEGRATION: AN UPDATE ON “TWO SCHOOLS UNDER ONE ROOF” IN BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Introduction

In this chapter, I explore ethnically-divided education in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and more specifically, ethno-national resistance to reforms targeted at the “two schools under one roof” program in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Divided education came to exist in BiH following the break-up of Yugoslavia and the war of the 1990s, during which ethno-national leaders and their forces directed violence in BiH and effectively suppressed opposition parties and the civilian population into bases of support while they secured state enterprises through the economic liberalization of the region.

The Dayton Peace Accords brought an end to the violence in 1995, but also created a state with power-sharing structures based on the ethno-national and territorial divisions generated during the war. In practice, this means that institutions in Bosnia-Herzegovina reflect those divisions, which fails to take into account that identity is not static, and has resulted in a fragmented government that has been unable, and perhaps even unwilling, to respond to the changing needs of its citizens. In addition, the power-sharing mechanisms have enabled ethno-national leaders to resist reform efforts and maintain the present arrangements. Resistance to reform efforts has enabled ethnically-divided education and the “two schools under one roof” program to continue, which further encourages spatial divisions. In this chapter, I argue that ethnically-divided education in BiH, and the “two schools under one roof” program in particular, allows schools to become private spaces that are used for the reproduction of ethno-national identities rather than as forums for cohesion and the interaction of a common citizenry.
Background
Pre-war and Post-war Education

Before delving into details about the “two-schools under one roof” program, it is necessary to provide some information about the pre-war system of education in Bosnia-Herzegovina. This will allow readers to see that although incompatibilities have been perpetuated as the norm, they are a development of the war. Insight into the pre-war system of education will allow readers to see how education became ethnically-tinged as divisions developed, and the ways in which schools became spaces used to dispute or support the post-war state.

Prior to the war, BiH was one of the more heterogeneous parts of Yugoslavia, and this extended into classrooms. Valerie Perry notes that the system of education was fairly uniform throughout Yugoslavia, and the socialist government used education to raise the literacy rate. Education was also used to promote Yugoslav “brotherhood and unity,” which was the notion that the various peoples across the republic could live and intermingle harmoniously. From 1945 until his death in 1980, Yugoslavia was led by Josip Broz Tito, who considered education an important tool for the reconstruction and development of the country in the aftermath of World War II. Tito’s death was felt throughout Yugoslavia, and afterwards, the country’s leaders began to face political and economic instability.

There were three official languages in the former Yugoslavia: Serbo-Croatian, Macedonian, and Slovenian, and nine national minority languages. Serbo-Croatian was the common language of Yugoslavia, but Macedonian and Slovenian were spoken in those republics.

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111 Hromadžić 2015. Pg. 46
The origins of Serbo-Croatian date back to the nineteenth-century linguist and Serb peasant Vuk Stefanović Karadžić. Karadžić, along with Croatian linguist and politician Ljudevit Gaj, saw the potential in the union of the Serbo-Croatian language as a “platform for the political unification of Serbs-under-Turks and Croats-under-Hungarians.”

The union of the two “was to serve as a cultural weapon in their struggle against the imperial rule of the Ottomans and Hapsburgs.” Furthermore, the union was based on the idea of a common Slavic ethnicity that would eventually develop a nation. This message resonated widely in Croatia and Serbia at the time, particularly due to resurgent nationalist fervors. The popular masses in both countries adopted Karadžić’s linguistic suggestions, and Serbo-Croatian was born. Nonetheless, some regional variations were preserved between and within the languages, and used as markers of different regions throughout Yugoslavia. For instance, Serbian variants used the Cyrillic alphabet, while Croatian variants used the Latin alphabet. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbo-Croatian was taught in all schools, and both alphabets were also used and taught.

When Yugoslavia began to dissolve at the beginning of the 1990s, the differences between the variants of Serbo-Croatian became emphasized by nationalists in Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. This led to the removal of the hyphen between the words “Serbo-” and “Croatian,” which also symbolized the fading of interconnectedness. Hromadžić notes that “linguistic methods” were used to both establish and prove the necessity for the right to difference. This was part of the ethnic elites’ ideology of cultural fundamentalism, which stressed the importance of distinctive cultural identities, as belonging to separate territories. As


113 Ibid.

114 Hromadžić 2015. Pg. 47.

115 Ibid.
discussed in the last chapter, following the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, ethno-national differences were formally recognized and institutionalized, which led to more changes in social and political relationships among the people. Serbo-Croatian was recognized as three separate languages: Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian, and additional linguistic practices were introduced and adopted to create distance between them.

For instance, Bosniaks and Croats stopped being educated in the Cyrillic alphabet, whereas Bosnian Serbs further emphasized the use of the Cyrillic alphabet and the adoption of a Serbian dialect, which wasn’t spoken by Bosnian Serbs prior to the war. In the case of Bosniaks, politicians and linguists primarily adopted one of two positions. The first position—that only Bosnian was spoken in Bosnia-Herzegovina—was refuted by the majority of non-Bosniak nationalists and linguists. The second position was a strategy to infuse the Bosnian language with elements of Turkish—either direct words or certain pronunciations. One example was the insertion of the letter “h” at the beginning of many words, that had allegedly “lost” their “h” in the course of history, and as the Ottoman empire’s influence in Bosnian culture was downplayed.\textsuperscript{116} The language of Croats, similar to that of Serbs and Serbian, became a symbol of Croat nationhood, and use of the language indicated belonging to the Croatian people.

In addition to changes in linguistic practices, religion in BiH experienced a revival after the dissolution of Yugoslavia. During the socialist period, the place and role of religion was perceived as traditionalistic and incompatible with the progressive thinking of the time by Yugoslavia’s Communist leaders.\textsuperscript{117} On the other hand, the Communist leaders also understood the historical and cultural significance of religion, as it related to the national sentiments of the

\textsuperscript{116} Hromadić 2015. Pg. 48.
South Slavic peoples. As Yugoslavia dissolved, and as local ethnic elites sought to mobilize the emerging nations through discourses of ethnic purity and cultural fundamentalism, religious communities were seen as protectors of national heritage and values, and provided institutional and symbolic support to their political entrepreneurs. As a result, the mobilizing discourses of the elites became further articulated in ethno-religious, rather than democratic-political terms.\footnote{118} Religion became politicized and ethnicized, and ethnic and religious identities collapsed into each other.

In other words, religion became a tool for mobilization against “ethnic others.” As R. Scott Appleby has noted: “the seeds of Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian religiosity were not stamped out under communist rule, even among so-called secularized masses; but neither were they nurtured. Scattered and left untended, they were eventually planted in the crude soil of ethno-nationalism.”\footnote{119} Abazovic explains that although the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina was not strictly a religious conflict, shifting perceptions regarding religion’s role in life “made religious sites targets of actual and symbolic violence.”\footnote{120} After the war, religion became an important part of social life, which affected the way it was taught in schools. Perry notes that religion classes have been taught more as faith formation classes, rather than simply as an academic subject, and while religion classes are optional, children may feel pressured by mentors and peers to attend.\footnote{121} In addition, in an in depth analysis of textbooks of religious education for primary schools, Aid Smajić reports that textbooks of all three major confessions, “be it Catholic, Orthodox or

\footnote{118} Ibid. 
\footnote{120} Abazovic (2010) ibid. Pg. 39 
Islamic,” contain some degree of negative portrayals of members of the other two confessions.\textsuperscript{122}

Furthermore, Valerie Perry notes that as education became fragmented, it led to different interpretations of the past:

In BiH, each of the three constituent peoples has their own preferred interpretations of history, with the Bosnian Croat view influenced by Zagreb and the Bosnian Serb view by Belgrade. The Bosniak frame of reference is different, as the Bosnian Muslims do not have a kin-state. They have therefore been more amenable to new texts, while maintaining an interest in the role that the Ottoman empire played in shaping the culture of BiH.\textsuperscript{123}

While Bosnian Croats look to Croatia and Bosnian Serbs look to Serbia, it is fair to say that present-day Turkey plays a role similar to that of a kin-state for some Bosniaks, as exemplified during a 2008 Euro Cup qualifications match between Turkey and Croatia, during which Bosnian Croats visibly cheered for Croatia, while Bosniaks instead cheered for Turkey.\textsuperscript{124}

An example of Turkey’s influence that I encountered during my study in Central Bosnia was a scenario in which donated funds had been utilized at a local elementary school for renovations to Bosniak classrooms, but not Croat ones. These classrooms were on the first floor, and designated for students from a neighboring town because there was not enough space in the combined primary-secondary school building in that town. While Bosniak students have gained access to this building, their classrooms exist as a separate entity within its walls. In addition, these students attend a mid-day shift, whereas local students attend morning and afternoon shifts. Though it is true that some of these arrangements are due to a lack of space, it is clear that there have been efforts to maintain the separation.

\textsuperscript{123} Perry (2003). Pg. 35.
\textsuperscript{124} I visited Central Bosnia during the month leading up to this event, but on the day this match took place, I was on my flight back to the U.S. Later, I read that there were fights between opposing groups of fans in areas of the Federation after Croatia was defeated, as well as clashes with police in certain areas. There have been more recent displays of nationalism in soccer throughout the region, which have not gone unnoticed.
Ethnically-divided Education

Ethnically-divided education came to exist in Bosnia-Herzegovina as a result of the ethno-national and territorial divisions of the war, but also because of Annex 7 in the Dayton Peace Accords, which provides refugees and displaced persons the right to return to their former homes, without undermining their constitutive status. Although this initially encouraged returnees, the post-war bitterness also fostered the creation of separate spaces and forms of education, unwelcoming to the “other.” In addition, returnee numbers were lower than expected, which disrupted plans for the eventual reintegration of classrooms and curriculums. Many displaced persons did not return due to safety concerns, and many who had settled in wealthier countries did not feel a desire to return to the insecurity in BiH. Those who did return to their former homes confronted various circumstances, including changes to local governmental structures and educational institutions.

As a result, education is highly decentralized in Bosnia-Herzegovina and there are 14 ministries of education: two entity ministries, ten cantonal ministries, a separate administration for education in the District of Brčko, and a ministry at the state level, which acts as a loose coordinating mechanism. Conversely, in the Republika Srpska, education is highly centralized, due to the Serb majority. As a result, education in this entity follows a Serb curriculum, and has been less contested. Meanwhile, governments in each canton in the Federation are obliged to transfer control of education to municipalities in areas where the majority population of a

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125 The Dayton Peace Accords http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/icty/dayton/daytonaccord.html
126 See Halilovich (2014)
127 Pašalić-Kreso (2008 Pg. 364) states: “Each area had chosen its own curricula and teaching methods and if these refugees were not part of the majority population in that area, their options were limited to choosing between total assimilation and complete rejection.”
municipality differs from the majority population of the entire canton. Similar to the Republika Srpska, education is not contested in ethnically homogenous parts of the Federation, but in areas where control has been transferred to municipalities, ethnically homogenous schools are able to embrace a mono-ethnic curriculum. In the separate curriculums, Croat schools use textbooks that are developed in Croatia, Serbs use textbooks from Serbia, and Bosniaks use textbooks developed in BiH.

In addition to separate curriculums, referred to as programs, Gordana Božić lists three types of ethnically-divided education that exist in post-war BiH: “(1) “two schools under one roof,” (2) busing children to monoethnic schools, (3) and the teaching of so-called national subjects.” According to Valerie Perry, the national subjects are history, language (mother tongue) geography, art, literature, and music. In more recent discussions, primarily history, language, and geography have been listed as the national subjects most contested. The idea of the national subjects was created by the OHR, and intended to facilitate the reintegration of non-national subjects, but it instead increased tensions. In addition, when the OHR introduced the idea of reintegrating certain classes, but not the national subjects, it failed to fully consider that all lessons are taught in national languages. This has allowed individual subjects, even those such as chemistry, physics, and mathematics, to be used for the “protection” of national identity. The national subjects are taught primarily in the Republika Srpska, in areas with significant numbers of Bosniak returnees. Bosniak students study the Serb curriculum in classrooms with

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128 Section V Article 2 of the Constitution of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina: http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,NATLEGBOD,,BIH,,3ae6b56e4,0.html
130 ibid., Pg. 326-7.
132 Božić 2006. Pg. 329.
133 Methadzovic, A., Silverman, Carol, & Vakareliyska, Cynthia. (2012). Segregated Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. Pg. 43.
Bosnian Serb students, but are then separated for the national subjects. The national subjects are also taught in the Federation, but in this case they are used primarily for Serb returnees.

In response to slow reconstruction in the aftermath of the war, “two schools under one roof” emerged in the FBiH as a temporary solution advocated by the U.S. and the EU. It enabled the shared use of resources by Bosniaks and Croats in the mixed areas of the Federation, but it did not facilitate the shared use of classrooms or curriculums. In 2002, the OSCE, initially tasked with monitoring elections in BiH, began to focus state-level education reforms. Reform efforts comprised three areas: technical, curricular, and legislative. In 2003, the OSCE reported that there were fifty-seven “two schools under one roof,” located predominantly in three cantons: Central Bosnia, Herzegovina Neretva, and Zenica–Doboj. Though the number of these schools seems small, they have posed a significant challenge to those working toward unified education.

Education Reform Efforts

One important event regarding education reform in BiH occurred in 2005, when the High Representative at the time, Paddy Ashdown, removed Nikola Lovrinović from his position as the Minister of Education in the Central Bosnia Canton for failure to adopt the Applicable Laws, which unified the legal and administrative aspects of “two schools under one roof.” The official document states that education reform is necessary for ensuring sustainable peace and realizing BiH’s hopes of joining the European Union, and Mr. Lovrinović obstructed this process by

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refusing to implement the legislation in schools in his jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{137} The document also notes that the Croat delegates in the Assembly of the Central Bosnia canton had invoked the “vital national interest” veto, regarding the laws, but the Constitutional Court of the Federation of BiH, did not find that the laws undermined Croats’ constitutive status. Afterwards, Mr. Lovrinović issued a “Standpoint on authentic interpretation,” which he described as a request for further clarification regarding certain provisions in the Applicable Laws.\textsuperscript{138} The OHR interpreted the standpoint as a refusal to cooperate, and his removal was announced several days later. In an interview with the “Vecernji List” Foreign Press Office in Mostar, Mr. Lovrinović had the following to say:

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to work as two independent schools. To combine them would mean violating European standards and rules not encompassed by last year’s imposed Law on Primary and Secondary Education. Moreover, that would violate the wishes of parents who want a curriculum in their mother tongue.

Mr. Lovrinović went on to say that he did not believe he was an obstacle to the rule of law in the Central Bosnia Canton. In addition, he said it would make him happy if someone could tell him where else in BiH could the constituent peoples exercise their right to schooling in their “mother tongue?” What of the rights of Croats in Sarajevo, or of Croats and Bosniaks in the Republika Srpska? These questions are nearly-identical to ones I received, albeit rhetorically, from Croat participants during my study. An Evaluation Report, commissioned by the OSCE in 2006, stated: “In this two-under-one system, everything is duplicated, e.g. there are two directors, two teachers’ councils, two student councils, two curricula and separate textbooks in the national languages, etc.” In 2007, the Minister of Education who replaced Nikola Lovrinović in the Central Bosnia Canton, Greta Kuna, a member of the Croat Democratic Union (HDZ BiH), said:

“There are two schools, and two school curriculums. One curriculum is taught in the basement, and the other is taught on the first floor. I think that the fact that there are two schools under one roof is not problematic at all. It is a sort of unification, a reduction of costs. You know, pears and apples should not join together; pears should be with pears; apples with apples.”

These words were interpreted differently by Bosniaks and Croats in the Central Bosnia Canton, but controversial to the public in any case. Those who favored unification, primarily Bosniaks, argued the minister had spoken of dividing children as if they were pears and apples, whereas

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139 It is worth recalling that education is not contested in homogenous parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina because there is no “ethnic other” to demand a separate program. Bosniak preferences are more in line with those of the IC: integration and a strong state government. A centralized and integrated state would grant Bosniaks a majority status in BiH, whereas Croats prefer a decentralized state in order to maintain their constitutive status. At the same time, because education is highly centralized in the Republika Srpska, the same circumstances do not exist: there is no transfer of control of education to municipalities, or “two schools under one roof.”
those who favored separation, primarily Croats, argued the comparison was a reference to the curriculums, and not to the students.\textsuperscript{142} Still, it is possible to see that Croat leaders in the Central Bosnia Canton, which has the highest number of schools that operate the “two schools under one roof” program, have been resistant to reforms.

Nevertheless, some reforms were achieved during this time, including the administrative reunifications of the Mostar Gymnasium (a well-known high school), and schools in the Zenica-Doboj Canton.\textsuperscript{143} A Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education was passed in 2003, which standardized primary and secondary school requirements and mandated a core curriculum.\textsuperscript{144} However, a core curriculum was not actually designed and implemented, but rather, similarities in all three curriculums were identified and labeled as the core curriculum. The OSCE also produced educational materials for students and officials, including schoolbooks and instruction manuals, as a way to supplement the mono-ethnic curriculums. Hromadžić states, however, that formal reunification efforts subsided after the Mostar Gymnasium success in 2005, primarily because the OSCE did not want to further exacerbate Croat-Bosniak tensions.\textsuperscript{145}

In 2010 The Parliament of the FBiH adopted a resolution which established multiethnic administrative systems, but most saw changes as unlikely. Only a few schools complied with the mandate. In more recent years, the OSCE has focused on “field-level, apolitical projects…in the absence of political will for the implementation of systemic reforms.”\textsuperscript{146} Still, the “two schools

\textsuperscript{142} Methadzovic, A. (2012). Pg. 39.
under one roof” program reinforces separate identities rather than a united citizenry, and resistance to reintegration and reform efforts further realizes the wartime divisions.

It bears mentioning that the District of Brčko, located in the northeast part of BiH can be considered to have an integrated system of education. As discussed in the previous chapter, the District of Brčko is a self-governing region, with its own leader, known as the Brčko District Supervisor. The office of BD Supervisor was established in 1997, after which the region was demilitarized, and economically and socially developed.147 Perry reports that the BD Supervisor began to work on education reform for the region in 1999, and after a couple of years of resistance on the part of Bosnian Serbs and local politicians, the BD Supervisor enforced a single Law on Education and standardized the curriculum.148 Integration began with first year students, and was successfully expanded and completed over the next four years. It was not an entirely smooth process, but Perry elaborates that the Law on Education imposed four principles:

1. Freedom of pupils to express themselves on their own language. 2. Issuance of school documents in the language and alphabet as requested by a pupil. 3. Appropriate ethnic composition of teachers for the instruction of national group subjects. 4. Use of existing textbooks in line with harmonized curriculum.149

Both Cyrillic and Latin alphabets are taught in Brčko schools, and a weekly rotation between the two takes place. Finally, national subjects are taught in ethnically-divided classrooms, while other subjects are taught in mixed classrooms. While Perry does not think that this model is transferrable to other parts of BiH, largely due to the political circumstances, it may offer insight for further curriculum harmonization efforts throughout the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

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147 Perry (2003). Pg. 77.
148 Ibid. Pg. 78.
149 Ibid. Pg. 79.
Things to Consider

Most of the literature on education in Bosnia-Herzegovina calls for systemic reform and European standardization, but it does not necessarily provide insight into students’ views on the importance of secondary education in the current political and economic climate the country faces. Azra Hromadžić spent a year observing classroom interactions at the Mostar Gymnasium and became familiar with the savviness the students exhibited when it came to cheating on exams. She reports that students used traditional methods such as small scraps of paper that they would prepare during breaks, but they also adopted more sophisticated methods through the use of technology and “bugs.” Hromadžić’s participants report that teachers made them memorize useless information, and held them accountable for knowing this material in oral examinations. Her participants explained to her that they didn’t think they were being immoral by cheating, they were being rational considering the rampant corruption in the public sector, education included. They detailed how some of their classmates’ parents had connections and simply purchased diplomas for their children, which enabled them to get into prestigious colleges outside of BiH, while other students struggled to pass complicated and information-laden exams.

Hromadžić writes that while cheating was present in the pre-war system, today’s situation differs slightly. In the socialist system, students would be in the same class from the start of their education, until they finished secondary school. They spent many years learning together, and cheating in these instances served to enhance solidarity among the students, whereas in the present situation, the neoliberal context places more emphasis on the individual, and so students use cheating as a means to get ahead and create opportunities for themselves. In prior times,

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150 Cheating Citizens and Their Democratic Predicament in Postwar and Postsocialist Bosnia and Herzegovina. Azra Hromadžić. Forthcoming publication.
cheating served to elevate the status of the entire class; students helped one of their own so they would all progress. Meanwhile, today’s students use cheating as a means to make it through to graduation, so that they can go and live better lives in better circumstances. Hromadžić states that the students are quite aware of the precarity of the Bosnian situation, and they understand that the current system is not preparing them to take charge.

In her research, Hromadžić explored mixing between students in the Mostar Gymnasium and reports on the use of informal spaces for inter-ethnic mixing. She describes spending time with mixed groups of students, who interact by smoking cigarettes together in the bathroom during breaks, and drinking coffee before and after school. In the account Hromadžić provides, it is evident that students find ways to interact, but this does not mean that reform is not needed.

Meanwhile, Komatsu notes that school directors in Bosnia-Herzegovina can act as facilitators between members of the school board and the community at large. They can encourage dialogue and consultation between participants rather than simply mediate their differences. He indicates that the level of independence that school directors may feel that they have represents the pre-war system, which influences how they perceive the school board—they may see it as merely a “council of teachers”—while they are the true professionals. Komatsu concludes that it would be advantageous to offer further training to school directors, so that they can, in turn, offer training to school board members. He notes that school directors can deepen their understanding of shared school governance and social cohesion if they were primarily responsible for training the school board members in doing so as well. Still, it is important not to

153 Ibid. 2014, Pg. 25.
overestimate the level of agency that school directors have in the local context. They must also tread cautiously, to avoid being seen as political pawns.

Recent Developments

In 2011, an NGO known as Vaša Prava, (Your Rights) filed lawsuits against the educational ministries in the Herzegovina Neretva and Central Bosnia Cantons, claiming that there were discriminatory policies in place due to the division of students along ethnic lines through the “two schools under one roof” program. The Mostar Municipal Court in the Herzegovina Neretva Canton ruled in favor of Vaša Prava, and stated: “the policy of division can only enhance prejudice and intolerance towards others, and lead to further ethnic isolation.”

The verdict was appealed by the Court of the Herzegovina Neretva Canton, which overturned the ruling, claiming that the statute of limitations had expired in the case. In addition to the case being overturned in the Herzegovina Neretva Cantonal Court, the Court of Travnik in the Central Bosnia Canton also overturned the decision.

However, in October 2014, the Supreme Court in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina ruled that the statue of limitations had not expired, and upheld the Mostar Municipal Court’s decision. The Supreme Court found that “organizing school systems based on ethnic background and implementing curriculums on ethnic principles” was discriminatory.

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156 Ibid.
This ruling was welcomed by Vaša Prava, as well as the Federation’s Minister of Education and Science, Damir Mašić, who said:

“The verdict’s aim is that the Federation, after more than a decade of divisions and the separation of children, will have a chance to reinstate a system which has existed for centuries, which is for children to live with one another and spend time together.”

He explained, however, that the responsibility to end the practice of dividing students lies with the authorities in the ten cantons that make up the Federation, and not with the Federation officials. On the other hand, Federation officials can advocate and assist cantonal ministries in ending the practice.

In December 2015, Radio Free Europe featured a report on “two schools under one roof” in the Central Bosnian city of Vitez, which contained a brief remark from the current Minister of Education for the Central Bosnia Canton, Katica Čerkez, in which she reiterated that Bosnia-Herzegovina is a country with three constitutive peoples, three official languages, and that the system of education is a reflection of the legal framework of Bosnia-Herzegovina, so the interests of both children and their parents are satisfied, and so children are able to obtain an education in the program they and their parents prefer. She repeats that, this is a result of the legal framework of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which generated the current system. After the Minister is shown, a local father who recalls a system without separation says children are divided at the age of seven until they are adults, so how can they hope for some sort of unity, when all they know is division? Still, another parent says that the school situation does not have an effect on who their child forms friendships with, and with whom the child has contact. The report concludes by showing ethno-national graffiti on the school’s exterior.

In March 2016, Minister Čerkez stated that discriminations stemming from the “two schools under one roof” program do not exist in the Central Bosnia Canton.\textsuperscript{158} While it may be possible to say that there is a harmonious overlap of students notwithstanding the structural divisions, and that students may end up in mixed classrooms depending on availability of resources and study plan particularities, the minister’s statement is once again settled within the Dayton framework, and in protecting Croat autonomy. Still, the minister does say that education in Bosnia-Herzegovina is not on par with international standards, but that this is an inherited problem and progress is slow, “especially in Bosnia.”

Conclusion

As discussed in this chapter, the “two schools under one roof” program and ethnically-divided education came to exist in Bosnia-Herzegovina as a result of the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the 1990s war. Ethno-national and religious sentiments replaced the Yugoslav notions of brotherhood and unity, which were emphasized during the socialist period. I have attempted to provide a brief overview of this transition in order to demonstrate that although ethnic divisions have been perpetuated as the norm, they are a relatively recent development. While the international community works to implement changes from above, research indicates that there is not a one-size-fits-all solution to ethnic divisions in education in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The change in approach by the OSCE for instance, from direct involvement in reform efforts to a more a-political strategy, is worth noting.

Although Bosnia-Herzegovina’s leaders have made renewed commitments to work towards EU membership, whether they can agree to implement the necessary reforms remains to

be seen. As demonstrated in this chapter, resistance to reform and reintegration efforts has enabled ethnically-divided education and the “two schools under one roof” program to continue. This allows schools to become private spaces that are used for the reproduction of ethno-national identities rather than as forums for cohesion and the interaction of a common citizenry. In the next chapter, I explore the attitudes that Bosniaks and Croats in a mixed semi-rural town in the Central Bosnia Canton have towards the 2014 Supreme Court ruling, which found the “two schools under one roof” program unconstitutional, and provide an update on reform efforts in the country.
CHAPTER IV: RESPONSE TO THE 2014 SUPREME COURT RULING IN THE CENTRAL BOSNIA CANTON

Introduction

In this chapter, I explore the attitudes that Bosniaks and Croats in a semi-rural town in the Central Bosnia Canton have towards the 2014 Supreme Court ruling in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as education in BiH in general.\textsuperscript{159} I provide a brief overview of my interactions with four individuals with ties to local schools, as well as with members of the general adult population. In addition, I provide a snapshot of the circumstances that students in this area face upon graduating from a system of ethnically-divided education. In doing so, I argue that the ethnically-divided system of education does not necessarily reflect the attitudes of the general population, and that there is a disconnect between the desires of ethno-national leaders and the concerns of citizens.

Although I was able to learn shortly after my arrival to the Central Bosnia Canton that no changes to the upcoming school year had been proposed by the Ministry of Education to in response to the 2014 Supreme Court ruling that found the practice of the “two schools under one roof” program discriminatory and unconstitutional, I still found it worthwhile to engage in discussions with participants about the court ruling and ethnically-divided education, due to the government’s renewed commitments to work towards European integration. As part of this commitment, BiH’s leaders have pledged to ensure that “access to all levels of education and training is free of any discrimination on the grounds of gender, color, ethnic origin or religion.”\textsuperscript{160} The division of children across ethnic lines, and particularly the existence of the


“two schools under one roof” program has been a consistent topic in meetings between EU and BiH authorities.161

This chapter also includes background information concerning the events of the war that took place in this part of Bosnia-Herzegovina, intended to show that the wartime divisions influence the attitudes of politicians and citizens in matters of reform and reintegration efforts. It can be said that the conflict in Central Bosnia differed slightly from the generally perceived conflict that occurred in Bosnia-Herzegovina, so discussions regarding reform and reintegration efforts may also differ.

Background

In order to understand the attitudes that Bosniaks and Croats in the Central Bosnia Canton have towards the 2014 Supreme Court ruling, and education in BiH in general, it is necessary to provide some background information about the fighting that took place between the Army of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina–ABiH and the Croatian Defence Council–HVO in this part of Bosnia-Herzegovina. This will help to define the divisions between Bosniaks and Croats as they exist in this area today, and perhaps enable readers to see why Croats have been more reluctant to work towards an integrated and centralized state. Although Bosnia-Herzegovina’s leaders have made further commitments to work towards EU membership, the events of the war remain in the recent past for many, which plays a part in whether reform efforts are adopted and implemented by local populations. At the same time, some background information about the war will help to provide insight into participants’ responses to this study.

161 ibid.
Charles Shrader writes that the civil war between the ABiH and the HVO in Central Bosnia was a war of logistics. The two factions fought for control of military industrial facilities in the region, as well as for control of lines of communication.\textsuperscript{162} Lines of communication included important roads linking ethnic enclaves together, as well as connections to the outside world. Shrader states that the ABiH wished to take the Lašva Valley so that Bosniak refugees from other parts of BiH could be settled there. The town of Busovaca, located in the Lašva Valley, was a political center for Bosnian Croats in Central Bosnia, and if the Croats from this area were expelled, then Bosniaks would have political control of the municipality.

In Yugoslavia, Bosnia-Herzegovina was considered the industrial sector. There were numerous production facilities located throughout the country. The majority were focused in the Lašva Valley in Central Bosnia, and some more were scattered along the borders of this region.\textsuperscript{163} North and south of the Lašva Valley were a series of military factories, which were all built and managed by the Yugoslav People’s Army (JNA). As Yugoslavia collapsed, the majority of the factories fell into the hands of the ABiH. These factories were located in Zenica, Konjic, Bugojno, Travnik, and Novi Travnik. However, the most important of these factories, the Slobodan Princip Seljo (SPS) factory, located in Vitez, remained in the control of the HVO throughout the conflict. The SPS factory was the only one of its kind in the Balkans, and was responsible for manufacturing military explosives necessary for the production of mortar and artillery shells. The factory was located west of Vitez, and it was the key to the chain of military

\textsuperscript{163} ibid. Pg. 18.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure1.png}
\caption{Croats (black) and Bosniaks (Gray) in BiH during 1993. White areas are Serb-controlled. The Lašva Valley lies in the area between Vitez and Kiseljak. (Source: \textit{Croatia.org})}
\end{figure}

Shrader notes that the fighting in the Lašva Valley was not the main conflict in BiH from 1992-1995, but it is an important one because such fierce fighting occurred in a small space and among close neighbors. Studying this conflict enables us to look at how wars are conducted in more modern and developed settings, as many skirmishes included fighting within towns and villages, in addition to the surrounding areas. When the Yugoslav/Serb forces attacked Croatia,
Bosnian Croats and Bosniaks began to get organized in case war broke out in Bosnia as well. The Bosnian Croats formed the Croatian Defence Council, first the civilian element on April 8, 1992, then the military element on May 15, 1992. Meanwhile, the majority of the former Yugoslav Territorial Defense forces and their resources were absorbed into the Army of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In Central Bosnia, Shrader states that the ABiH launched their initial attacks in January 1993, aiming to cut the Croat enclave in the Lašva Valley into several pockets, culminating in their forced surrender and exodus from the region. The attacks in January were designed to test the response of the Croat defenders, and they essentially worked, catching the Croats off guard in the northern parts of the Lašva Valley, as well as generally throughout. The HVO was able to prevent any major advancements during January, although their defense lines were only partially staffed and stretched thin. There were several incidents, such as kidnappings of prominent HVO officials by mujahideen soldiers, as well as small-scale exchanges of fire, which provoked tensions among the Bosniaks and Croats in Central Bosnia during the early months of 1993.

A cease-fire was established after the January attacks, but it was not closely followed by ABiH forces, something the HVO reported in the weeks leading up to the renewed ABiH offensive on April 15, 1993. The next day, the HVO forces launched a counterattack in the village of Ahmići and in other nearby areas, aimed at preventing the ABiH troops from regrouping. Shrader notes that the military aspect of the counterattack was successful, but the ensuing massacre of Bosniak civilians, as well as the destruction of the village, was an “unintended consequence” of the counterattack.\(^\text{165}\) Though his assessment is based on an analysis of the available communication records, as well as personal experience in the region during and

\(^{165}\) Shrader (2003). Pg. 92.
after the war, it is difficult to truly know what led to the events that transpired on that day. Several Bosnian Croat leaders were convicted of war crimes because of this incident, and it is the most cited of the events of the Muslim-Croat conflict in Central Bosnia.\textsuperscript{166} Another cease-fire was signed between the ABiH and the HVO in late April, and the two sides reassessed their positions.

Following the implementation of the cease-fire, the Bosnian Croat and Bosniak leaders agreed to follow human rights protocols, including care for the wounded, protection of civilians, and provisions for the exchange of prisoners. Colonel Blaskic issued a series of orders to his subordinates during the last weeks of April, urging them to follow the cease-fire agreement, but also to be on their guard.\textsuperscript{167} Due to the reports he was receiving from eyewitnesses, he believed the Bosniaks were not serious about following the cease-fire, so he communicated with the UN and EC leaders in Central Bosnia, urging them to intervene in the matter.\textsuperscript{168}

Fighting broke out again during the first week of June, 1993, when the ABiH forces attacked the HVO in the town of Travnik, located in the northern part of the Lašva Valley, and forced them in the direction of the Serb forces, who took them prisoner. Similar, intense, small-scale conflicts continued to take place even as peace agreements developed. The Kula sector east of Busovaca fell to the ABiH during the month of June, as did other villages bordering the Lašva Valley. In August, 1993, Colonel Blaskic reported that the HVO situation was becoming critical. He issued an order calling for severe disciplinary measures to be taken against soldiers deserting their positions. The ABiH leaders met in Zenica in late August and discussed their plans for the continued offensive against the Croats in Central Bosnia. There was also some restructuring in

\textsuperscript{166} ibid.\textsuperscript{167} ibid. Pg. 124.\textsuperscript{168} ibid. Pg. 126.
the ABiH command, which led to more conservative individuals assuming control over the Bosniak forces surrounding the Croats in Central Bosnia.\textsuperscript{169}

The fighting continued during September, resembling trench-warfare, and calmed down during the month of October.\textsuperscript{170} In November, it erupted again, and this time, the SPS factory came under direct fire by the ABiH forces. In Vitez, fighting was intense during the fall of 1993, and the ABiH forces attempted to break the Croat pocket in two. They came close to doing so in early January, 1994, but they did not fully succeed. The HVO launched a series of counterattacks in the areas that were lost during the fall, and they regained some of the lost ground in late January.\textsuperscript{171} However, fighting between Bosniaks and Croats tapered off as the Washington Agreement was introduced in February 1994, and preparations were made for its signing. A cease-fire in accordance with the agreement was signed on February 23 in Zagreb, and implemented on February 25.\textsuperscript{172} When the Washington Agreement was signed, the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina was established, and the Muslim-Croat alliance was restored. This was the end of the open conflict between the two, and eventually the HVO was absorbed into the ABiH after the war ended.

As can be seen, the fighting in this area was especially heated from 1993-94, which, in addition to the continued political and economic problems, adds to the difficulty for those working towards reconciliation, reform, and reintegration. As discussed in earlier chapters, Croat nationalists have repeatedly argued for a third entity, and used the “vital national interest” veto to block reforms from implementation. Furthermore, the election of self-declared Bosnian Croat and member of the predominantly Bosnian-supported Social Democratic Party (SDP BiH) Željko

\textsuperscript{169} HQ, ECMM, (1993) Pg. 8-9.
\textsuperscript{171} Shrader (2003). Pg. 154.
\textsuperscript{172} Ibid. Pg. 159.
Komšić (rather than a nationalist) as the Croat representative to the Presidency in 2006, and his re-election in 2010, further upset Croats and caused them to stop cooperating on matters of reform. Croat nationalists argued that because Komšić was elected primarily by Bosniak votes, he was not a rightful representative, and their constitutive status was being undermined.

Ethnographic Study

On May 25, 2015, I flew to Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina and spent the next six weeks in a mixed, semi-rural town in the Central Bosnia Canton, gauging the response to the 2014 Supreme Court ruling in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina that found the “two schools under one roof” program unconstitutional, and ordered an end to its practice. It took me approximately two weeks after arriving to formulate an approach to interviews, and to begin meeting with individuals. During this time, I visited with family and friends who reside in the Central Bosnia area, and obtained their advice on possible candidates for potential interviews. For the first two weeks, I stayed at my uncle’s house, and I made an effort to help out with chores here and there while I established a daily routine, and adjusted to the area. While I had visited BiH several times after moving to the United States, I had never attempted to carry out a study, and this time around, my focus was not just personal. Because of this, I had to establish a way to keep my study-related interactions separate from my familial and social interactions, which also took a bit of planning.

After the first two weeks, I moved into an apartment in town, which belongs to a relative of mine who lives in Austria, and lived there by myself for the next month. I was fortunate to have the space and the resources to conduct additional research, as well as the solitude to reflect on the events of the day. After moving into the apartment, I read that the local primary school
planned to have a day where students and parents could come and buy/sell/exchange their schoolbooks, and I saw this as an opportunity to see if I could meet potential study participants with ties to the school.

Primary school visit

I walked to the school on the day of the sale, and saw that there was a small crowd of students in front of the building, gathered around a table with books on top of it. As I approached, I saw that there was an older student standing by the front doors, monitoring the gathering. I greeted this student and asked if the director was in, to which he replied that he was, and that he was possibly on the second floor. There was a teacher just inside the school who overheard us talking and she confirmed that the director was upstairs and offered to take me to him.

The teacher led me up to the second floor and the director was there, speaking with another teacher by the look of it, but he concluded shortly after we reached the landing. I introduced myself to the director, who looked not much older than me, and shared with him that I was from this area, but that I now lived in the United States, and attended school there. I explained the details of my study, making note of the literature I had read, as well as the news of the 2014 Supreme Court case, and asked if he might be able to tell me if he had heard about the court case. The director said he had heard about the initial Municipal Court case, and the subsequent case that overturned the ruling, but he did not mention the Supreme Court case. At this time, I had already been in the area for a few weeks, and it was somewhat apparent to me that the Central Bosnia Ministry of Education had not proposed any changes to the local schools to reflect the Supreme Court ruling so I did not ask the director if he was perhaps unaware of the
most recent court case. Instead, I asked if he might be willing to give me a brief tour of the building. As I described in the last chapter, this building operated the “two schools under one roof” program, and the Bosniak classrooms, located on the first floor, had been renovated through the use of funds from Turkey. Below is a photo of the exterior of the school.

![Photo of the exterior of the school](image)

*Figure 2. Primary school in the Central Bosnia Canton. Gymnasium attached. Author’s Photo.*

As can be seen in the photo, graffiti had been painted over in mismatched colors, leaving the underlying marks discernable from up-close. Shortly before my arrival to BiH, I read a brief report that the school had been broken into, which was confirmed to me by a relative, who suggested that I should have somebody arrange an introduction with the director in order to

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173 It is interesting that the director did not acknowledge the Supreme Court case, because neither did the Croat Minister of Education for the Central Bosnia Canton in an interview she gave to a local news program earlier this year (see previous chapter). Minister Čerkez also specifically recalled the Municipal Court case, and the Cantonal Court case which overturned it, and then indicated the matter was resolved. This indicates that Croats in the Central Bosnia Canton may not necessarily recognize the authority of the courts in Sarajevo, but instead look to the courts in the “Croat capital of BiH,” Mostar. It remains to be seen if the Supreme Court ruling will have any effect on the way education is carried out in the FBiH.

174 The underlying marks refer to a local Croat wartime leader.
avoid appearing suspicious. In any case, I did not ask the director about this incident, as I felt it would be rude of me to inquire as an outsider. The director showed me several of the Croat classrooms, and we then walked back downstairs.

During the descent, I assumed he was going to show me the classrooms on the first floor as well, but he did not lead me into the hallway where these classrooms were. Instead, he pointed out that a part of the interior had been freshly painted, and there were plans to paint the rest now that the school year was over. Our conversation subsided after this, and I did not want to overstay my welcome since this meeting was not scheduled so I did not inquire as to whether he could show me the Bosniak classrooms, but I later learned that the renovated Bosniak classrooms are an extension of the combined primary/secondary school in the neighboring town, which I visited and describe later in this chapter. The director of the school in the neighboring town is technically the director of the Bosniak classrooms. In addition, the students from the neighboring town attend a mid-day shift, while local students attended morning and afternoon shifts. Though it may be true that some of these accommodations are due to a lack of space, it is also clear that there have been efforts to maintain divisions. Afterwards, I thanked the director for speaking with me, as well as the teacher who led me to him, and then I left the school.

I was pleased that the director had spoken with me, but in some ways I imagine it was strange for him to have a Croat with ties to the area inquire about the ongoing state of reforms in education. I mentioned to the director that I attended first grade in BiH, but undoubtedly, my research questions came from an American academic’s perspective. One of the reasons why I chose to conduct this study in this area was because much of the literature I came across did not describe the Central Bosnia Canton in great detail so I was curious as to what perceptions were in this area, regarding both the recent Supreme Court ruling and the system of education. In some
ways, my desire was to supplement the available literature on education in BiH with a snapshot of the current events in Central Bosnia. It was my hope that I could use my identity to my advantage in discussions with Croat participants, but it has been nearly twenty years since I moved to the United States, and in many ways I have become an outsider. The following section provides an example of a less successful interaction with a Croat participant.

**Secondary school visit**

After meeting with the Croat director of the primary school, I spent the next couple of days debating how I could arrange a meeting with the Croat director of the local secondary school. I had a relative who worked in the school, but because the school year had ended, I was told the director was only at the school for a couple of hours each morning, finishing up paperwork before he departed for vacation. My relative offered to introduce me to the director, and she suggested that I show up at the school at around eight in the morning, before she began her shift. I went to the school and entered through the main set of doors. This building also had two schools under one roof; the Croat students attended a morning shift while the Bosniak students attended an afternoon shift. They had separate curriculums, directors, administrations, and teachers. My relative had worked there for more than a decade, and informed me that the Bosniak students had returned to the school around 2004-05, after the “two schools under one roof” program was enacted. While we waited for the director to arrive, I sat with her in the staff locker room/break area. It was a small room, really only big enough for a few people at most, so as more of the staff arrived, chairs quickly filled up. Several of the individuals smoked cigarettes in preparation for their shift, and although the smoke filtered out of the room, it was stifling and I began to wonder when the director would arrive.
Around eight thirty, the director entered the school, and as he passed by the custodial locker room on the way to the stairs, my relative called out to him and arranged an introduction. This director was slightly older than the director of the primary school, but from the look of it, both men were somewhere in their thirties. Contrary to the primary school director, this director was less willing to speak with me, and after I introduced myself and explained the nature of my study, once again making note of the court case and the literature, the only response that I received was that what I had read about the “two schools under one roof” program was a “tinted” version of the story. He did not explain what he meant, but based on my analysis, his reply indicates that he did not see the ethnic-divisions in education as the “segregation” of students, which is how it has been framed in much of the literature.

Perhaps this was because, as many of the Croat participants with whom I spoke mentioned, despite the formal divisions, Bosniak students in the Central Bosnia Canton often attended Croat schools or enrolled in Croat curriculums in order to study the Croatian language. As my participants explained, this was in order to demonstrate proficiency on college entrance exams, or find employment in Croatia. Perhaps this influenced his reaction. Still, it is necessary to consider that Bosniak students in Central Bosnia maybe did this out of necessity, and not out of a desire to be among Croat students; in some cases, Croat schools in are better equipped or staffed because they were once shared schools in the pre-war system, while the Bosniak schools may have been erected in the aftermath of the war, and may not have the same level of recognition outside of Bosnia-Herzegovina. One example of this is the Petar Barbarić

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175 My relative who had worked in the school staff for over a decade mentioned that while Bosniak students frequently enrolled the Croat curriculum, in her time at the school, only one Croat student had signed up for the Federal/Bosniak curriculum, and this was because his mother enrolled him as punishment for not performing well in the Croat curriculum. She said that this student was isolated initially, but eventually made some acquaintances.

176 Hromadžić (2015) describes instances of this in her work on the administrative reunification of the Mostar Gymnasium.
Catholic School Center in Travnik, located in NW Central Bosnia. This school exists in one half of a singular building. The Croat Catholic school part of the building has been renovated, while the Bosnian state school side of the school has not. I was told by one Croat participant that some of the teachers who teach in the Croat school also taught in the pre-war system, while the Bosniak school teachers are less experienced. This school, like most of the Catholic schools in Bosnia-Herzegovina was built by the Austro-Hungarian empire, and bears recognition outside of BiH. Today in BiH, there are six Catholic school centers, and they are open to students of any religion.\footnote{\vukovic, A. (2010). The A to Z of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press. Pg. 76.} Approximately 15% of the students are non-Catholics.\footnote{ibid.} Below is a picture of the divided school building in Travnik.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure3.png}
\caption{Petar Barbarić Catholic School Center in Travnik. Source: Radiosarajevo.ba}
\end{figure}
The Croat director asked if I had obtained permission from the Ministry of Education in the Central Bosnia Canton to meet with him, to which I replied that I had not. He then said that we could not speak further, wished me a good day, and walked out of the school. I was caught off guard a bit, because I did not expect such a sudden reaction, and I felt like I had offended the director, causing him to leave the building. My relative informed me that his demeanor was usually like this, but I felt that I needed to apologize to the director because my intent that morning was simply to introduce myself, and to see if he might be willing to speak with me, not to disturb his business.

I spoke with the staff for another ten minutes or so, until the director came back to the school. I had a chance to tell him that I did not mean to upset his mood, to which he replied that I had not done so, but since I did not have permission from the Ministry to meet with him, my time would be better spent among the general population, perhaps in cafes. I thanked him for his time, and our interaction ended.

While it was evident to me that the director had to guard his position and remain unbiased in the public eye, the way I introduced myself and presented my study was not designed to elucidate his personal opinion on the matter of ethnically-divided education, but to see if he had heard about the 2014 Supreme Court case. Still, similar to my discussion with the primary school director, I can see how my inquiry into the matter, both as a Croat and as an outsider, might have been unorthodox. At the same time, considering that Bosnian Croats in the Central Bosnia Canton may not necessarily recognize the validity of the state-level courts in Sarajevo, since they may see Mostar as the “Croat capital in BiH,” it is possible to understand his reaction.
A couple of days later, I headed into town to meet a friend for coffee. As I began my walk, I was greeted by the next door neighbor who inquired as to where I was headed. We spent a few minutes catching up and eventually began to talk about my study. I mentioned to her that I was interested in meeting with individuals connected to the local schools, and she said that she could introduce me to the director of the combined primary/secondary school in the neighboring town because she had met with him before and discussed sending her son to his school, but she also had a friend who was a teacher at the school with whom she could visit while I met with the director. I did not expect this opportunity to come up, and I gladly accepted her offer. We agreed to meet early the next day, a Monday, and drive to the school, once again with the hopes of finding the director before he went on vacation. Early the next morning, we drove to the neighboring town and made our way to the school. The parking lot was fairly full, which was a good sign.

**Combined primary/secondary school visit**

During my meeting with this director, we did not speak much about the “two schools program,” because this was primarily a Bosniak school, and operated under the Federal curriculum, so we spoke more about education in general. My neighbor sat with us while we spoke, which was helpful for me because she chimed in here and there and kept the discussion moving forward. While I am for the most part fluent in the language, this director spoke rather eloquently so it was beneficial to have someone there who was able to keep up with his every word, or bring the conversation to a pause. In this particular instance, after our meeting with the director my neighbor provided me with additional details about local divisions in education, as well as some background information about the director, which further helped me to reflect on
the interaction. On another level, this was really my first meeting with a Bosniak person to speak about the existing divisions, so her presence was advantageous in the initial approach to the discussion.

After my neighbor introduced us, I shared with the director the nature of my study, and then mainly listened to what he had to say. In regards to the divisions in education, the director said that the problem is more deeply rooted in the overall political and financial problems in Bosnia-Herzegovina. A lot of money is spent maintaining the existing divisions, and certain steps can be taken to rationalize some of the spending. For example, the director referenced a remote village that had a mono-ethnic school with fewer than twenty students, and said that a lot of money was spent maintaining this school and employing the necessary individuals, when instead, a van or two could be sent to the village to transport the students to a better-equipped school closer to town. This was an interesting observation, one that was somewhat echoed by a Croat participant later in my study who stated that the current system would not last much longer because “there isn’t enough money to pay for two of everything: two directors, two administrations, two sets of teachers, [etc.].” It is fair to say that the Croat participant’s remark was more or less speculative, but time will tell. Valerie Perry, who worked on education reform policy issues at the OSCE Mission to BiH, notes that as of now, there is little incentive for the ruling parties to promote compromise, and it is unlikely that these problems will be solved in the short-term. It is possible to infer that there may be resistance to reforms even among those who are employed in the divided system; there are more opportunities for work when there is “two of everything.” And while some parents may show preference towards a divided system of

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education, based on the overlap of students in better-equipped facilities, or more recently, in nursing school programs, the general population appears more concerned with economic stability.

The director said that at his school a large number of students sign up for faith-formation classes, as opposed to classes such as information processing, and ones that teach students practical skills. He explained that although the faith classes were important, they were theory-laden, and “a few too many of the week’s hours were spent preparing theologians rather than practically-skilled persons such as builders, cooks, and engineers.” He stated that this begs the question: “What kind of nation do we want, a theocracy or a secular nation?” Finally, in regards to the ethnic divisions in education, the director said the collective taxpayers in the Central Bosnia Canton help fund the local system of education. “We are already paying for each other’s schooling, so why not be more rational about it?” Though he did not elaborate, the World Bank reports that the administrations in each canton identify each school separately in budget estimates, and schools are directly funded from canton budgets.180

It is clear that this director’s stance favors a more centralized approach to education in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but at the same time, when speaking to me, he made distinctions between “his” people and “my” people, which was interesting because I did not expect to be “othered.” Although, if one takes into account that Croats are numerically a minority population in BiH, it is possible to say that from the perspective of the Bosniak majority, Croats are the “other.” Just as well, if the events of the war are considered from the perspective of the Bosnian government in Sarajevo, it can be said that the Army of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina was utilized to

suppress separatist forces and stabilize the newly independent Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. On the other hand, if one takes into account that in this conflict certain parts of Central Bosnia and Herzegovina were declared by Croats as part of the quasi-state of Herceg-Bosna, it is possible to consider why the return of Bosniaks to these parts, as well as to schools in this area, has been met with resistance on the part of local Croat nationalists.

Reflection

After meeting with these directors, my initial reaction was that education in general deserves more attention from Bosnia-Herzegovina’s government. It appeared to me that education reforms had become overshadowed by the wider political and financial problems. In my interactions with recent Croat graduates of the local secondary schools, many had expressed a desire to leave Bosnia-Herzegovina for more opportune areas such as Germany, Austria, and even Croatia. In order to do so, some had signed up for nursing school because of the demand for medical workers in Western European countries. It should be stated though that Croat desires to leave BiH are tied to the fact that Croats in BiH can have dual citizenship in Croatia, and as a result of Croatia’s accession to the EU, they are able to travel and work in EU countries. A few of these participants mentioned that their nursing programs were frequented by Bosniak students who were also seeking to move to Western European countries. Of the several participants who had found work in Bosnia-Herzegovina, a couple of them revealed that they were only able to do so through “connections,” and one even said it required a bribe. Furthermore, though they had found work, they more or less spoke about the precarity of the conditions in BiH.

Although my time in Central Bosnia was brief, based on these interactions, it appears once again that the general population is more concerned with socio-economic conditions, rather
than ethno-national autonomy. The individuals with whom I spoke repeatedly expressed that the current system benefits only the elites, and that Bosnia-Herzegovina has become an oligarchy. Meanwhile, the EU continues to work with the ruling elites, relying on a policy of “carrots and sticks.” This has resulted in a largely depoliticized society. The fact that returnee numbers have tapered off, and that people continue to emigrate from Bosnia-Herzegovina to more opportune areas is further indication of this. Because of the consociational nature of democracy, and because ethnicity remains the main factor in BiH political identity, the wartime divisions linger and are potentially exacerbated in the precarious economic conditions. This has resulted in what Azra Hromadžić refers to as “the production of an empty state,” or even more so, what Jasmin Mujanovic has dubbed “an institutionalized crisis.” Meanwhile, as Bosnia-Herzegovina hinges on bankruptcy, emergency relief funds are loaned out, and further austerity measures are introduced.

Center for Education

During my time in Central Bosnia, some of my participants referenced a local learning center, which offered German and English courses, as well as courses in information processing and employment training. Some of my participants had taken German courses at the center in their efforts to find work in Germany or Austria. I was interested in the learning center because it seemed to operate independently of the local schools, and it seemed like the kind of place that was catered to the general population rather than a particular group. I found the center’s website, and spent a couple of hours reading through the pages, learning about its history and its offerings. Afterwards, I sent an e-mail to the provided contact, in which I mentioned that I was in

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181 As one participant put it, “This state was created so that Europe’s dirty money could be laundered.”
182 Referenced earlier in this discussion.
town for school-related reasons, and was interested in meeting with someone who could tell me more about the center. I received a reply from the center’s mail administrator and information processing teacher, who informed me of the center’s hours of operations, and that I could stop by and meet with the director of the center. I was excited to hear back and replied that I would stop by the next day.

I walked to the learning center the next morning. It wasn’t far from the local bus station, where I had been before so I was surprised I hadn’t discovered it in my previous visits to this area. The learning center was on the first floor of a two-story building, and as I approached the entrance, I could see that it was divided into two rooms. The director was in the larger of the two rooms, a computer lab and conference center. The smaller room was used for sewing and tailoring courses. I walked in and greeted the director, who was an older gentleman, but an energetic speaker. He had been informed that I was going to stop by, and no one else was in the room at the time, so we spoke for about forty-five-minutes.

The director informed me that the school was funded in 2003 by a Swedish organization, in cooperation with a locally formed group. The center follows the Swedish model of education, and the participants are mixed—there are primary, secondary, and university students, as well as working and retired persons. The local center established a second department in a neighboring town, which has become quite popular as well. For instance, in 2007, due to the multi-ethnic composition of both the instructors as well as the participants, the center received a sliver plaque from the municipal government and was rewarded with a budget for the following year. At the same time, the director said the center had participants not just from the immediate area, but from surrounding towns as well. He informed me that initially, most people were interested in computer literacy courses, as well as foreign language courses, but their offerings have grown
considerably, and now include employment training classes. The center operated independently in 2012, and formed a new partnership in 2013, after their initial partnership concluded. The new partnership was also with a Swedish organization, and further enabled the center to increase its course offerings.

One detail the director mentioned was that the center was sponsored by the local Social Democratic Party (SDP BiH), but that this was a necessary formality, and their relationship was only nominal. After we spoke about the school, the director told me a little about himself, and it turned out he was a local man who had played soccer for the town’s club in his younger days. He told me that some of the local teachers also helped out at the center, and had played a part in its early stages. After our conversation, the director showed me some photographs of the center throughout the years, which included trips to Sweden and visits from the Swedish partners, as well as graduation ceremonies and anniversaries. I did not expect our conversation to last as long as it did, but I was glad to learn about the center’s effective implementation of the Swedish model of education. Its longevity also impressed me.

Before departing, I asked the director if I might be of any use to the learning center, perhaps as a volunteer in the English course during my remaining time in Central Bosnia, to which he replied that they were well-staffed, but I was welcome to come by and visit. I was pleased to have this encounter, and I informed the director that the multi-ethnic composition of the center was sort of what I had been trying to find for my study. He commented that the center’s enrollment records, from the onset of its operations, reflected the pre-war (mixed) enrollment records of local schools, and this was a proud achievement. At the same time, he stated that the center has experienced nothing but cooperation between those of different backgrounds who enrolled in its course offerings. It is an indication that integration is possible,
and that a European model of education is applicable in the Central Bosnia Canton.

The growth in popularity of information processing and employment training courses, as well as German and English, indicates that the general population is anticipating European integration. The interest in the center’s offerings, and its overall longevity, perhaps supports the notion that the general population is more concerned with economic stability rather than ethno-national autonomy. Nonetheless, the systemic divisions continue, and whether changes to education will be implemented by the ruling parties remains to be seen.

Conclusion

As of this writing, the “two schools under one roof” program continues to operate in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and there have not been any changes in response to the 2014 Supreme Court ruling. In the area of my study, a semi-rural mixed town in the Central Bosnia Canton, both the primary and secondary school buildings have “two schools under one roof,” which have been in place for a little over a decade. The students in these schools attend separate shifts, and have separate teachers, directors, and administrations. Although a Federation-wide law was passed in 2010, which mandated the administrative reunification of primary and secondary schools, the Ministry of Education in the Central Bosnia Canton has not implemented changes.

As my relative in the secondary school mentioned to me, “At the end of every school year, for the past five years, there have been whispers about whether there will be administrative reunification, but after a few weeks the whispers die down, and nothing changes in the fall. We, the workers, don’t really know anything more than that.” Croat leaders have argued in favor of autonomy for the protection of national identity and for education in the mother tongue, and they
have used the “vital national interest” veto to block reforms from implementation. What may be necessary in the Central Bosnia Canton and the areas of the Federation where the “two schools under one roof” program operates is a more grassroots approach, or perhaps a series of reforms in each canton, which would pave the way for entity-wide legislation. At the same time, more support for local forms of cohesion, such as the learning center, can help to improve education and overall governance.
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

While Bosnia-Herzegovina’s leaders have made renewed commitments to work towards European integration, they have ultimately failed to promote inter-ethnic cooperation, which has prevented genuine reconciliation from taking place. Though the ruling parties have repeatedly agreed to work together, resistance to the EU state-building project has been strong, especially among Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats, which has further hindered reform efforts targeted at reintegration. Bosnia-Herzegovina’s ruling parties have used the power-sharing mechanisms established in the Dayton Peace Accords, such as the “vital national interest” veto, to retain the present arrangements and resist reforms designed to strengthen the state government. The European Union has responded through the OHR and the higher courts in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but this direct involvement has been met with further resistance on the part of ethno-national elites and used to assert their reelection.

Although it is clear that solutions to the reform failures in Bosnia-Herzegovina are not as simple as creating institutions, it remains to be seen if the EU’s approach to Bosnia-Herzegovina will be modified. Considering the present circumstances in Europe, it is possible to say that this may be the last chance for Bosnia-Herzegovina and the EU to “get it right.” Reforms in education must take place if Bosnia-Herzegovina’s citizens are to undergo genuine reconciliation, and if they are expected to compete in the European market.

At the same time, it is clear that there is not a “one-size-fits-all” solution to the problem of ethnically-divided education in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The change in approach by the OSCE for instance, from direct involvement in reform efforts to a more a-political strategy, is worth noting. Additionally, what may be required in the three cantons where the “two schools under one roof” program continues to operate is a more grassroots approach, or perhaps a series of
reforms in each canton, which would pave the way for entity-wide and state-level legislation. Based on my experience, what seems to be taking place in this part of Bosnia-Herzegovina is an ongoing population shift, in which Bosniak numbers have increased or remained steady, while Croat numbers have possibly decreased.¹⁸³

What was perhaps once understood as Croat territory has become a shared space. Although Croats are a constitutive nation in BiH, a population shift may nevertheless have an effect on the local power-sharing arrangements. In my understanding of the matter, this ongoing shift has been met with resistance on the part of Croat nationalists. As noted in the earlier chapters, laws mandating changes in education have not been implemented by Croat Ministers in the Central Bosnia Canton. This has enabled the ethnically-divided system of education, and the “two schools under one roof” program to continue.

Though an ethnically-divided system of education may allow for the protection of national identity, it is counter-productive to the wider goals of European integration, and to an understanding of social identity as a dynamic process. As the work of scholars interested in this region shows, genuine reconciliation cannot take place in Bosnia-Herzegovina until there is a consensus regarding the events of the past, which cannot be achieved as long as there is a system that encourages different interpretations, and which ultimately allows schools to become private spaces rather than forums for cohesion.

Although the citizens of BiH recently voiced a united concern over the political and economic stagnancy the country faces, resistance to reform efforts on the part of ethno-national leaders at multiple levels of government continues to encourage spatial divisions.

¹⁸³ The results of first post-war census are scheduled for publication in June 2016. These are speculations based on my discussions with individuals in the area over the past twenty years.
As an example, below is a more recent picture of the primary school that I photographed above, in June, taken later that year in August. As can be seen, a message of support for a local Croat war-time leader has again been placed on the school, while additional markers have been sprayed over the original spot.

![Figure 4. Primary School in Central Bosnia, Croat nationalist graffiti.](source)

On a more personal note it is important to recognize that Bosnia-Herzegovina is a land that is rich in culture and in history. It is necessary that those who are in power, and those working towards reforms ensure that all of Bosnia-Herzegovina’s citizens are able to learn and influence its culture, and be part of its history. At the same time, Bosnia-Herzegovina is a land that is rich in resources, and it is vital that this land is not exploited, but that it is maintained for those who are yet to come. In many ways, Bosnia-Herzegovina is a part of Europe already, but now, as the country finds itself somewhat on the formal threshold to European integration, it is
perhaps even more vital that its citizens are able to thrive on the land and grow their knowledge of it. In order for this to happen, Bosnia-Herzegovina’s leaders must work together, and the international community must maintain its focus in the matter. Finally, though we as outsiders may assume that Bosnia-Herzegovina has a long way to go, there are elements of life there that are worth learning and preserving, as well as elements of life worth improving.


The Dayton Peace Accords http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/icty/dayton/daytonaccord.html

The decision to remove Nikola Lovrinović from his position as Minister of Education of the


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