

**THE IDENTITY OF CROATS IN BOSNIA AND
HERZEGOVINA:
THE COMPELLING DIFFERENCES**

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*For The Family and
the crazy third cousins*

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INTRODUCTION

Bosnia and Herzegovina¹: already the name of the state indicates certain dualism. Although the name itself doesn't necessary proof any other dualism accept the one it contains in itself, the ongoing debate on the usage of the state abbreviations does. Whenever instead of the full state name Bosnia and Herzegovina only "Bosnia" is used, one can expect reactions from Herzegovina. Examples are numerous and they originally provided the incentive for more detailed research that will be presented here.

Professor Lučić mentions a public debate in B&H after the Croatian member of the state Presidency² protested against the state's Ambassador to NATO who didn't used the full name of the state in the address of the embassy but only "*Ambasade de Bosnie*".³ Dodig, a Croatian Columnist from Herzegovina, dedicated one of his articles to the problem of supremacy of larger entities in states with two elements in its name, with special emphases on Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁴ Professor Ančić is more concrete in his article explaining that just Bosnia is not the same as Bosnia and Herzegovina and that there are serious differences between two parts of the state. The different historical experiences and the whole set of other factors, he goes on, justifies the usage of the full name of the state and the offence on the part of Herzegovinians when only "Bosnia" is used.⁵ Even my own experience confirmed that leaving out Herzegovina will not go un-noticed by Herzegovinians. When I answered to vice

¹ Further on the abbreviation B&H will usually be used instead of the long full name of the country.

² According to the Dayton Peace Treaty Bosnia and Herzegovina has three levels of the government: the state level, the entity level and the local level. One of the institutions of the state level is The Presidency with three members: one from each of the three dominant ethnic groups. For more on structure of B&H's government see Imamović, Mustafa (2006) *Bosnia and Herzegovina: Evolution of Its Political and Legal Institutions*, „Magistrat“ Sarajevo, Sarajevo

³ Lučić, Ivo (2005) "Ima li Hercegovine? (Tko i zašto negira Hercegovinu i Hercegovce?)" in *National Security and The Future 3-4 (6)*, pp. 37 – 86 [eng. "*Is there Herzegovina?(Who and why denies Herzegovina and Herzegovinians?)*"]

⁴ Dodig, Radoslav (2005) "Hercegovina ili esej o zemlji na ćenaru" in *National Security and The Future 3-4 (6)*, pp 129 – 149 [eng. "*Herzegovina or essay on "land on the edge"*"]

⁵ Ančić, Mladen (2005) "Što je Bosna bez Hercegovine?" in *National Security and The Future 3-4 (6)*, pp. 87 – 127 [eng. "*What is Bosnia without Herzegovina?*"]

president of Dubrovnik branch of “Napredak”⁶ that I am going to Bosnia, he immediately corrected me by saying that I am going to Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁷

All of this indicated existence of a strong regional identity of Herzegovina population exercised, in this case, through a demand to use a full state name that contains the name of the land they identify with. Precisely such indications encouraged further research.

Knowing that in 1832 Herzegovina become separated from Bosnia elayet under Ali-aga Rizvanbegović⁸, that Herzegovina vicariate was separated from Bosnian in 1847 after, that Franciscan Province was divided on Bosnian and Herzegovinian part, that Herzegovina Franciscans and its population had different education background from Bosnian ones and so on, shows that distinctive Herzegovinian identity could have developed.

Ivo Lučić provides an example of how this division is exercised today. He explains that Bosnian Franciscans deny the very existence of a distinctive Order in Herzegovina because they still haven’t recovered from the losses in the 19th century.⁹ It contains a paradox since by doing this they actually affirm that differences did exist and have obviously survived until today.

Radoslav Dodig confirms these differences and also provides as with a geographical definition of Herzegovina that will be used throughout this thesis. By acknowledging that “[m]ountain chain Makljan – Ivan – Čemerno, sharply divides Bosnia from Herzegovina region and at the same time mark the boundaries of stronger Mediterranean influence in cultural-historical sense (...)” and that “[r]omanization entered Herzegovina well before it

⁶ “Napredak” is Croatian cultural society with a task of encouraging education of Croatian people, and promoting Croatian cultural heritage in general and new cultural creative work. For more information see <http://napredak.com.ba> (website available in English)

⁷ Vice-president of Dubrovnik branch of “Napredak” is Marinko Marić, born in Herzegovina, with whom I conducted an interview on April 18, 2010 in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

⁸ Malcolm, Noel (2002) “Bosnia: A short history“, Pan Macmillan, London: p. 121

⁹ Ibid. pp. 53 - 54

entered inner Bosnia (...)"¹⁰ he implies that Herzegovina and Bosnia had different paths of primarily cultural development.

Together with geographical differences between Herzegovina and Bosnia, it is plausible to argue that different cultural influences conditioned different developments of both Franciscans and populations in these two regions. Being a Croat in Bosnia and being a Croat in Herzegovina, it would seem, was hardly a same thing. This formed a basis for future identity politics that are always selective in their construction.

The task of this thesis is to present first the differences among the two groups of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina: those living in Herzegovina and those living in Bosnia. The main idea is, however, to explore the sources of these differences and offer a possible explanation for why they manifest the way they do. Therefore, it will be argued that Croatian population in B&H is divided with respect to how they identify and how they approach series of issues (like the state reform) and that this division follows the border between the two realities: the Herzegovinian and the Bosnian.

Why are some Croats in B&H so attached to Republic of Croatia (and feeling Croat) while others perceive Bosnia as their home (and feeling more "Bosnian") without a problem? How did these differences in identity come into being in the first place? How strong these identities are? Why do Croats in Herzegovina and in Bosnia have different attitudes towards the state reform? Why do they find it difficult to agree? These are some of the questions this thesis will aim at offering answers.

¹⁰ Dodig, Radoslav (2005) Hercegovina ili esej o „zemlji na čenaru“ in National Security and The Future 3-4 (6) 2005, pp 129 – 149 (pp. 131); “Planinski vijenci na potezu Makljen – Ivan – Čemerno, koji oštro razdvajaju bosansko od hercegovačkog područja, obilježavaju ujedno granicu jačih prodora mediteranskih utjecaja u kulturno-historijskom smislu“; (134) “Romanizacija je u Hercegovinu prodrła znatno prije nego u unutrašnjost Bosne.“ [eng. *The mountain chains Makljen-Ivan-Čemerno sharply divide Bosnian from Herzegovinian territory, marks also the border of Mediterranean influence in a cultural – historical sense. Romanization came to Herzegovina much earlier than in inner Bosnia.*]

The first chapter will explain differences in attitudes among Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina by providing a historical framework within which Croatian identity took shape in this country. The aim of this chapter is to present some of the most important events in the last two centuries in B&H and how were they experienced among Croats in two different regions.

The second chapter will continue by emphasizing few facts on Croatian national identity in general which is necessary for understanding how Croatian identity developed among Catholic population in B&H. Two main topics will be covered by this chapter: the crucial differences in 19th and present day Croatian national identity and the particularity of “Croatian” experience in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This ongoing debate on differences among Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina was tested in a field research that will be described in the third chapter together with its results. The aim of the research was to collect qualitative (not quantitative) data on differing attitudes of Croats living in B&H. Attitudes that were of specific interest for this research are related to “homeland issue”¹¹, the status of Croat entity in Bosnia and Herzegovina¹², the need for the reform of the administrative structure of B&H¹³ and the future of B&H.

The fourth and the last chapter, will finally offer the possible explanation for the differences presented in previous chapters. Contrary to those attempts to explain the division among Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina using only one dimension (the differing historical experience that nourished different identities) and thus falling into a trap of oversimplification, this chapter will offer four factors that together help understand the reasons behind the division.

¹¹ What is the homeland of Croats living in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

¹² Are Croats endangered in B&H? Why and how if yes?

¹³ Is the reform needed? If yes on what basis should it be implemented?

CHAPTER I – The Historical Background

In order to explain differences in attitudes among Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina it is inevitable to provide first a historical framework within which Croatian identity took shape in this country.¹⁴ It is the intention of this chapter to present some of the most important events in the last two centuries in B&H. Some of these influenced all of its inhabitants and some had particular effect on its Catholic population (sometimes just parts of it), who today predominantly refer to themselves as Croats. The significance of these events is even greater having in mind they will later on be used to support the main hypothesis and help explain some of the reasons behind different attitudes among Croats towards Bosnia and Herzegovina and its future.

The chapter will focus mainly on events in the 19th and 20th century and will rarely refer to previous periods. The main reason for this comes from the fact that Croatian national identity began to develop in the first half of the 19th century and not before¹⁵. Therefore, as interesting as earlier times might be, they rarely offer relevant information for arguments that will be presented here. Special emphases will be on those events that were experienced differently by Croats in Bosnia and Croats in Herzegovina. These events strengthened regional identity in Herzegovina, cultivated its separate mentality and might have influenced the attitudes of Herzegovina Croats on a range of issues. This, however, will be debated in more detail in the following chapters.

The main topics of this chapter will cover the following periods of B&H history: 19th century Ottoman rule, Austro – Hungarian rule, first (King Karađorđević) Yugoslavia, The Second World War, Communist (Tito) Yugoslavia and finally the break up of Yugoslavia and Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina.

¹⁴ For a map of Bosnia and Herzegovina see Appendix 1

¹⁵ The “Illirian movement“ [hrv. *Ilirski pokret*] also known as “National Revival “ [hrv. *Nacionalni preporod*] is considered to be the beginning of this process.

There are at least two features of 19th century Bosnia and Herzegovina that come into focus as relevant for Catholics in this country, their Croatian identity(s) and its development(s): first The Franciscan Order and second “National Revival” movement¹⁶.

1.1. The Franciscans of “Silver Bosnia”

It is impossible to make any relevant conclusions about the Catholic population of Bosnia and Herzegovina and issues of their identity without taking into consideration the Bosnian Franciscan Order and its missionaries. The importance of their presence and work for preservation of Catholicism on the territory of today’s B&H is undisputable, as well as their strong and deep relationship with the local population.

The first Franciscans arrived in Bosnia already in the mid 13th century with the protection and support of local nobility (most notably Kotromanić dynasty) they pushed members of the Dominican Order (the first order to settle Bosnian territory) out of Bosnia. This process was soon to be crowned with the foundation of Bosnian (Franciscan) vicariate in 1340.¹⁷ This will later be widely known as the Franciscan Province “Bosna Srebrena”¹⁸.

Since then till 1881, when the official church hierarchy was established for the first time in Bosnia and Herzegovina (after the 1878 Austrian invasion), Franciscans practically remained the only pastoral clergy functioning on the territory of modern time Bosnia and Herzegovina.¹⁹ Their importance for the preservation of Catholic population as well as contribution to the development of literature is well documented and recognized. In order to

¹⁶ Although this movement started in Croatia it exercised significant influence on the Catholic population of B&H.

¹⁷ Džaja, M., Srećko (1997) “Katoličanstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini“, HKD Napredak, Sarajevo: pp. 50 – 51 [eng. *Catholicism in Bosnia and Herzegovina*]

¹⁸ “Bosna Srebrena“ [lat. *Bosnia Argentina*] was named after the Bosnian city of Srebrenica, where one of the first Franciscan monasteries was built serving as a first seat of the province. Since the city was built as a mining settlement close to the silver mines, it was named after it and so was the province of the Franciscan Order.

¹⁹ Karamatić, Marko (1992.) “Franjevci Bosne Srebrene u vrijeme austrougarska uprave 1878 – 1914”, Svijetlo riječi, Sarajevo: p 43 [eng. *Franciscans of Silver Bosnia under Austro-Hungarian administration 1878 – 1914*]

protect them, the Catholic population referred to their friars as “Ujak” (uncle) which remains a practice even today.²⁰ Everything indicates that close ties between Franciscans and the Catholic population existed and are preserved to the present day.

Prominent Croatian Columnist and researcher Radoslav Dodig describes this “almost mystical and incomprehensible” link and offers a possible explanation claiming that in a hostile atmosphere (like that of the Ottoman Empire) Franciscans were seen and felt as people’s “terrestrial and celestial protectors”.²¹ Besides being God’s men and spreading the “Good Word”, being the only educated people among Catholics (and thus teachers) also gave them the necessary authority to exercise strong influence over their population. It is therefore no surprise that ordinary Catholic peasant with little or (more often) no education at all looked up to educated Franciscans and saw them as community leaders.

Furthermore, Franciscans must have been much more respected for sharing the difficult life of Ottoman rule together with their Catholic flock. Historian Srećko Džaja describes the difficult everyday practices of members of the Franciscan Order that did not differ from those of common people.²² It is here that we should seek for the sources of the strong and unusual relationship between Franciscans and Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Franciscans constitute a unique example by being community leaders, priests, educators and fellow neighbours sharing life’s difficulties, all in one.

With nationalist ideas from Croatia and Serbia making their way into Bosnia and among its population in the 19th century, religions became nationalized as well. Linking

²⁰ Malcolm, Noel (2002) “Bosnia: A short history“, Pan Macmillan, London: pp. 53, 98 - 100

²¹ Dodig, Radoslav (2005) “Hercegovina ili esej o zemlji na ćenaru“ in National Security and The Future 3-4 (6) 2005, pp 129 – 149 (pp. 139); “*Možda je razlogom to što je hercegovački čovjek, nemajući svoju vlast, u franjevcu vidio svoga i zemaljskog i nebeskog zaštitnika.*“ [eng. *Maybe because Herzegovinian man did not have the rule of his own that he saw in a Franciscan the earthly and heavenly protector.*”]

²² For more see chapter on “Odgoj i život klera” in Džaja, M Srećko (1971) *Katolici u Bosni i Zapadnoj Hercegovini na prijelazu iz 18. u 19. stoljeće, Kršćanska sadašnjost, Zagreb* (pp. 134 - 156) Džaja offers an insight into difficult circumstances of upbringing of young members of The Order or the so called “*pitomci*“. By describing their choirs and everyday practices he shows us that Franciscans interacted with people not only as community leaders but also as community members who all shared the same burdens of life. Although functioning as some kind of community elite they, expect respect, enjoyed no privileges that usually go with it.

religious identity with ideas of nationhood made Catholics become Croats by default. In this light Franciscans who were seen as guardians of Catholicism in Bosnia became at the same time guardians of Croatian national identity as if it existed “since ever”. This constructed myth made Bosnian Franciscans one of the main promoters of the Croatian national idea in Bosnia.

Franciscan history is therefore unavoidable in examining the development of Croatian identity. Even more, events within The Order might shed some light on a division among Croats in B&H and their differing attitudes. The most important one of these is most definitely the so called “Barišić Affair” that led to a division within The Order although it is significant not so much for its consequences as much as for its sources.

Bishops, seated in the modern day Croatian city of Đakovo did not visit Bosnia but they kept challenging Franciscan rights on the tithe claiming it for them - unsuccessfully in the end.²³ Because of this continuing conflict between the bishops and the Franciscans, the provisional solution of creating an Apostolic vicariate was implemented in 1735, with an apostolic vicar (functioning as a bishop) elected among the Franciscans.²⁴ Džaja notes that the “[v]icariate included the whole Bosnia and western Herzegovina, with vicars as bishops, seated in one of the Franciscan monasteries in central Bosnia” but emphasizes that this did not put an end to The Bishop – Franciscans conflict. The only difference now was that the bishop was Franciscan as well.²⁵

It is against this background that the “Barišić Affair” takes place in the 30s and 40s of the 19th century. A direct result of the conflict between the bishop-vicar Rafael Barišić and the

²³ Džaja, M., Srećko (1997) “Katoličanstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini“, HKD Napredak, Sarajevo: pp. 40 - 43 [eng. *Catholicism in Bosnia and Herzegovina*]

²⁴ Karamatić, Marko (1991.) “Franjevačka provincija Bosna Srebrena“, Franjevački provincijalat, Sarajevo: pp. 9 [eng. *Franciscan Province Silver Bosnia*]

²⁵ Džaja, M., Srećko (1997) “Katoličanstvo u Bosni i Hercegovini“, HKD Napredak, Sarajevo: pp. 48 [eng. *Catholicism in Bosnia and Herzegovina*] : “U Vikarijat je uključena čitava Bosna i zapadna Hercegovina, a vikari su bili biskupi, koji su stolovali u jednom od franjevačkih samostana u centralnoj Bosni – što će opet voditi u konflikte između biskupa-vikara i franjevaca.”

Franciscan Order was the suspension of the Franciscan province the Silver Bosnia in the period from 1843 till 1847 when the apostolic vicariate was established in Herzegovina next to the Bosnian one. This change in official Church structure for the first time in history of the Bosnian Franciscan Order resulted in a change of the unofficial structure of the Franciscan Order. What happened is that in 1952 Herzegovina Franciscan custody was established (separated from the Bosnian one) and later on elevated to level of the province in 1892.²⁶ This was the first visible sign of division within the Catholic population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is evident something was going on within the Franciscan Order that made Herzegovina Franciscans support bishop-vicar Rafael Barišić against their brother friars from Bosnia.

A possible explanation is offered by Džambo, a participant of the Scientific Conference on father Grgo Martić that took place in 1995 in Zagreb, Croatia, who reveals the existence of animosities among Franciscans of Silver Bosnia, notably between three districts with centres in monasteries in Kraljeva Sutjeska, Fojnice and Kreševo. He shows that although on the outside it seemed the brothers of Silver Bosnia lived in harmony, on the inside they were divided and even coined special names to differentiate one from another (“Sutješćani”, “Kreševljaci” and “Fojničani”). Furthermore these differences were publicly expressed during the “Barišić Affair”. This was, he believes, a result of different monastery traditions, discipline levels, entrance requirements and educational background.²⁷

Education in combination with the generally inaccessible Bosnian territory was probably the most important element behind the formation of differences within the Bosnian

²⁶ Babić, Marko (1996) “Političke i kulturne prilike u Bosni i Hercegovini u doba fra Grge Martića“: in „Zbornik radova Znanstvenog skupa Fra Grgo Martić i njegovo doba, Zagreb, 8. - 9. studenog 1995.“, Zavičajni klub Posušje, Zagreb: pp. 29 – 30; [eng. *Political and Cultural circumstances in Bosnia and Herzegovina in time of father Grgo Martić*]

²⁷ Džambo, Jozo (1996) “Stoljeće fra. Grge Martića: Dihotomija svjetova franjevacu Bosne Srebrene“: in „Zbornik radova Znanstvenog skupa Fra Grgo Martić i njegovo doba, Zagreb, 8. - 9. studenog 1995.“, Zavičajni klub Posušje, Zagreb: pp. 48 -50; [eng. *Dichotomy of the worlds of the Franciscans of Silver Bosnia*]

Franciscan Order. Herzegovina, bordering the Dalmatian region²⁸ had relatively stable contacts with Dalmatian cities and Catholic population there and also had easier access to schools in Dalmatia and through them Rome. On the other hand, Bosnian Franciscans were much more linked with northern parts of Croatia and university centres like Zagreb and Vienna. This, I would argue, best explains different monastery traditions that produced a sense of uniqueness and distinctiveness among Bosnian Franciscan Orders in Bosnia and in Herzegovina. The “Barišić Affair” was thus seen as a good opportunity on the side of the Herzegovina Franciscans to finally “emancipate from the monastery of Kreševo (Bosnia)”²⁹ on the basis of already existing differences.

The “Barišić Affair” resulted in a new Bosnian Franciscan province with Rafael Barišić as its head and is therefore not important because of its content but because of its effects. These effects, in the form of this new administrative division within The Order, show that different traditions among Catholics existed in Bosnia on the one side and Herzegovina on the other. Whatever the reasons for the conflict between the bishop-vicar Rafael Barišić and Bosnian Franciscans might have been at that time, it is plausible to argue that the dichotomy of Silver Bosnia was not its consequence but most likely the cause.

With official Church hierarchy set up in Bosnia and Herzegovina³⁰ in 1881, the Franciscans will gradually be pushed to the side and lose the status of the main clergy in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although their importance for preservation of Catholicism and Croatian hood was never contested they will never again play the role they played in the 19th century and thus they leave the main focus of this chapter.

²⁸ The Map 1. shows the proximity of Dalmatian coastline and its Herzegovinian hinterland (Neretva valley, cities of Ljubuški, Široki Brijeg, Mostar and so on)

²⁹ Džambo, Jozo (1996) “Stoljeće fra. Grge Martića: Dihotomija svjetova franjevac Bosne Srebrene”: in “Zbornik radova Znanstvenog skupa Fra Grgo Martić i njegovo doba, Zagreb, 8. - 9. studenog 1995.”, Zavičajni klub Posušje, Zagreb: pp. 51 [eng. *Dichotomy of worlds of Franciscans of Silver Bosnia*]

³⁰ Meaning that non-Franciscan bishop was inaugurated

1.2. The Croatian National Revival

It is important to note that above these differences within the Franciscan Order and Catholic population coming from strong regionalism accompanied by distinctive mentalities, there was (and still is) a strong common Catholic – Croatian identity linking all of them. National movements, developing in the 19th century in Serbia and the Croatian part of the Austrian Empire heavily influenced the Christian population in Bosnia and ways they constructed their national identities. It seemed natural that the Catholic population would incline towards Catholic Croatia and its national movement while the Orthodox population would link itself to Orthodox Serbia and its movement.

In essence it means that “borders” between religious groups are also “borders” between ethnic groups and further on nations. The Orthodox population is thus necessarily Serbian and Catholic must be Croatian. These ideas however were not, in a way, indigenous to Bosnia and Herzegovina but were rather poured into it from outside, as already mentioned from Serbia and Croatia.³¹ Development of such a national movement in Croatian parts of Austro – Hungarian Empire heavily influenced Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially through the work of Bosnian Franciscans (and some others) and this to great extent answers the question how did Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina become Croats in B&H.

Croatian National Revival [*cro. Hrvatski Nacionalni Preporod*] was a long process of cultural and socio – political revival that took place in Croatia in the 19th century. Although there is no agreement regarding when exactly it started and ended we can broadly place it in a period between the 1830’s and 1880’s. Some of the most important legacies of this epoch was establishing the standard for Croatian language, laying down the foundation of a series of national institutions (for example the Croatian Academy for Arts and Science) as well as a

³¹ Malcolm, Noel (2002) “Bosnia: A short history“, Pan Macmillan, London: p. 1 – 12; chapter I: Races, myths and origins: Bosnia to 1180

“system of national values” (in culture, politics, law, religion, administration, education, science and so on) that set certain outlines of what it means to be a Croat. Croatian historiography regards this period as one in which the Croatian nation joined the company of modern European nations.³²

Already some of the first leaders of this movement, like count Janko Drašković, argued that Croatia had a “historic right on Turkish Bosnia” and expected that “on the basis of ethnic principle” the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina would unify with Croatia.³³ This resulted in increased interest of the Croatian press for everything that was going on in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Ottoman Empire and wishes for Bosnia “to be liberated and joined with Croatian lands” were more and more often proclaimed in the public sphere.³⁴

Once again, Franciscans hold the key to answer how these ideas were transferred to Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The history of education of young friars under Turkish rule has always been the history of education outside Bosnia and Herzegovina. One of the most respected Franciscan’s historians, friar Ignacije Gavran, indicates that the 19th century was “the most arranged period of education of Bosnian clergy” thanks to the Croatian bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer³⁵ who invited Franciscans to get education in his diocese. This, he goes on, ended in 1876 when Hungarians decided that Bosnian Friars were being educated in a “too Slavish way” under the patronage of the Croatian bishop.³⁶ In Croatia Franciscans were educated of ideas promulgated by Croatian National Movement. It seems clear that the

³² Korunić, Petar (1996) “Fra. Grgo Martić i Hrvatski Nacionalni Pokret“: in “Zbornik radova Znanstvenog skupa Fra Grgo Martić i njegovo doba, Zagreb, 8. - 9. studenog 1995.”, Zavičajni klub Posušje, Zagreb: pp. 59 - 64 [eng. *Dichotomy of worlds of Franciscans of Silver Bosnia*]

³³ Ibid. Pp. 68

³⁴ Korunić, Petar (1996) “Fra. Grgo Martić i Hrvatski Nacionalni Pokret“: in “Zbornik radova Znanstvenog skupa Fra Grgo Martić i njegovo doba, Zagreb, 8. - 9. studenog 1995.”, Zavičajni klub Posušje, Zagreb: pp. 69 - 74 [eng. “*Friar Grgo Martić and Croatian National Movement*” in “*Collection of paper of Scientific conference on Fr. Grgo Martić and his era*“]

³⁵ Josip Juraj Strossmayer was a Croatian bishop of Đakovo (city in Slavonia region) and one of the most prominent figures in Croatian National Revival Movement. As a bishop, theologian, politician, writer, publicist and a patron he is regarded by national Croatian historiography as one of the greatest Croats in history.

³⁶ Gavran, Ignacije (2010) „Sputnici bosanske povijesti“, Svjetlo riječi, Sarajevo – Zagreb, pp 126 – 128 [eng. „*Companions of Bosnian History*“]

Hungarian authorities were unhappy with these “too Slavish” (meaning Croatian national) ideas the young friars were exposed to and were afraid that they might spread them back home. This is exactly what they did.

There is no doubt that Franciscan “Ujaci” [*eng. Uncles*] in B&H did have a huge impact on their population and how they perceived themselves and others by educating them, caring for them, often protecting them and having authority over them. However, even if both Bosnian and Herzegovinian Franciscans together with their flock supported the Croatian national idea and advocated unity among all Croats based on religion/ethnicity, (previously mentioned) differences between the two parts of the same Order and people remained.

1.3. The experience of the 20th century

The situation in B&H was becoming more and more anarchic as the country entered the second half of the century. In the mid 70's in highland Herzegovina, due to (traditionally) low crop income Christian peasants started fleeing into the mountains to avoid paying increased taxes which provoked brutal measures by the authorities.³⁷ This rebellious nature of Herzegovina will be confirmed even the after arrival of the Austro – Hungarian army with so called “robbers” attacking gendarme posts and army positions.³⁸

By the end of the 80's of the 19th century it was clear to everyone that the Ottoman Empire could no longer cope with the increasing numbers of rebellions in its European lands (Bulgaria, Serbia, Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina). The Austro – Hungarian

³⁷ Malcolm, Noel (2002) “Bosnia: A short history“, Pan Macmillan, London: pp. 132

³⁸ Ibid. pp.138 - 139

Empire was ready to make use of this and, although reluctantly³⁹, to take over control of Turkish Bosnian vilayet.

As history will show on many occasions, Bosnia and Herzegovina as the most heterogeneous society already in the beginning of 20th century, was the main “battlefield” of different nationalist ideas and its political parties. Among these, Croatian and Serbian were not the only ones, but were joined by a Muslim National Organization in 1906.⁴⁰

Together with these three nationalist ideas, whose strength varied through history depending on circumstances, one more idea appeared that is widely regarded as an Austrian invention. Benjamin Kallay, the Monarchy’s minister in charge of Bosnia, advocated the idea of “bošnjaštvo” (“Bosnianism”) as a separate nation with distinct identity, different from Croats and Serbs living outside Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁴¹ Although this idea did not yield much success and was abandoned in the early 20th century it was not in fact an Austrian invention but appeared in the pre-occupation period among Bosnian (not Herzegovinian) friars, notably father Anto Knežević.⁴²

Under Austro – Hungarian rule and the experience of war’s misery, all South Slavs of The Empire came together and in 1918 opted for secession and unification with the Kingdom of Serbia. The disappointment will come only later with unpopular (among Croats and Muslims) policies of Serbian centralism. It was in general dissatisfaction and Serbian oppression that nourished a sense of unity among Croats (Catholics) and a good part of the

³⁹ It was particularly the Hungarian part of the Empire afraid of including more Slavs under its rule. Their main concern was this would strengthen the Slav corpus within the Empire and weaken Hungarian rule. However, the possibility of B&H coming under Serbian rule and thus increasing the strength and desirability of Serbia for all South Slavs worried them even more. The occupation of B&H occurred in 1878 after the Congress in Berlin. See *Malcolm, Noel (2002) “Bosnia: A short history”, Pan Macmillan, London: pp. 136 - 138*

⁴⁰ Ibid. pp. 151

⁴¹ Karamatić, Marko (1992.) “Franjevci Bosne Srebrene u vrijeme austrougarska uprave 1878 – 1914, Svjetlo riječi, Sarajevo: pp 60 [eng. *Franciscans of Silver Bosnia under Austro-Hungarian administration 1878 – 1914*]: “... minister Benjamin Kallay advocated for creation of distinct nation, with Bosnian-Herzegovian regional belonging as its framework.”

⁴² Ibid. pp. 60 - 61: „... minister Benjamin Kallay advocated for creation of distinct nation, with Bosnian-Herzegovian regional belonging as its framework.“

Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina against the central state and Serbs.⁴³ The tensions were increasing and escalated in 1928 when Stjepan Radić⁴⁴, the Croatian national leader, was assassinated in Parliament. As a result King Aleksandar Karađorđević introduced his personal dictatorship in January 1929 and the name Yugoslavia as official state name appeared for the first time.

The king's dictatorship did not solve much and actually gave some stimulation to Croatian radical movements, especially to „Ustaše“ and their leader, Ante Pavelić, under whose leadership Croatia would suffer tragedy in the upcoming war.⁴⁵ The king was murdered in Marseille in 1934 and many agree this in effect opened space for solving the so called „Croatian question“⁴⁶ in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

The solution finally came in the form of the well known „Cvetković – Maček agreement“⁴⁷ in 1939 under which Croatia was granted wide autonomy within the Kingdom. The newly established unit was named „Banovina Hrvatska“⁴⁸ and its territory included not only present day Croatia (with the exception of Istria in the West) but also a good part of

⁴³ Malcolm, Noel (2002) „Bosnia: A short history“, Pan Macmillan, London: pp. 161 -167

⁴⁴ Stjepan Radić was a leader of main Croatian party called Croatian Peasant Party (Hrvatska seljačka stranka - HSS) that managed to attract Croatian voters of all profiles. HSS was often seen not only as a national party but also as a national movement and Stjepan Radić as national leader.

⁴⁵ The Ustaše movement was founded in 1929 by Croatian right-wing politician Ante Pavelić. It was a Croatian fascist and anti-Yugoslav separatist movement sought to create an independent Croatian state and thus was banned in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Their name comes from the Croatian word „*ustati*“ meaning "to rise", hence „*ustaše*“ would mean insurgents, or rebels. After the German invasion of Yugoslavia, Ante Pavelić was installed leader of a puppet state called Independent State of Croatia [*cro. "Nezavisna Država Hrvatska – NDH"*] whose military formations collaborated with the Axis troops in fighting against the resistance forces, the Yugoslav Partisans and their leader Josip Broz Tito. As German forces withdrew from Yugoslavia in 1945, the Ustaše were defeated, expelled, and eventually destroyed by the Partisans. The Ustaše aimed at an ethnically "pure" Croatia, and saw the Serbs that lived in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina as their biggest obstacle. The result of such aim was establishment of number of concentration camps with Jasenovac as the most "famous" one. The exact numbers of victims remains contested till present day.

⁴⁶ The "Croatian question" refers to the battling between the two concepts of Yugoslav state in the first Yugoslavia (1918 - 1941). Against the Belgrade's centralist concept Zagreb opposed its federal concept aimed at acquiring large autonomy for Croatian lands. The conflict produced almost constant tensions in political system of Yugoslavia and often resulted in Croatian MPs withdrawing from Parliamentary sessions. The solution for the problem was first implemented by the King himself with introduction of, already mentioned, personal dictatorship and abolition of nationally colored administrative division of the state. This attempt to solve "the question" failed in 1934 in Marseille.

⁴⁷ [Dragiša Cvetković](#) was the new Yugoslav prime minister and Vladko Maček was the new leader of HSS after Radić's death in 1928.

⁴⁸ To see the map of the „Banovina Hrvatska“ go to Appendix 2

present day Bosnia and Herzegovina. To be more precise, the part of B&H that was unified with Croatia was Western Herzegovina and some parts of Central and (small parts of) Northern Bosnia.⁴⁹ These parts will remain under Zagreb's was annexed to Croatia.

As part of the Independent State of Croatia⁵⁰ [cro. “*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska – NDH*”] Herzegovina was, unlike Bosnia, put in the Italian occupational zone.⁵¹ With Serbian “*Četniks*” movement from Eastern Herzegovina particularly active in this region, Croats and Franciscans from Herzegovina had a rather different experience from their counterparts in Bosnia. This severely affected the way Communist Yugoslavia treated Croats in Herzegovina region meaning it was more repressive.⁵²

This contributed even more to development of distinctive identities backed by differing mentalities that refer to different historical and cultural backgrounds. The fact that these differences were noted from outside (by the Yugoslav Communist state for example) also played a role in its consolidation. In the wake of the Yugoslav secession wars and the emergence of the Croatian Democratic Union (*HDZ- Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica*) the stage of differences among Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina was already set and ready and Croatian political elites were well aware of it.⁵³ Just as war sealed the differences based on ethnic/religious differences, so did the different views on the future of the Bosnian state and political agendas that emerged as a result of it, sealed differences within the Croatian national corpus in B&H.

⁴⁹ Malcolm, Noel (2002) “Bosnia: A short history“, Pan Macmillan, London: pp. 171 - 172

⁵⁰ See footnote 45

⁵¹ Lučić, Ivo (2005) “Ima li Hercegovine? (Tko i zašto negira Hercegovinu i Hercegovce?)” in *National Security and The Future* 3-4 (6), pp. 37 – 86 [eng. *Who and why denies Herzegovina and Herzegovinians?*] (pp. 45)

⁵² Ibid. pp. 54 - 58

⁵³ The fact that leadership of Republic of Croatia (RH) opted for secession of Herzegovina region and was ready to „abandon“ parts of Bosnia show that they were aware of differences among Croats on the field. It is widely accepted that Herzegovina Croats exercised much more influence on politics of RH than those from Bosnia through figures like Minister of Defense of Republic of Croatia (MORH) Gojko Šušak who was from Široki Brijeg, Herzegovina.

1.4. The break up of Yugoslavia

History will give Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina one more chance to demonstrate their differences during the 1990's and the war that engulfed the country. Even though faced with a common enemy and same threat of (physical) elimination, Croats in Herzegovina and Croats in Bosnia showed that they view reality in different ways. The most devastating result of this would be the establishment of the "Croat Community of Herceg – Bosna" in mid 1992 and the Muslim – Croat war in early 1993⁵⁴.

After two federal units, Croatia and Slovenia, declared they were seceding from Yugoslavia on June 25 1991, it took almost a year for Bosnia and Herzegovina to organize an independence referendum (February 29 and March 1 1992) which was obstructed by Serbian militia and biased members of the Yugoslav National Army. By the time Bosnia and Herzegovina received its international recognition on April 6 1992, conflict between Serbs in the self - proclaimed "Serbian Autonomous Regions" on one side, and Croats and Bosniacs in the rest of the country on the other side had already started.⁵⁵

That there had been no consensus among the Bosnian political elite regarding the future of B&H (then still the federal unit of Yugoslavia) was obvious long before the war had actually started. Unsurprisingly the disagreement followed the line of ethnic division. Mustafa Imamović notes that it was already after the first democratic elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina that SDS (Serb Democratic Party), the party representing Bosnian Serbs, although part of governing coalition started undermining state institutions. This was only the beginning of what was to follow. Already in November 1991, division among Serb representatives on the one side and Bosniak and Croat on the other, was confirmed when the

⁵⁴ Malcolm, Noel (2002) "Bosnia: A short history", Pan Macmillan, London: pp. 241 - 249

⁵⁵ For more details see: Malcolm, Noel (2002) "Bosnia. A short History", Pan Books, London, pp. 213 - 233

“Memorandum of Independence” was passed and representatives of SDS left the parliamentary session as a sign of protest.⁵⁶

On March 27, 1992, the already mentioned “Serbian Autonomous Regions” were formed within the territory of the then internationally recognized state: Bosnia and Herzegovina. Those self-proclaimed regions, formed against the idea of an independent B&H, would survive the war in the form of a legalized (by Dayton Treaty) entity named *Republika Srpska*.⁵⁷

Croats in B&H, under the leadership of Stjepan Kuljić were in favour of preserving the borders of all (already former) Yugoslav republics. However, in January 1992 Kuljić was replaced by Mate Boban, a Hercegovinian Croat, a process overlooked by Croatian president Franjo Tuđman. To be from Herzegovina at that time meant being more hard-line since Croats there witnessed the establishment of “Serbian Autonomous Regions” as well as its military build up.⁵⁸

The Croatian counterpart to “Serbian Autonomous Regions” in Bosnia and Herzegovina was established in July 1992 and was given the name “Croat Community of Herceg – Bosna”⁵⁹. Although it was marked as a provisional solution, Croatian currency (HRK - Kuna) was introduced as well as the Croatian national flag (red, white, blue with red – white check board in the middle as a coat of arms). Many saw this as a first step towards realization of the plan of carving territory out of B&H that was heavily supported by the

⁵⁶ Imamović, Mustafa (2006) “Bosnia and Herzegovina: Evolution of Its Political and Legal Institutions”, „Magistrat“ Sarajevo, Sarajevo, pp. 386

⁵⁷ Malcolm, Noel (2002) “Bosnia: A short history“, Pan Macmillan, London: pp. 232

⁵⁸ Ibid. pp. 232

⁵⁹ Herceg – Bosna occupied areas in Western Herzegovina where Croats were predominant majority. To a great extent, it imitated the Bosnian part of the borders of the “Banovina Hrvatska”. Later on, it will tend to expand its territory into areas of Central Bosnia where Croats resided but never constituted predominant majority and often no majority at all. It is known that for example Croats in Northern Bosnia in the Posavina region never supported the war against Muslims in Central Bosnia.

Herzegovinian born adviser of president Tuđman, Gojko Šušak⁶⁰. Whether president Tuđman supported this idea or not is not clear but Malcolm Noel suggests president Tuđman was a “rational opportunist” who would have accepted Šušak’s idea if he had been given a positive sign from “outside”.⁶¹ A similar hypothesis was also presented by Jerko Zovak, one of the Croatian commanders in Northern Bosnia who believed the Croatian high command lacked consistent policies towards B&H and strongly believed this region was given to Serbs in exchange for Herzegovina (Herceg - Bosna).⁶²

It is against this background as well as in the light of the Vance – Owen peace plan⁶³ that war between Bosniacs and Croats broke out in Central Bosnia. In early 1993 Croat forces besieged Muslim forces in Gornji Vakuf and by April the same year a full scale war in Central Bosnia was in progress.⁶⁴

As a result forces from Herzegovina (with predominant Croatian majority) entered Central Bosnia (where Croats were the minority) and engaged fighting with soldiers that the local Croatian population regarded as allies only few months before. Meanwhile, in Northern Bosnia and Sarajevo, Croats and Bosniacs continued to fight side by side. At this point, on the whole territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina everyone was fighting everyone and as an old saying says: “You couldn’t tell who is drinking and who is paying”. By the end of the war different group of Croats accumulated significantly different experiences and notions of who the enemies and who the allies were.

⁶⁰ Gojko Šušak at that time served as Defense Minister of Republic of Croatia and was regarded in public as the second most powerful man after president Tuđman.

⁶¹ Malcolm, Noel (2002) “Bosnia: A short history“, Pan Macmillan, London: pp. 241

⁶² Zovak, Jerko (2009) “Rat u Bosanskoj Posavini 1992“, Posavska Hrvatska d.o.o., Slavonski Brod, pp. 663 - 668 [eng. „*The War in The Bosnian Posavina region 1992*“]

⁶³ Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance proposed in October 1992 detailed proposal for a political settlement of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They proposed creation of autonomous provinces (or cantons) that would be ethnically labeled which would spark competition between Croats and Bosniacs in Central Bosnia. See Malcolm, Noel (2002) “Bosnia: A short history“, Pan Macmillan, London: pp. 247 - 248

⁶⁴ Malcolm, Noel (2002) “Bosnia: A short history“, Pan Macmillan, London: pp. 248 - 249

The war between Croats and Bosniacs ended on March 18, 1995 after presidents Tudman and Izetbegović agreed under international pressure to establish the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Washington Agreement) as a form of alliance against Serb forces.⁶⁵ Although peace was restored in Central Bosnia, it is easy to imagine the disappointment of the significant amount of Croats in Herzegovina with The Agreement since it meant the end to an idea of secession from Bosnia and Herzegovina. The only consolation could have been the talks of confederation between the newly formed Federation and Republic of Croatia.⁶⁶

The war in entire Bosnia and Herzegovina ended in the same way that Muslim – Croat War ended: thanks to international pressure. It was not until 1995 and the horrible events in Srebrenica that made the international community realize peace would not be achieved without its strong interference. According to Professor Pejanović, the peaceful solution became the only option mainly thanks to American diplomat Richard Holbrooke and NATO air strikes against Bosnian Serb forces in 1995.⁶⁷

The Dayton Treaty, officially known as The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the peace agreement reached near Dayton (Ohio) in November 1995. It was, however, formally signed⁶⁸ in Paris on December 14 1995, which marked the end of the war⁶⁹ in Bosnia and Herzegovina. If anyone in early 1995 still doubted that the Republic of Croatia was a party in conflict in B&H⁷⁰, one should look at the signatures on The Treaty: together with Alija Izebegović (from B&H, representing Bosniacs) and Slobodan

⁶⁵ Imamović, Mustafa (2006) “Bosnia and Herzegovina: Evolution of Its Political and Legal Institutions, „Magistrat“ Sarajevo, Sarajevo, pp. 389 - 392

⁶⁶ Malcolm, Noel (2002) “Bosnia: A short history“, Pan Macmillan, London: pp. 257 - 258

⁶⁷ Pejanović, Mirko (2007) “The Political Development of Bosnia and Herzegovina in The Post-Dayton Period“, TKD Šahinpašić, Sarajevo, pp. 41

⁶⁸ As I already mentioned earlier, The Treaty was signed by Alija Izetbegović, Slobodan Milošević and Franjo Tuđman.

⁶⁹ War left over 50% of the Bosnian population displaced, over 250 000 dead or missing, 200 000 wounded , 15 – 20 billion \$ worth assets destroyed, 90% unemployment ... Data have been taken from: Cousens, Elizabeth M. , Carter, Charles K. (2001) “Toward Peace in Bosnia“, Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc. , London

⁷⁰ ... a party that implemented policies of division of Bosnia and Herzegovina giving false hope to many Croats in B&H (mostly to those living in neighboring region of Herzegovina) that they will soon be part of Republic of Croatia.

Milošević (Serbia), there stood the proof of Croatia's interference – the signature of Croatia's president Franjo Tuđman. If Croats in Herzegovina (“Croat Community of Herceg – Bosna”) were acting on their own, one has to wonder why was The Treaty signed by president Tuđman and not the leader of Croats in B&H Mate Boban?

The war ended but it was obvious that the peace was forced onto the parties involved. Cousens and Carter argue that “(...) coercion played a critical role in ending the war” and that “war did not end with mutually hurting stalemate but with what is better called a coerced compromise”⁷¹. In the same way political elites are still being forced to cooperate in the absence of any kind of consensus. It is crucial to see that Bosnia and Herzegovina as a state is not founded on consensus but rather on two entities⁷² in latent conflict suppressed by pressure from outside with results that are hardly bright.

It is with this historical background and within such a framework that Croatian elites in B&H operate today and Croatian population live, perceive and reflect on the future. This chapter demonstrated that differences in attitudes among Croats in B&H had been conditioned by different historical experience, life conditions and specific mentality (etc.) of those residing in Herzegovina and Bosnia. As much as one's identity is constructed it is always constructed out of specific interpretations (as distorted as they may be) of actual events and circumstances. Since Bosnian Croats and Herzegovinian Croats were often subjects of different experience, those who involved in (national) identity construction (always with the intention of putting it to some specific use) had much more material to manipulate.

⁷¹ Cousens, Elizabeth M. , Carter, Charles K. (2001) “Toward Peace in Bosnia”, Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc. , London, pp. 27

⁷² See Appendix 4 for a map of the two entities established by the Dayton Treaty.

CHAPTER II – The Faces of Croatian Nationalism

Before focusing on the differences in attitudes among Croats of Bosnia and Herzegovina and offering possible explanations, few facts on Croatian national identity in general should be presented. Furthermore, particularity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the way(s) Croatian national identity formed itself in it are crucial for understanding how can there be such a distinctive contrast in attitudes of members of the same national corpus on important issues. The general basis for this chapter is provided in “Ethnicity without Groups” where Brubaker emphasizes that no group is 100 per cent homogenous and that “groupness” is not given and plain. Brubaker shows that ethnicity and other forms of groupness are not something real, visible and touchable. They are instead a result of the way people perceive their reality and perceptions can be manipulated.⁷³

There is no doubt that Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina recognize their national identity as different from those of their fellow Serb and Bosniac citizens. As Noel Malcolm notices, the only “real basis” for differing national identities in Bosnia and Herzegovina were different religious identities.⁷⁴ Consequently, on the basis of sharing the same religion, Catholics of B&H became Croats and remained such till the present day albeit perhaps on different basis. It is precisely this new basis, specific for Bosnia and Herzegovina, which this chapter aims to present and clarify.

Two main topics will be covered by this chapter: the crucial differences in 19th and present day Croatian national identity and the particularity of “Croatian” experience in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

⁷³ Brubaker, Rogers (2004) “Ethnicity without Groups”, Harvard University Press, Cambridge

⁷⁴ Malcolm, Noel (2002) “Bosnia: A short history“, Pan Macmillan, London: pp. 166

2.1. The 19th century Croatian National Movement

Previous chapter provided some basic information on the “National Revival” movement that sparked Croatian national feelings in the first half of the 19th century. The historical importance of the movement for the establishment of Croatian national identity has been emphasized as well as its impact on Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina through the work of influential Franciscan Order. It has also been implied that Catholics of B&H become members of the same national group as those Catholics living in Croatia.

Although Ivan Lovrenović, the authority on the question of the identity of Croats in B&H, discloses animosity of the 19th century Croats and Croatian Revival movement towards all those “oriental elements” that were coming with Croats/Catholics from Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is nothing that would indicate Catholics from B&H felt less Croat.⁷⁵ As Brubaker notes, it is the perception of reality that mattered and not what someone in Zagreb may have thought. The perception of the reality is precisely what this chapter will deal with. This will provide a better understanding of the nature of Croatian national identity, both in Croatia and B&H.

As many other, the 19th century Croatian nationalist movement was reactionary as well. Goldstein clearly indicates that Croatian Revival movement was a form of resistance to Hungarian nobility and Hungarian national movement that was pushing for the idea of Hungarian state from Carpathians to Adriatic Sea. Budapest ‘s attempt to impose Hungarian as official language in all lands under St. Stephan’s crown⁷⁶ produced fierce opposition in

⁷⁵ Lovrenović, Ivan (2002) “Bosanski Hrvati“, Durieux, Zagreb, pp. 8 – 9 [eng. *The Bosnian Croats*]

⁷⁶ St. Stephan's crown was crown of Hungarian kings (title Hapsburg’s held since 1527) who in 19th century ruled Croatia as well.

Croatia and in the end resulted in the creation of a modern and standardized⁷⁷ Croatian language.⁷⁸

It is fair to claim that Hungarian nationalism greatly contributed to the development of the Croatian nationalism and the idea of joining Serbia into one large South Slav state.⁷⁹ As it has already been mentioned in previous chapter, unification of Empire's South Slav lands with Kingdom of Serbia was one of the worst fears of Vienna and Budapest. This proved to be a powerful incentive for the Austro-Hungarian army to occupy Turkish Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878. From this year on (all the way to the brake up of Socialist Yugoslavia), Croats of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croats in Croatia shared the same state.

In the light of a "pushy" Hungarian nationalism, Croat public figures at first named the National Revival using a neutral name: "Illirian Movement". This was to demonstrate their attempt to spread their ideas to Slovene and Serbian national territory which was without much success though. "Illirian Movement" thus remained Croatian but with strong element of South Slav solidarity that was to be materialized in a common state.⁸⁰ It also proved to be a powerful tool in fighting regionalisms of Slavonia, Dalmatia, Dubrovnik, Istria and Bosnia.⁸¹

From 1878 on, Croats of B&H found themselves within same borders with other Croats of Austro – Hungarian Empire which meant sharing the same political framework and the same problems. As a result, Croatian national identity was now taking form within one state and one political body – Croats of Austro –Hungarian Empire.

⁷⁷ Croatian Revival movement actually started as a call for the standardization of the Croatian language that has three dialects. In the end, it was „Štokavian“ („što“ meaning „what“ as opposed to „kaj“ and „ča“ with a same meaning but in other two dialects) dialect, native to 2/5 of Croats, that was used as a norm. See. Garde, Paul (2004) "Unity and Plurality in the Serbo-Croatian Linguistic Sphere" in Judit, Tony, Lacorne Denis (eds.): "Language, Nation, and State. Identity Politics in a Multilingual Age.", New York, Palgrave, pp. 215-230

⁷⁸ Goldstein, Ivo (1999) „Croatia: A History“, C. Hurst & Co. Ltd., London, pp. 60 - 62

⁷⁹ Different (and conflicting) concepts of such South Slav state promulgated from Zagreb (the federal one) and Belgrade (the centralist one) are not the topic of this chapter but it is useful to keep it in mind.

⁸⁰ Yugoslavia [cro. Jugoslavija] means literary "the land of South Slavs".

⁸¹ Goldstein, Ivo (1999) "Croatia: A History", C. Hurst & Co. Ltd., London, pp. 61

Three key points should be emphasized here: 1. in 19th and early 20th century Croatian national identity was developing against Hungarian nationalism; 2. it was developing among Croats living within the borders of one state; and 3. with the aim of establishing one large South Slav state.

It was important to explain these early developments to show that unity among Croats in the 19th and early 20th century was conditioned by certain historical circumstances. In the wake of break up of Yugoslavia and the new awakening of Croatian nationalism these circumstances were dramatically different. To some extent this helps us understand how did split in attitudes among Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina occurred. This chapter can now move to particularities of present day Croatian identity leaning onto three key points just presented above.

2.2. Particularities of the 20th Croatian National Movement

As opposed to being a reaction to Hungarian nationalism in 19th century, present day Croatian nationalism resurfaced as a response to events in Serbia and Serbian nationalism. Goldstein sees causes of this primarily in the attempt of Serbian writers to reinterpret history and portray Croats as the nation with “genocidal nature” [*cro. genocidni Hrvati*]. Slobodan Milošević and (in)direct threats he made in his speeches on numerous occasions⁸² only added up to previously established animosities in public sphere.⁸³ This put Croatian nationalism in a strong defensive mode and helped it gain momentum.

⁸² One of the best examples of such threats can be found in Milošević’s speech he delivered in 1989 on the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo. He used the example of Kosovo Battle to describe the battle(s) Serbia will soon have to wage. For more see Goldstein, Ivo (1999) “Croatia: A History“, C. Hurst & Co. Ltd., London, pp. 203

⁸³ Goldstein, Ivo (1999) “Croatia: A History“, C. Hurst & Co. Ltd., London, pp. 199 - 204

Messages coming from Belgrade influenced all, then still Yugoslav, republics and not only Croatia and Croats. However, considering that territories of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina were often mentioned as up for grabs, it is not surprising that non-Serbian population of these republics felt most endangered by rising Serbian nationalism. This provided the cohesion factor for Croats regardless of inner federal borders. Therefore, although compared to 19th century, modern Croatian nationalism gained incentive from Serbian and not Hungarian nationalism its effects for Croats in Croatia and B&H were the same. Croatian national identity unified against one common enemy once again. Similarities (between 19th and 20th century) however end there.

As emphasized earlier, in the 19th century Croatian national identity was developing among Croats living within the borders of one state: the Austro-Hungarian Empire. As opposed to that, 1990s arrived with Croats living in one Yugoslavia but in different federal units. Within Yugoslavia Croats in Croatia and B&H were subjects to different political authorities and were basically experiencing Yugoslavia in different ways. The following chapters will provide more detail on these different experiences and here it will only be emphasized that in 1990's Croatian national identity (unlike in 19th century) was cut by a border between Republic of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

After two federal units, Croatia and Slovenia, declared they were seceding from Yugoslavia on June 25 1991, it took almost a year for Bosnia and Herzegovina to organize an independence referendum. This finally happened on February 29 and March 1 1992. By the time Bosnia and Herzegovina received its international recognition on April 6 1992, the conflict between the Serbs in self - proclaimed "Serbian Autonomous Regions" on the one side, and Croats and Bosniacs in the rest of the country on the other side had already been in

progress.⁸⁴ According to the results of the referendum almost all Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina voted for “(...) independent and sovereign Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the state of citizens and peoples: Muslims, Serbs and Croats (...)”.⁸⁵

It was confirmed in March 1992 that Croats (as opposed to 19th century experience) no longer lived in the same country and as it will be argued later, this was not clear to some members of Croatian political elites both in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Croatian national movement now operated from two different countries and this will prove important in establishing (one of the) sources of different attitudes of Croatian polity in B&H.

The last point regarding differences of 19th and 20th century Croatian national movement focuses on its aim. Unlike in 19th century when Croatian political leaders spoke in favour of one South Slav state (which at that time meant unification with Kingdom of Serbia), in 20th century it was quite clear that aim is independent state or at least highly autonomous republic within Yugoslav Federation.⁸⁶

Possible complexities that might emerge out of such aim with Croats living in two different sovereign countries are clearly visible. One of the most important questions that each Croat must have had asked him/herself was probably: to which state should Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina be loyal to? Why Croats in B&H answered differently will be dealt with in the fourth chapter.

Before moving to some particularities of Croatian identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina, one last thing on the nature of the Croatian identity in general should be outlined. Bellamy dedicated a one whole chapter of his book on Croatian identity to “the Croatian historical

⁸⁴ Malcolm, Noel (2002) “Bosnia. A short History“, Pan Books, London, p. 213 - 233

⁸⁵ Komšić, Ivo (2010) “Ustavno-pravni položaj Hrvata nakon Dayton – kontinuitet depolitizacije“ in “Hrvati u BiH: ustavni položaj, kulturni razvoj i nacionalni identitet“, Centar za demokraciju i pravo Miko Tripalo and Pravni fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Zagreb pp. 7-21 [eng. *Constitutional status of Croats after Dayton – continuity of depolitization* in „*Croats in B&H: constitutional status. Cultural development and national identity*]

⁸⁶ Goldstein, Ivo (1999) “Croatia: A History“, C. Hurst & Co. Ltd., London, pp. 203 - 205

statehood narrative”. There, he argues that Croats have never felt safe with defining themselves just in terms of culture and linguistics⁸⁷ and were more interested (if not even obsessed) in proofing historical continuity of the Croatian statehood. Ethnic origins and distinctiveness did appear in nationalist discourse but were always of secondary importance. On the other hand, in the focus of such discourse were attempts to prove that since 7th century (alleged arrival of Croats) till the present day there was some form of a sovereign state linking them. This was presented as a key prove that Croats are distinctive nation and have legitimate right on an independent state.⁸⁸

That Bellamy was right and that Croats indeed “suffer(ed)” from “state obsession” is mirrored in preamble of The Croatian Constitution passed on Christmas in 1990. A huge portion of the preamble (still part of the Constitution) consists of listing proofs of Croatian statehood throughout history, starting with the 7th century.

The text of preamble goes as follows⁸⁹:

“Expressing millennial national identity⁹⁰ and national existence of the Croatian people, confirmed in a total sequence of historical events in the various state forms and the maintenance and development of state-founding thought of the historic right of the Croatian nation to full national sovereignty, which was (is) evident in: The creation of Croatian principalities in the seventh century; The independent mediaeval state of Croatia founded in the ninth century; The Kingdom of Croats established in the tenth century; The preservation

⁸⁷ Main reason for this is most probably the fact that linguistic differences between (most notably) Croatian and Serbian are practically none existent and to talk about two different cultures would also be pushing it too far.

⁸⁸ Bellamy, J. Alex (2003) “The Formation of Croatian National Identity“, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, pp. 32 - 40

⁸⁹ The text of the preamble was written by the first president of Republic of Croatia, Franjo Tuđman. Since some of the linguistic constructions (because he used newly „invented“ words) he used are hard to translate an original version of the text of the preamble in Croatian will be provided in the end. Where needed, additional translations and explanations of specific words will be provided in footnotes inserted in the English translation immediately.

⁹⁰ The word that was here translated as „identity“ in the Croatian original is “samobitnost“. This word can not be translated to English so the “identity“ is used since its meaning is the closest to „samobitnost“. The word “samobitnost“ comprises of two words “samo“ (meaning “self“) and “bitnost“ (meaning “essentiality”). “Samobitnost” in direct translation would therefore be something like “self-essentiality”.

of Croatian national subjectivity in Croatian-Hungarian personal union; In an independent and sovereign decision of the Croatian Parliament in 1527 to elect a king from the Habsburg dynasty; In an independent and sovereign decision of the Croatian Parliament on the Pragmatic Sanction in 1712; The conclusions of the Croatian Parliament in 1848 on the restoration of the integrity of the Triune Kingdom of Croatia under the rule of “Ban”⁹¹, based on historical, national and natural right of the Croatian people; The Croatian-Hungarian settlement from 1868 on the regulation of relations between the Kingdom of Dalmatia Croatia and Slavonia and the Kingdom of Hungary on the basis of the legal traditions of both states and the Pragmatic Sanction from 1712; The decision of the Croatian Parliament on 29th October 1918 to dissolve state relations between Croatia and Austro - Hungary and the simultaneous affiliation of independent Croatia, with reference to the historical natural and national law, to the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs⁹² proclaimed on the former territory of Habsburg Monarchy; The fact that the decision of the National Council of State SCS to unite with Serbia and Montenegro in Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (on 1 December 1918), that was later (on October 3, 1929) proclaimed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the Croatian Parliament never sanctioned; The establishment of the Croatian Banovina⁹³ in 1939 which rebuilt the Croatian national identity⁹⁴ within Kingdom of Yugoslavia; The establishment of the foundations of the state sovereignty during World War II, expressed versus declaration of Croatian Independent State (1941) in the decisions of the National Anti-Fascist Council of National Croatian Liberation (1943) and then in the Constitution of the People's Republic of Croatia (1947) and later in the constitutions of the Socialist Republic of Croatia (1963-1990), on the historical turning point of rejection of communist system and changes in the international order in Europe, the Croatian people on

⁹¹ “Ban“ is a specifically Croatian title for Imperial regent/protector/governor.

⁹² Abbreviation: State SCS [*cro. Država SHS*]

⁹³ „Banovina“ is a Croatian name for the territorial unit subject to the rule of one “Ban“

⁹⁴ See footnote 90

the first democratic elections (1990) by its freely created will confirmed its one thousand years national identity⁹⁵. With the new Croatian Constitution (1990) and victory in the war (1991-1995) Croatian people showed their determination and willingness to establish and preserve Croatian Republic as autonomous and independent, sovereign and democratic state. Starting from the presented historical facts and generally accepted principles in the modern world and inalienability and indivisibility, un-transferability and un-exhaustibility of the right to self-determination and national sovereignty of the Croatian people, including the unimpaired right to secession and association, as the basic preconditions for peace and stability of international order, Republic of Croatia is being established as the national state of the Croatian people and the state of its autochthonous national minorities: (...)"⁹⁶

⁹⁵ See footnote 90

⁹⁶ From "Narodne novine" [eng. *National newspapers*] the official newspaper of the Republic of Croatia: The original text in Croatian goes as follows: "(...) Izražavajući tisućljetnu nacionalnu samobitnost i državnu opstojnost hrvatskoga naroda, potvrđenu slijedom ukupnoga povijesnoga zbivanja u različitim državnim oblicima te održanjem i razvitkom državotvorne misli o povijesnom pravu hrvatskoga naroda na punu državnu suverenost, što se očitovalo: u stvaranju hrvatskih kneževina u VII. stoljeću; u srednjovjekovnoj samostalnoj državi Hrvatskoj utemeljenoj u IX. stoljeću; u Kraljevstvu Hrvata uspostavljenome u X. stoljeću; u održanju hrvatskoga državnog subjektiviteta u hrvatsko-ugarskoj personalnoj uniji; u samostalnoj i suverenoj odluci Hrvatskoga sabora godine 1527. o izboru kralja iz Habsburške dinastije; u samostalnoj i suverenoj odluci Hrvatskoga sabora o pragmatičnoj sankciji iz godine 1712.; u zaključcima Hrvatskoga sabora godine 1848. o obnovi cjelovitosti Trojedne Kraljevine Hrvatske pod banskom vlašću, na temelju povijesnoga, državnoga i prirodnoga prava hrvatskog naroda; u Hrvatsko-ugarskoj nagodbi 1868. godine o uređenju odnosa između Kraljevine Dalmacije, Hrvatske i Slavonije i Kraljevine Ugarske na temelju pravnih tradicija objiju država i Pragmatičke sankcije iz godine 1712.; u odluci Hrvatskoga sabora 29. listopada godine 1918. o raskidanju državnopravnih odnosa Hrvatske s Austro-Ugarskom te o istodobnu pristupanju samostalne Hrvatske, s pozivom na povijesno i prirodno nacionalno pravo, Državi Slovenaca, Hrvata i Srba, proglašenoj na dotadašnjem teritoriju Habsburške Monarhije; u činjenici da odluku Narodnoga vijeća Države SHS o ujedinjenju sa Srbijom i Crnom Gorom u Kraljevini Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca (1. prosinca 1918. godine), poslije (3. listopada 1929. godine) proglašenoj Kraljevini Jugoslavijom, Hrvatski sabor nikada nije sankcionirao; u osnutku Banovine Hrvatske godine 1939. kojom je obnovljena hrvatska državna samobitnost u Kraljevini Jugoslaviji; u uspostavi temelja državne suverenosti u razdoblju drugoga svjetskog rata, izraženoj nasuprot proglašenju Nezavisne Državne Hrvatske (1941.) u odlukama Zemaljskoga antifašističkog vijeća narodnog oslobođenja Hrvatske (1943.), a potom u Ustavu Narodne Republike Hrvatske (1947.) i poslije u ustavima Socijalističke Republike Hrvatske (1963.-1990.), na povijesnoj prekretnici odbacivanja komunističkog sustava i promjena međunarodnog poretka u Europi, hrvatski je narod na prvim demokratskim izborima (godine 1990.), slobodno izrađenom voljom potvrdio svoju tisućgodišnju državnu samobitnost. Novim Ustavom Republike Hrvatske (1990.) i pobjedom u Domovinskom ratu (1991.-1995.) hrvatski je narod iskazao svoju odlučnost i spremnost za uspostavu i očuvanje Republike Hrvatske kao samostalne i nezavisne, suverene i demokratske države. Polazeći od iznesenih povijesnih činjenica, te općeprihvaćenih načela u suvremenu svijetu i neotuđivosti i nedjeljivosti, neprenosivosti i nepotrošivosti prava na samoodređenje i državnu suverenost hrvatskog naroda, uključujući i neokrnjeno pravo na odcjepljenje i udruživanje, kao osnovnih predujveta za mir i stabilnost međunarodnog poretka, Republika Hrvatska ustanovljuje se kao nacionalna država hrvatskog naroda i država pripadnika autohtonih nacionalnih manjina(...)" Full text can be found on: <http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/232289.html>.

The rest of the preamble is short and describes what Croats want Croatia to be like. The first part is much more interesting since it reveals certain national frustrations and obsession with statehood or better to say with need to prove the right on it. Considering the historical experience (the lack of the self-rule) and context in which constitution was written (dissolution of Yugoslavia) emphasizes that preamble makes shouldn't leave anyone surprised. Preamble was presented here to demonstrate what dominated nationalist discourse in 1990s, a decade most crucial for development of different attitudes among Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina towards the state (B&H) and its future.

2.3. Croatian experience in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In order to better understand mentioned divisions among Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina more should be said on B&H itself. Some main characteristics and developments of Croatian national idea have been presented but without understanding how they reflected in the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Differences between the “main stream” Croatian national identity (in Croatia) and the one in B&H are not simply a matter of different regional identities.

Indeed, just like Croats in different Croatian regions of Slavonia, Istria, Dalmatia or Dubrovnik feel Croat but with “regional flavour” so do Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The very important difference however exists. Bosnia and Herzegovina is not one of the Croatian regions. It might be considered as one of the regions of Croatian national identity sphere but the fact that it is a subject of a different political authority, a different state, makes a significant difference. It will be argued in the last chapter that failure of some to distinct between region of (Republic of) Croatia and region of Croatian national identity sphere is one

of the sources for division among Croats in B&H. In order to clarify it, this chapter now turns to particularities of Croat identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

One of the most important characteristics of identity development in B&H is well described by Norwegian anthropologists Tone Bringe. In her book she argues that "... Bosnian Muslim identity cannot be fully understood with reference to Islam only, but has to be considered in terms of a specific Bosnian dimension which for Bosnian Muslims implied sharing history and locality with Bosnians of other non-Islamic religious traditions (...)" meaning that in practice people "... defined being a Bosnian Muslim through both Islamic and non – Islamic practice and customs."⁹⁷

The same applies to non-Islamic population of Bosnia and Herzegovina like Catholics. The identity of Catholics/Croats in B&H can not be fully understood without keeping in mind that experience of the "others" was part of their everyday life. To be a Croat in B&H meant not only what Croats in Croatia thought it was but also what their neighbours in B&H (Orthodox and Muslims) were not. Together with the positive identity definition, in B&H the negative definition played a crucial role.⁹⁸ Bringe's mentioned "Bosnian dimension" is exactly about such experience and without it Croats in B&H can not be fully understood.

For prof. Cvitković what makes this "Bosnian dimension" so special is Bosnia and Herzegovina being an "intercultural" rather than "multicultural" society. He goes on to explain that "multiculturalism" implies "us" and "them" relationship ("life next to each other") while "interculturalism" implies "life with one another and for one another".⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Bringe, Tone (1995) "Being Muslim the Bosnian Way", Princeton University Press, Princeton, pp. 230 - 231

⁹⁸ Above Croatian identity in general often being defined in negative terms as what it is not. Today this is most often displayed against Serbian identity.

⁹⁹ Cvitković, Ivan (2010) "Hrvatski identitet u Bosni i Hercegovini" in „Hrvati u BiH: ustavni položaj, kulturni razvoj i nacionalni identitet“, Centar za demokraciju i pravo Miko Tripalo and Pravni fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Zagreb pp. 107-122 [eng. *Croatian Identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina in Croats in B&H: constitutional status. Cultural development and national identity*]

Cornelia Sorabji in a similar fashion sees “neighbourliness” as basis of life in (pre-war) Bosnia and Herzegovina, crucial for local understanding of identity and nation.¹⁰⁰

Compared to Croats in Croatia, this element does make experience of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina specific and different. Unlike in Croatia, in Bosnia and Herzegovina Croats share their living space with two other ethnic groups and together with them were equally dispersed on the territory of B&H.¹⁰¹ History of B&H shows that common people relied on their neighbours regardless of different religion and lived truly together rather than just next to each other.

For example, conflicts (in form of uprisings) within 19th Bosnian elayet¹⁰² were not based on religious divisions. Uprisings of Bosnian Christian population were never aimed against Muslims as such but rather against landlords who happen to be Muslim. Uprising of 1835 was specific for cooperation between Catholics and Orthodox against landlords while in many other cases Muslim peasants cooperated with non-Muslim peasants.¹⁰³ Reasons for these rebellions were of economic character not a result of religious tensions.

Therefore, the everyday experience of “others” in an “intercultural” society nourished the sense of togetherness (“neighbourliness”) although it might seem paradox at first. Even though three groups with the three different national identities lived together, this never sharpened division among them. Quite contrary, it shaped their particular national identities in a unique way creating a new one on a higher level that will be deconstructed only by

¹⁰⁰ Sorabji, Cornelia (1994) “A very modern War”, in Watson, H., Hinde, R., “War: a cruel necessity: the bases of institutionalized violence”, I.B. Tauris, London and New York

¹⁰¹ After the last war this is no longer the truth though. According to 1991 B&H census 61,24% of Croats, 44,24% of Serbs and 47,36% of Bosniaks had been relocated during the war. See Vukšić, Tomo (2010) “Demografski pregled na stanje Katolika (Hrvata) u Bosni i Hercegovini (1996-2008) in “Hrvati u BiH: ustavni položaj, kulturni razvoj i nacionalni identitet“, Centar za demokraciju i pravo Miko Tripalo and Pravni fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Zagreb pp. 45 - 62 [eng. *Demographic overview of the situation of Catholic (Croats) in Bosnia and Herzegovina in Croats in B&H: constitutional status. Cultural development and national identity*]

¹⁰² Elayet (later vilayet) was a territorial and administrative unit of the Ottoman Empire.

¹⁰³ Malcolm, Noel (2002) “Bosnia: A short history“, Pan Macmillan, London: p. 122

extensive use of violence. Above (or perhaps under) the Croatian there existed this particular identity that is not necessarily contradicting the previous one but it did make a difference.

Cvitković recognizes three “objective characteristics” of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina and lists them as follows: language, religion and national consciousness.¹⁰⁴ Language is probably least solid element of the three since it’s quite difficult to talk about three different languages: Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian. Garde underlines that in Yugoslav region rural dialects “make up a very homogeneous entity”. For him Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian can only be seen as three different norms of the same language and not three completely separate languages. He estimates that differences between mentioned norms are approximately 5 to 10 percent with most of the different words being relatively infrequent. He concludes that one would have to read several lines of the text before establishing in which language/norm text is written.¹⁰⁵ Differences within Bosnia and Herzegovina are even less noticeable. To recognize someone’s accent means only to approximately know where from in B&H is he or she coming from and not of what nationality they are.¹⁰⁶

Therefore, it is difficult to agree with Cvitković that language constitutes one of the “objective characteristics” since language Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina speak is hard to distinct from others. Even if inhabitants of Herzegovina have distinctive accent, being from Herzegovina is no guarantee one is Catholic/Croat.

However, what can be claimed is that Croatian standard language (norm) and Serbian standard language (norm) do differ enough for anyone to recognize them although the one who speaks only one of the two languages can understand and speak both. Standard language is of course artificial, result of an attempt to create a norm that will be thought in schools and

¹⁰⁴ Cvitković, Ivan (2006) “Hrvatski identitet u Bosni i Hercegovini“, Synopsis d.o.o., Zagreb and Sarajevo, pp. 58 – 76 [eng. *Croatian Identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina*]

¹⁰⁵ Garde, Paul (2004) “Unity and Plurality in the Serbo-Croatian Linguistic Sphere” in Judit, Tony, Lacorne, Denis “Language, Nation, and State. Identity Politics in a Multilingual Age”, Palgrave, New York, pp. 215 - 230

¹⁰⁶ Today this is more and more often not the case. After extensive ethnic cleansing in the first half of the 1990's it is increasingly true that place of origin and ethnicity coincide.

used in public sphere. Together with standardization of language comes also the “official” literature and language history that are used to proof historic continuity of one language. If the term “language” is used in such way than it could be argued that language constitutes one of the “objective characteristics” Cvitković talks about. Bosnian Franciscan Ignacije Gavran in series of his articles on Croatian culture often writes about “Croatian” writers and literature like Marko Marulić¹⁰⁷ and his piece “Judita”.¹⁰⁸ In that way, notion of what Croatian language (literature) is sets Catholics/Croats of B&H apart from others who don’t share the same notion.

It has already been said much on the question of religion and identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In previous chapter strong emphases had been made on the link between the Franciscan Order and the Catholic population as well as the transformation of Catholics into Croats with national ideas making their way into B&H from surrounding territories. This chapter also continued down this line and insisted that definition of Catholic/Croat identity in B&H often depended on definitions of other religious identities in the country.

Therefore, it is clear that religion played (and still plays) crucial role in Croat identity in B&H. This part of the chapter will end with Cvitković’s acknowledgment that common religion proved to be “empirically the most relevant for majority of those in Bosnia and Herzegovina who self-identity as Croats”.¹⁰⁹

The last characteristic Cvitković mentions is more of a synthesis of everything mentioned here, rather than being only one element. National consciousness implies many different factors linking numerous people who use it as an imaginary link between

¹⁰⁷ Marko Marulić is considered to be the father of Croatian literature. He was born in present day Split (Croatia) in 15th century.

¹⁰⁸ Gavran, Ignacije (1988) “Putovi i putokazi: Niz članaka o našoj prošlosti“, Svijetlo riječi, Sarajevo, pp. 9 – 14 [eng. *Paths and Pinters: Series of articles on our history*] Publisher “Svijetlo riječi“ published four books of these articles in which Ignacije Gavran writes about major Croatian historical events, persona, writers, books, places and so on. He regularly uses word „our“ when referring to these topics of his articles.

¹⁰⁹ Cvitković, Ivan (2006) “Hrvatski identitet u Bosni i Hercegovini“, Synopsis d.o.o., Zagreb and Sarajevo, pp. 67 [eng. *Croatian Identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina*]

themselves. Language, religion, culture, historical experience and so on (as much as all of these elements might be constructed) constitute a basis for any common identity. Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina believe in them and thus they entered one Croatian national corpus.

The only element that was not mentioned in previous paragraph and that proves to be important especially today (and especially in respect to the topic of this thesis) is the state. The state to which a nation belongs (or rather vice versa) hasn't been an issue before 1990s since all Croats shared only one.¹¹⁰ Cvitković talks about "state identity" as though it's separate from national identity of Croats and uses such distinction to explain why some Croats in B&H are finding it easier to identify with Croatia than country they live in.¹¹¹

It is exactly with this final element of the state that Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina are having issues and demonstrate their different attitudes. Although all being Croats and being Croats in particular context of B&H, they differ in a way they identify themselves and disagree on how should the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina be administrated and what is the future of it. After the break up of Yugoslavia and establishment of the state borders between Croatia and B&H, it would seem that "state" became the new basis for self-identification among some Croats in the later one. The third chapter will deal with this into more detail.

These first two chapters focused on explaining historical background and describing characteristics of Croatian national identity in general and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The following chapters will provide results of field research that confirmed differences in attitudes and later on offer a possible explanation for why and how this division was possible.

¹¹⁰ It has been noted previously that since 1878 and occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austro – Hungarian Empire until 1990s and brake up of Yugoslavia, Croats lived in one country.

¹¹¹ Ibid. pp. 105 - 115

CHAPTER III- The Interviews and The Research Results

The first chapter of this study already emphasized to some extent different historical experience of population in Bosnia and in Herzegovina. However, before moving to explain these differences into more detail, this chapter will present results of the research conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina from April 14 to April 25, 2010. The incentive for conducting the research came, as it has been already mentioned in the introduction, from ongoing debate on the differences among the Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the need to either both confirm them and explore their nature or discharge them.

3.1. Time, Place and Subjects of the Interviews

The aim of the research was to collect qualitative (not quantitative) data on differing attitudes of Croats living in B&H. Attitudes that were of specific interest for this research¹¹² are related to “homeland issue”¹¹³, the status of Croat entity in Bosnia and Herzegovina¹¹⁴, the need for the reform of the administrative structure of B&H¹¹⁵ and the future of B&H.

Considering the time and fund limits the research never intended to have a sample representative of all Croats in B&H. Main intention was to compare answers of Croats from Herzegovina and Croats from Bosnia, detect where the main differences lie and finally to seek for the sources of it. Besides that, certain amount of interviews (specifically with members of the political elite, the university professors, members of the Franciscan Order and members of the official Church Order) was intended to provide a better understanding of research topic(s).

As it has already been mentioned, research started on April 14, 2010. The first interviews were conducted in Zagreb where four students from Bosnia and Herzegovina were

¹¹² Attitudes that most likely mirror differences among Croats in respect to the main hypothesis of this thesis.

¹¹³ What is the homeland of the Croats living in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

¹¹⁴ Are the Croats endangered in B&H? Why and how, if yes?

¹¹⁵ Is a reform needed? If yes on what basis should it be implemented?

interviewed together with Mr. Tonino Picula.¹¹⁶ After Zagreb followed Dubrovnik and already mentioned interview¹¹⁷ with Mr. Marinko Marić. On April 19 and April 20 interviews continued in Bosnia and Herzegovina in Mostar and Međugorje where 14 Croats had been questioned together with professors Božo Žepić¹¹⁸ and Božo Goluža¹¹⁹ and members of the regional government, Minister Luka Faletar¹²⁰ and Pero Ćiro Pavlović.¹²¹ From April 21 till April 25 a total of 19 people were interviewed in Sarajevo and Fojnice (on April 23) in addition to interviews with Franciscans Fr. Luka Markešić,¹²² Fr. Mato Topić,¹²³ Fr. Drago Bojić¹²⁴ and Professors Mirko Pejanović¹²⁵ and Ivan Cvitković¹²⁶.

Four cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina had been chosen for interviews. Mostar and Međugorje are situated in Herzegovina region, while Sarajevo and Fojnice are situated in the

¹¹⁶ Mr. Tonino Picula is currently a member of Croatian Parliament [*cro. Hrvatski Sabor*] and was also a Minister of Foreign Affairs in Croatian Government in the period 2000 – 2003. His input on Croatian politics towards Bosnia and Herzegovina, before, during and after his mandate was most useful.

¹¹⁷ See the Introduction.

¹¹⁸ Božo Žepić is a retired professor on Faculty of Law, University of Mostar. He lectured, among others, Legal Sociology and Political system courses. He is also author of the books (among others): “Enigma Bosna i Hercegovina“ [*eng. “Enigma Bosnia and Herzegovina“*]; “Hrvatski entitet u Bosni i Hercegovini: za i protiv“ [*eng. “Croatian entity in Bosnia and Herzegovina: for and against“*]; “Istrošenost Dayton: problemi i teškoće daljnjeg razvitka“ [*eng. “Deterioration of Dayton: problems and difficulties of further development“*] and “Bosna i Hercegovina 1990.-2025. : rasprave o prošlosti, sadašnjosti i budućnosti Bosne i Hercegovine“ [*eng. Bosnia and Herzegovina 1990 – 2025: debates on past, present and future of Bosnia and Herzegovina*]

¹¹⁹ Božo Goluža is a professor of History on Faculty of Philosophy, University of Mostar and also a vice-dean for education on the same faculty. He is also a chief editor of the pastoral-sheet of the dioceses of Herzegovina “Crkva na kamenu“ [*eng. Church on the rock*].

¹²⁰ Luka Faletar is a current Minister of Health in the Cantonal Government of Herzegovina – Neretva Canton and member of HDZ 1990 (political party).

¹²¹ Pero Ćiro Pavlović is a spokesman for the Government of Herzegovina – Neretva Canton and member of HDZ 1990.

¹²² Fr. Luka Markešić is a prominent member of the Franciscan Order (Franciscan Province “Silver Bosnia”), respected publicist, president of the Croatian National Council of B&H [*cro. Hrvatsko nacionalno vijeće BiH*] and was also chief editor of „Bosna Franciscana“, official magazine of the Franciscan Theology in Sarajevo. He is also the author of the “Hrvati i katolici u Bosni i Hercegovini“ [*eng. “Croats and Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina“*] and one of the editors of “Hrvati u BiH : ustavnoi položaj, kulturni razvoj i nacionalni identitet“ [*eng. „Croats in B&H: constitutional status. Cultural development and national identity“*]

¹²³ Fr. Mato Topić is a member of the Franciscan Order (Franciscan Province “Silver Bosnia”) and chief editor of “Svijetlo riječi“ [*eng. Light of the Word*] a publishing house of the Franciscan Province “Silver Bosnia”. He is author of series of works on population of Rama (region on the border between Herzegovina and Bosnia).

¹²⁴ Fr. Drago Bojić is a young member of the Franciscan Order (Franciscan Province “Silver Bosnia”). He recently acquired his PhD on Faculty of Theology, University of Vienna. The topic of his PhD thesis was “Katolički tisak u Bosni i Hercegovini. Franjevački mjesečni magazin Svjetlo riječi“ [*eng. “Catholic press in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Franciscan motherly magazine Light of the Word“*]

¹²⁵ Mirko Pejanović is a current dean of the Faculty of Political Science, University of Sarajevo. In the war time period he was a member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. He is also the author of „The Political Development of Bosnia and Herzegovina in The Post-Dayton Period“.

¹²⁶ Ivan Cvitković is a professor at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Sarajevo and an author of the book “Hrvatski identitet u Bosni i Hercegovini“ [*eng. Croatian Identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina*]

region of Central Bosnia. Based on data provided by the Catholic Church there are 454 921 Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina. To this number they add 50 000 more Croats that they estimate do not declare as Catholics, rounding up the final estimate of Croats in B&H at 500 000 or around 13% of the total population.¹²⁷ According to the same estimates from 2008, Mostar diocese¹²⁸ had 192 403 Catholics while Sarajevo diocese¹²⁹ had 204 060 Catholics which cumulatively makes majority of Croats in B&H.¹³⁰ This was the main reason why Sarajevo and Fojnice were selected for interviewing Croats from Bosnia and Mostar and Međugorje for Croats from Herzegovina.

The structure of subjects interviewed in Bosnia and Herzegovina according to the place of interview, sex and age:

| | Number of people interviewed | Sex | | Age | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | M | F | -35 | 35+ |
| Sarajevo and Fojnice | 19 | 7 | 12 | 8 | 11 |
| Mostar and Međugorje | 14 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 9 |
| Total | 33 | 14 | 19 | 13 | 20 |

Table I: The structure of interviewed subjects according to the place of the interview, sex and age

¹²⁷ Vukšić, Tomo (2010) “Demografski pregled na stanje Katolika (Hrvata) u Bosni i Hercegovini (1996-2008) in „Hrvati u BiH: ustavni položaj, kulturni razvoj i nacionalni identitet“, Centar za demokraciju i pravo Miko Tripalo and Pravni fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Zagreb pp. 45 - 62 [eng. *Demographic overview of the situation of Catholic (Croats) in Bosnia and Herzegovina in Croats in B&H: constitutional status. Cultural development and national identity*]

¹²⁸ Mostar and Međugorje are under jurisdiction of Mostar diocese. Mostar is also a capital of Herzegovina – Neretva Canton with the Croatian population majority. Međugorje is situated south to Mostar and is one of the mayor Catholic pilgrimages and has a special meaning for Croats in B&H.

¹²⁹ Sarajevo and Fojnice are under the jurisdiction of Sarajevo diocese. Sarajevo is also the capital of B&H and Fojnice is a city west to Sarajevo with a small Croatian community and one of the oldest Franciscan monasteries.

¹³⁰ Ibid. pp. 50- 54

In addition, four more interviews were conducted with students from Bosnia and Herzegovina in Zagreb, making the total number of the interviewed (“common”) people 37. One student is from Herzegovina, one from Northern Bosnia and two are from Sarajevo. Of four of them, three are female and one is male. The interview was conducted as a group interview with all four students.

3.2. The Interview types

The research itself consisted of the two types of interviews. The first type was the “life story” semi-structured interview prepared for the “common”¹³¹ people. The idea was to avoid media-like interviews that encourage well structured opinion answers that are often framed by the “public opinion”. Instead, interviews started with a short life experience story after which subjects were encouraged to talk about topics/events relevant for the research as part of their own experience. By embedding the conversation topics into their life experience it was much easier to interpret the "story" and the framing separately.

The topics for interviews were used only as guideline for the interviewer and rarely all of them were covered during a single interview. Different subjects had different stories and experiences and therefore were encouraged to discuss different topics from the list. The intention was to make subjects provide certain opinions and these could be acquired through different stories, depending on personal experience of each subject. Therefore, there was no need to cover all of the interview topics with each interviewee. As soon as the targeted opinions were collected, individual interview would be brought to an end. All of the interviews had been recorded and later on analyzed for the attitude comparison.

¹³¹ The word “common” is used to differentiate between two groups of interviewed subjects and not to describe in any way people in the group. The group of “common” subjects is opposed to group of “expert” subjects. The “common” group was asked about their life experience from which attitudes were later deducted in analyses. The group of experts on the other hand was directly asked to give expert opinions on series of topics relevant for the research.

The topics for the “common” people interview were structured as follows:

1. Brake-up of Yugoslavia experience

- Events in Serbia and Kosovo in the late 1980s
- Croatian national movement lead by HDZ and Franjo Tuđman
- Referendum on independence in Croatia
- Formation of SAO Krajna (Serb quasi-state)
- First news of conflicts in Croatia
- Infamous Karadžić speech in Bosnian Parliament
- Izetbegović and his *Bosniak* party (SDA)
- Referendum on independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Formation of Serb dominated quasi-states in Bosnia

2. War time experience

- First conflicts in Eastern Bosnia (city of Zvornik)
- Siege of Sarajevo
- Formation of Croatian Communities that would eventually form Croatian quasi-state in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Conflicts among Croats and Muslims (Mostar, Travnik)
- Formation of Croatian quasi-militia (HOS) and their crimes
- Destruction of Mostar’s “Old Bridge” by Croatian forces
- The fall of North Bosnian region *Bosanska Posavina* with the majority of Croatian population
- Ideas of separation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Tuđman-Milošević plan)
- Dayton peace treaty

3. Dayton Bosnia experience

- Bosnia and Herzegovina itself
- State institutions
- Cantonal institutions
- Role of the Church (especially Franciscans)
- Death of the first Croatian president Franjo Tuđman
- Death of Alija Izetbegović
- Croatian elections and results in 2000
- Split in HDZ of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Other parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Status of Republic of *Srpska*
- Željko Komšić as the first non-HDZ Croat member of The Presidency

4. In general additional questions

- What is your opinion on the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina?
- What is your opinion on dual-citizenship?
- What do you think of “Široki Brijeg incident” when a young Croat from Sarajevo, supporter of football club “Sarajevo”, was killed by Croatian police officer?
- Who represents Croatian interests in Bosnia in the best way? Why?
- What do you see as main threat(s) to Croatian population in B&H?
- How do you see the role of the Republic of Croatia?
- Do you vote on Croatian national elections? Why?
- What is your opinion on European Union and Croatia’s accession?

The second type of the interview was much more structured: the expert interview. The aim was not to acquire personal experiences but expert opinions on the topic of the research and the thesis. Therefore, as opposed to the first type of the interview, the expert interviews could move to a more general level. The information provided was used for a better understanding of the situation of Croats in B&H, conflicts among them and broader political, sociological and cultural context of it. In case of expert interviews all of the subjects are listed here by their names and their professions.¹³² All of the interviews had been recorded, however, only few allowed for their statements to be used in this thesis which does not reduce the importance and relevance of these interviews for my better understanding of the topic(s) at hand.

The expert interviews were structured as follows:

1. Franciscan Order

- Importance of history for identity formation of Croats in B&H
- “Barišić affair” from mid 19 century
- Division among Franciscan Order and possible connection with identity division

¹³² See footnotes 116 - 125

- The first years of democracy in Bosnia (political split of official Church hierarchy and Franciscans)
- The role of the Order in the WW II
- Order under the Communist rule
- Order today

2. Competing Nationalisms

- Historical importance of Croatian national idea for the identity formation of Croats in B&H
- The WWII experience (B&H under Ustaša regime)
- Importance of Republican borders in Yugoslavia
- HDZ and SDA political platform and their impact
- Media coverage of events that preceded the conflict(s)
- Impact of Tuđman's and Izetbegović's speeches
- The role of Croatia in the War in Bosnia (Gojko Šušak and the "Herzegovina lobby")
- Croatian policies of dual citizenship and trans-border voting
- Impact of 2000 changes in Croatia (policy changes toward Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- Electoral victory of Željko Komšić

3. In general additional questions

- How does political system, introduced by Dayton agreements, effect identity politics in B&H?
- What is your opinion on the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina?
- What do you think of "Široki Brijeg incident" when a young Croat from Sarajevo, supporter of football club "Sarajevo" was killed by Croatian police officer?
- What are the Croatian interests in Bosnia and Herzegovina? Who represents them in the best way?
- What do you see as main threat(s) to interests of the Croatian population in B&H?
- How do you see the role of the Republic of Croatia today compared to 10 years ago?
- What is your opinion on European Union and Croatia's accession and possible effects this might have on the Croats in B&H?

3.3. Results of the research – similarities and differences

After 37 interviews, although without representative sample, certain trends could have been established. Following the hypothesis that there is a division in attitudes (towards the state of B&H among Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as towards its reform and its future) that follows regional divisions the research aimed at either confirming or discharging such claim. The results of the first part of the research that has already been presented in the previous two chapters showed that Croats in Bosnia and Croats in Herzegovina had different historical experience which allows Cvitković to claim how “(...) to be Croat in Grude (...Herzegovina...) is one thing, and to be a Croat in Zenica or Sarajevo (...Bosnia...) is completely a different thing.”¹³³ The second part of the research (the interviews) aimed at confirming such claim and exploring how these differences reflect in people’s attitudes toward previously mentioned topics.

After analyzing the collected data, two main groups of attitudes (for the purpose of this thesis) had been crystallized. The first group contains attitudes that are shared to some extent by the majority of the interviewed subjects, while the other group contains those attitudes, relevant to this thesis, which the interviewed subjects did not share.

All of the subjects without exception expressed their Croatian identity and marked Catholicism as its main characteristic. The differences however exist and flawlessly follow the line of the regional division. Unlike those from Herzegovina, subjects in Sarajevo and Fojnice were usually referring to themselves in one of the three ways¹³⁴: as “the Catholics”, as “the Catholic Croats” or as “the Bosnian Croats”. Out of 19 interviewees only two (both male

¹³³ Cvitković, Ivan (2010) “Hrvatski identitet u Bosni i Hercegovini“ in “Hrvati u BiH: ustavni položaj, kulturni razvoj i nacionalni identitet“, Centar za demokraciju i pravo Miko Tripalo and Pravni fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Zagreb pp. 107-122 [eng. *Croatian Identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina in Croats in B&H: constitutional status. Cultural development and national identity*]

¹³⁴ It is not implied here that subjects used exclusively one of these terms. Indeed in most cases, subjects used all three terms.

between 18 and 23 years old) referred to themselves only as “the Croats”. The word “Catholic”¹³⁵ was the most used word when they talked about Croatian identity. Contrary to this, in Herzegovina: only 2 subjects used “the Catholic Croats” to identify themselves, one used it when talking about Croats in B&H in general but not when talking about himself, no one used “the Bosnian Croat” and “the Catholic” and 14 of 14 used at the same time terms “the Croat” and “the Herzegovinian”.¹³⁶

One additional difference, indirectly related to the one just mentioned, concerns the attitudes toward the neighbours of other religion. Croats from Bosnia regularly emphasized good relations with their Muslim neighbours.¹³⁷ The peaceful life and coexistence before the war was often mentioned among Croats interviewed in Sarajevo and Fojnice. When talking about pre-war period they often tell stories of visiting their Muslim friends for Muslim holidays and vice versa.¹³⁸ In Herzegovina, on the contrary, only 3 subjects in Mostar told such stories while most other people either spoke of Muslims in negative terms or expressed their respect and wish not to mingle and mix in any way. In Sarajevo and Fojnice some form of neighbourliness was regularly mentioned when discussing everyday life. All of the interviewees mentioned their non-Muslim neighbours in some context: living in the same building, sharing office space, sitting together in school, drinking together and so on. In Herzegovina non-Catholics were only mentioned as those who live on the other side of the river (in Mostar) and with whom a deal had to be made in order to maintain peace in the city. When discussing everyday business, Muslims were hardly ever mentioned and, if they were, they were not described in a positive way.

¹³⁵ Cro. “*Katolik*”

¹³⁶ Cro. “Hercegovac”

¹³⁷ Orthodox neighbors were mentioned on 4 occasions. The logical explanation reveals itself in the fact that the Croats of Sarajevo and Fojnice are predominantly mixed with Muslims while the Serb population is small.

¹³⁸ Similar stories were told in 15 of 19 interviews in Sarajevo and Fojnice.

Contrary to one part of the main hypotheses, no significant differences in attitudes towards the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina were noticed. With exception of 3 subjects from Herzegovina (one from Mostar and two from Međugorje), all other interviewees agreed that B&H is their homeland and that Croats should seek for their rights within in. In different ways 32 of 33 subjects shared concerns about huge state bureaucracy, widespread state corruption, inefficient public administration, low incomes and so on. Although I initially expected to encounter more separatism in Herzegovina, the interviews proved me wrong and revealed that interviewed Herzegovinians accept Bosnia and Herzegovina as framework within which to seek the solution to the problems. This was also confirmed in the interviews with the two members of the Canton government. However, the differences in opinions exist regarding the definition of the problem and the ways of possible solutions.

Both groups expressed their fears that Croats would disappear in Bosnia and Herzegovina if no measures were taken. Massive emigration of the Croats from B&H to, most often Croatia, was mentioned in all of the interviews and most people agreed that negative economic situation in the county is to blame.¹³⁹ Except one subject in Međugorje, none of the subjects mentioned problems that would be intrinsic to Croats.¹⁴⁰ According to these interviews, Croats are facing the same everyday problems as all the other citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The low salaries, the low pensions, the small social benefits and so on fit those problems that can easily be imagined to bother people regardless of their religion and ethnic background. No subjects thought they lived worse than the others just because they were Croats and not Bosniaks or Serbs.

¹³⁹ “The mad economic situation” is only litotes. The general despair and lack of any optimism dominated discussions on young people leaving B&H.

¹⁴⁰ The subject was interviewed in Međugorje, aged 53, mail, born in Ljubuški, Bosnia and Herzegovina (Herzegovina) who rarely discussed his personal life and most of the time talked about political issues and his views. He openly expressed his support for the Ustaše movement and stated Herzegovina is within B&H only by chance.

It was only after they were directly asked what their problems are as Croats, that subjects mentioned “the difficult life of the Croats”. The most popular ideas expressed in these cases resembled the famous saying: “Two beds and three nations”.¹⁴¹ While they remained ignorant of such issues when casually discussing their personal experiences, subjects were able to give expected and quite clear answers as soon as the conversation was framed by interviewer’s question.

In the case of the interviews in Sarajevo and Fojnice subjects talked about political issues more often as citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina and rarely as the separate political group. Most of the interviewed talked about the Croat’s problems as something shared by all the others. “It’s the same for all of us!” said one 48-year old unemployed woman in Sarajevo.¹⁴² All of them agreed that “entity politics”¹⁴³ should be abolished and reform of the state implemented. Among 19 interviewed: 15 opted for some kind of regionalization of B&H that would be immune to ethnic structure of the population, one was in favour of the centralized state and 3 were in favour of creating the third entity for Croats but only in the region of Herzegovina.

As opposed to this, different ideas were offered in Mostar and Međugorje. Out of 14 interviewees: 13 opted for the establishment of the Croat entity and one was in favour of the secession. Their main argument is that Croats are endangered; that they have to protect their interests and that the best way to do this is to insist on establishment of a separate entity within the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Only 5 expressed their opinion that Republic of Srpska should disappear, while most of other subjects agreed it should be reduced but not abolished completely. None of the subjects in Herzegovina offered convincing argument how would the third entity benefit Croats in B&H. “We need to administer ourselves on our

¹⁴¹ *cro.* “*Dva kreveta i tri nacije*”

¹⁴² *cro.* “*Svima nam je isto!*”

¹⁴³ “Entity politics” refers here to the division of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the two entities (Republika Srpska and The Federation).

own!"; "Our voices would be heard!", "We would have a television in our own language!", "If Bosniaks and Serbs have an entity, so should we!" - these were some of the most often proclaimed arguments in favour of the Croat entity. However, no one managed to explain how this (the third entity) would solve any of those problems expressed when talking about personal life experiences and everyday problems.

In respect to the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina, general conclusion of all interviewed subjects was that some kind of a reform is necessary if B&H is to survive. In the case B&H would not survive, a sentence by a 64-year old man in Sarajevo mirrors the difference between Croats in Bosnia and Croats in Herzegovina: "Those in Herzegovina will always have Croatia; we are here today and will most probably be tomorrow as well."¹⁴⁴

This chapter presented only a small portion of data collected from April 14 till April 25. Only the results that were considered to be of importance for this thesis had been selected and provided here in order to test the hypothesis that Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina disagree on the important issues of the state, its reform and its future. A short summary would therefore confirm that although Croats in B&H generally accept B&H as a framework for solving their problems, they disagree on how these problems should be solved, what kind of reform should be executed and where would B&H go in the future.

Only establishing the differences does not provide answer to many questions. The fact that the Palestinians and the Israelis have disagreements on many issues is a general knowledge and these issues are not difficult to identify. The same can apply for the situation with the Catholics and the Protestants in the Northern Ireland. However, the more relevant question would be reasons are behind these disagreements. The following chapter will offer a possible answer to the main question: "Why do the Croats in Herzegovina and the Croats in Bosnia disagree?"

¹⁴⁴ cro. "Oni u Hercegovini će uvijek imati Hrvatsku; mi smo danas tu, a vrlo vjerojatno i sutra"

CHAPTER IV- Explaining the Differences

The previous three chapters presented results of the research on Croats of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The data for the first and the second chapter of this thesis had been acquired mostly in the libraries, then with the help and the guidance of my mentors and finally through interviews with the experts on the topic. Third chapter came as a result of acquired data from series of interviews conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The aim of these chapters was to, each in its own segment, help understand the division of Croat population of B&H. The first chapter provided historical background demonstrating how Croats in Herzegovina and Croats in Bosnia had different historical experiences. The second one provided the context of the division by explaining how Croatian national identity developed and how it shaped in B&H. Finally, the third chapter provided some empirical data on how and where these differences materialize.

The fourth chapter, the present one, will offer the possible explanation for the differences presented so far. Although there are no illusions in Bosnia and Herzegovina that there is some kind of barrier between Croats in Herzegovina and Croats in Bosnia, most academic articles don't go further from establishing that Herzegovinians have strong regional identity. Mladen Ančić¹⁴⁵, Radoslav Dodig¹⁴⁶, Ivo Lučić¹⁴⁷ are just some of the authors who wrote on the topic and all of whom dedicated their articles to proving and confirming how and why is there such a strong regional identity present among Croats in Herzegovina. Although it is important to detect and describe these differences, they are of little use if no explanation for them is offered. By just establishing them we leave a lot of important questions unanswered.

¹⁴⁵ Ančić, Mladen (2005) "Što je Bosna bez Hercegovine?" in National Security and The Future 3-4 (6), pp. 87 – 127 [eng. *What is Bosnia without Herzegovina?*]

¹⁴⁶ Dodig, Radoslav (2005) "Hercegovina ili esej o „zemlji na čenaru“ in National Security and The Future 3-4 (6) 2005, pp 129 – 149 [eng. *Herzegovina or essay on "the land on the edge"*]

¹⁴⁷ Lučić, Ivo (2005) "Ima li Hercegovine? (Tko i zašto negira Hercegovinu i Hercegovce?)" in National Security and The Future 3-4 (6), pp. 37 – 86 [eng. *Is there Herzegovina? (Who and why denies Herzegovina and Herzegovinians?)*]

Contrary to those attempts to explain the division among Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina using only one dimension (the differing historical experience that nourished different identities) and thus falling into a trap of oversimplification, this chapter will offer four factors that together help understand the reasons behind the division and how it is possible.

The chapter will therefore be organized around the following four topics: 1. historical experience/regional identities; 2. political factor/failed politics; 3. population structure/”experience of the others”; and 4. unstable society/insecure future.

4.1. The Historical Experiences and Regional Identities

The historical overview of the last two centuries in the first chapter focused on Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina and paid special attention to those events and periods that had been experienced differently in Herzegovina and Bosnia. Leaning onto what has already been said there; this section will conclude how different historical experiences laid foundation for development of two different mentalities and nourished a strong regional Herzegovinian identity.

As mentioned in the first chapter, in mid 19th century the “Barišić affair” revealed serious differences in the Franciscan Order within which two lines existed: the Bosnian and the Herzegovinian. Although at first glance one might conclude this was nothing more than a conflict on the administrative issue(s), the Franciscan records from the period prove differently and indicate Herzegovinian monasteries had different traditions from those in Bosnia. These differences were not the result of just some internal Franciscan conflict but rather were influenced by broader socio-economic differences of two regions that nourished

development of the two differing mentalities. The “Barišić Affair” and the split among the Order was only the first loud and clearly visible sign that historiography recorded.

History of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as seen in the first chapter, over and over again demonstrated Croats in Herzegovina had a different historical experience and this only confirmed and furthermore sealed their regional identity. Dodig therefore today claims Herzegovina is a region with a “specific Mediterranean heritage and cultural-ethnologic characteristic”¹⁴⁸ opposed to the rest of the country (B&H).

Establishing existence of these two mentalities and regional identities is only a result of examining historical experience of Croats in Herzegovina and Bosnia. On its own, this fact provides us with a virtual border between the two groups of Croats in B&H that we can operate with. As the field research confirmed, different attitudes follow exactly this virtual line we set by examining history.

Having defined these two groups it is furthermore possible to try to use their historical experience to explain some of the differences detected in answers of subjects interviewed in Herzegovina and Bosnia. However, it should be emphasized that the historic experience, as a factor of the creation of regional identity, can not alone provide the full explanation for noted differences.

Interviews, as already indicated, showed that Croats in Herzegovina are less likely to use any form of the word “Bosnia” when self identifying themselves as opposed to Croats from Bosnia. Instead they either use the word “Croat” or “Herzegovinian”. Taking in account the proximity of the Croatian border; on numerous occasions confirmed strong links with the Croatian region of Dalmatia; specific Herzegovinian regional identity; presence of the “Četnik” movement in Herzegovina in WW II; compared to other Croats in B&H unique

¹⁴⁸ Dodig, Radoslav (2005) “Hercegovina ili esej o zemlji na ćenaru“ in National Security and The Future 3-4 (6) 2005, pp 129 – 149

negative experience of Communist rule; and experience in a war time self-proclaimed “Herceg-Bosna” autonomous region; it shouldn’t be hard to understand why is the Croatian component of identity so strong in Herzegovina.

Of these elements, probably the most important one in the last 50 years for salience of this particular Croatian-Herzegovinian identity was the experience of the Communist rule. With strong presence of the “Četnik” movement in Herzegovina region during the WW II, percentage of population joining the “Ustaše” movement was higher than in any other region populated by Croats.¹⁴⁹ After the defeat of fascist forces and with them of “Ustaše” as well, Herzegovina came to bear the un-proportional burden of responsibility for atrocities committed by the “Ustaše” regime during the war.

Cvitković notes how Communist authorities systematically discriminated against Croats from Herzegovina: they were unable to get student scholarships, unable to serve in the Yugoslav People’s Army¹⁵⁰, police forces or be appointed to any public office. Furthermore, Croats from Herzegovina couldn’t become teachers, medical personal or judges in Herzegovina. Usually these positions were filled with people from outside Herzegovina and most often not of Croatian nationality at all. This, he continues, went on for over 20 years and started to change during the early 1970s.¹⁵¹

For over 20 years Croats in Herzegovina had been discriminated only for being Croats and even more for being Croats of Herzegovina. They had been denied to feel as equal part of the Yugoslav state for too long and reminded of their Croatian identity too often. This could have only alienated Herzegovinian Croats from the state, straighten their regional identity,

¹⁴⁹ Malcolm, Noel (2002) “Bosnia: A short history“, Pan Macmillan, London

¹⁵⁰ Yugoslav People’s Army [*cro. Jugoslavenska Narodna Armija - JNA*] was considered to be one of those unifying elements in Yugoslavia. Tone Bringe highlights experience of young men in JNA as one of those that bind young men of different religion and strengthen their sense of a common belonging. For more see Bringe, Tone (1995) „Being Muslim the Bosnian Way“, Princeton University Pres, Princeton, pp. 60 - 75

¹⁵¹ Cvitković, Ivan (2006) “Hrvatski identitet u Bosni i Hercegovini“, Synopsis d.o.o., Zagreb and Sarajevo, pp. 186 – 191 [*eng. Croatian Identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina*]

embed the sense of discrimination and insecurity in it, and maintain their view that solution to their problems and difficult life lies in a break up of the Communist Yugoslavia and a Croatian self-rule.

Such historic experience provides explanation for why Croats in Herzegovina today still favour their Croat and regional Herzegovinian identity over any other (that they never actually had a chance to develop) and why they feel endangered. It also brings us closer to understanding why they believe third entity is necessary for their protection and therefore makes a favourable form of the state reform. However, to have a complete picture of where does this “autonomy” aim comes from, this chapter moves to the next factor.

4.2. The Remainings of the Failed Politics

The political factor that contributes to a better understanding of those differing attitudes that are the topic of this thesis is to a great extent linked to the already mentioned “state obsession” nature of Croatian nationalism on the one side and the failed 1990s politics implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the other. The political factor should provide the final answer why Croats from Herzegovina so much favour the “third entity” solution.

The topic of the involvement of the Republic of Croatia in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the first part of the 1990s and its role in the “Herceg-Bosna” autonomous region is a controversial one.

The current Croatian president Ivo Josipović visited Sarajevo on April 14, 2010. In his address to the state parliament president Josipović talked about destructive effects the last war had on social ties in Bosnia and Herzegovina and expressed deep regret “that Republic of

Croatia's politics in the 1990s contributed to it".¹⁵² Less than a month later in the same city his predecessor Stjepan Mesić stated that "Milošević and Tuđman were trying to divide B&H" and that this is the main reason why he left HDZ and Franjo Tuđman.¹⁵³

The response from the "other side" came when the prime minister Kosor (from the ruling HDZ) stated that Croatia had never been an aggressor but was leading a defensive war and insisted these were "the historic facts".¹⁵⁴ At the same time, one of the prominent leaders of HDZ, Andrija Hebrang criticized president Josipović by saying he "introduced Croatia as one of the world aggressors", adding Croatia had never participated in the plans for partition of B&H.¹⁵⁵

Leaving political debates aside, the facts show that Republic of Croatia was not merely a neutral observer of the events in B&H. The fact that it was President Tuđman who signed the Dayton Treaty on behalf of Croats in B&H (and not their political leader Mate Boban) is only the final confirmation. A transcript of a meeting of Tuđman with representatives of HDZ from B&H from 1991 is even clearer. President Tuđman stated the following:

"Therefore, it seems to me that, as we took advantage of this historic moment to create an internationally recognized independent Croatia, so I think it is [also] time to use [the opportunity], to gather the Croatian nation within the maximum possible borders.

¹⁵² Portal Jutarnji.hr. "Josipović se ispričao za pokušaje Hrvatske da podijeli Bosnu i Hercegovinu." *Jutarnji list*, April 14, 2010. (cro. "Duboko žalim što je i Republika Hrvatska svojom politikom u 90-im godinama prošlog stoljeća tome doprinijela"); [eng. "Josipović apologized for Croatian attempts to divide Bosnia and Herzegovina"]

¹⁵³ Tulić, Zlatko. "Mesić u Sarajevu: Milošević i Tuđman pokušavali podijeliti." *Večernji list*, May 4, 2010. [eng. "Mesić in Sarajevo: Milošević and Tuđman were trying to divide B&H"]

¹⁵⁴ Adriano, Milovan. "Kosor: Pozvat ću Josipovića, Hrvatska nije bila agresor u BiH." *Jutarnji list*, April 15, 2010. [eng. "Kosor: I will call for Josipović; Croatia was not aggressor in B&H"]

¹⁵⁵ Dauenhauer Jarić, Nenad. "Hebrang: Josipović je Hrvatsku uveo u red svjetskih agresora!." *Jutarnji list*, April 14, 2010. [eng. "Hebrang: Josipović introduced Croatia as one of the world aggressors!"]

¹⁵⁶ Lovrenović, I., Lucić, P. (2005) "Stenogrami o podjeli Bosne, knjiga prve", Kulturna rasvjeta-Civitas, Split-Sarajevo, pp. 88 [eng. "Transcripts on partition of Bosnia, the first book"]: "Prema tome, čini mi se da, kao što smo iskoristili ovaj povijesni trenutak da stvorimo samostalnu Hrvatsku međunarodno priznatu, tako mislim da je vrijeme da iskoristimo, da okupimo hrvatsko nacionalno biće u maksimalno mogućim granicama. (...) Prema tome, meni se čini, da sa jednom pametnom politikom možemo čak dovesti do toga - sa jednim pametnim

(...)

Therefore, I think, that with one smart policy we can even accomplish – one smart demarcation agreement with the Serbs in Bosnia – we can accomplish [it], instead of the war that threatens from this [not yet] settled issue and with this accumulation of the army - even [more] to make this army be a pledge of the implementation of such a demarcation.”¹⁵⁶

What Tuđman meant by the “maximum possible borders” remained unclear but according to the same transcript, the vice-president of the B&H’s branch of HDZ Božo Radić stated, that the minimum borders for him meant the 1939 borders of Banovina Hrvatska.¹⁵⁷ As mentioned in the first chapter, Banovina included the whole present day Herzegovina and smaller portions of Central and Northern Bosnia leaving significant portion of Croatian population outside of it.¹⁵⁸

Whether these thoughts had ever been put into practice can not be proved for sure. However, the fact remains that an autonomous region of Herceg-Bosna had been established and that one of the conclusions of its Presidency was that foundation of this entity provides a legal basis for unification of its territories with the Republic of Croatia.¹⁵⁹ It is also an undeniable fact that a war between Croats and Muslims broke in 1993 and ended only under pressure from international community.

Impact of such politics and events on common people must have been significant. Lovrenović emphasizes the education aspect revealing that Croatian children in Herceg-Bosna

razgraničenjem, sporazumom sa Srbima u Bosni - da možemo dovesti do toga, da umjesto rata koji prijete ovakvom neriješenom pitanju i sa tim gomilanjem armije - da čak ta armija bude zalag provedbe takvog razgraničenja.”

¹⁵⁷ Lovrenović, I., Lucić, P. (2005) „Stenogrami o podjeli Bosne, knjiga prve“, Kulturna rasvjeta-Civitas, Split-Sarajevo, pp. 100 [eng. “*Transcripts on partition of Bosnia, the first book*“]

¹⁵⁸ Goldstein, Ivo (1999) “Croatia: A History“, C. Hurst & Co. Ltd., London, pp. 128 - 130

¹⁵⁹ Komšić, Ivo (2010) “Ustavno-pravni položaj Hrvata nakon Dayton – kontinuitet depolitizacije“ in “Hrvati u BiH: ustavni položaj, kulturni razvoj i nacionalni identitet“, Centar za demokraciju i pravo Miko Tripalo and Pravni fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Zagreb pp. 7-21 [eng. “*Constitutional status of Croats after Dayton – continuity of depolitization*“ in “*Croats in B&H: constitutional status. Cultural development and national identity*“]

used Croatian history textbooks, learning about Croatian history, Croatian Geography and about Croatia as their homeland and Tuđman as their president.¹⁶⁰ Komšić forwards a statement of one Croat from Travnik region who stated that “(...) Croatian people in Travnik region (...) live with the idea of the final unification with the Croatian state and are ready to accomplish it by all the means (...)”.¹⁶¹ Based on such and similar statements it can be argued that a significant amount of Croats who felt the same, at that moment sized to be citizens of B&H in their minds and thus lost their state subjectivity. Importance of these events and these policies is that Croats in Herceg-Bosna no longer felt as a region of Croatian National Sphere but as a region of the Croatian state. At the same time, numerous Croats in the remaining parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina were left out and their experience of the war was completely different. They experienced it as the citizens of B&H, subjected to this state.

That Herceg-Bosna as a region of the Croatian state was only an illusion became obvious after Dayton, if not even before with the establishment of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a form of the renewed alliance between Croats and Muslims in 1994. However, experience of Herceg-Bosna couldn't have been just erased from the collective memory.

The people who expected/hoped to see Herceg-Bosna as part of Croatia by the end of the war now had to face new circumstances. According to the results of the field research, they dealt with it by eventually accepting Bosnia and Herzegovina as a permanent framework for solving their problems. As presented in the third chapter, virtually all of the subjects agree Bosnia and Herzegovina is their homeland and Republic of Croatia only a neighbouring country.

¹⁶⁰ Lovrenović, Ivan (2002) “Bosanski Hrvati“, Durieux, Zagreb, pp. 166 - 167 [eng. „*The Bosnian Croats*“]

¹⁶¹ Komšić, Ivo (2010) “Ustavno-pravni položaj Hrvata nakon Dayton – kontinuitet depolitizacije“ in „Hrvati u BiH: ustavni položaj, kulturni razvoj i nacionalni identitet“, Centar za demokraciju i pravo Miko Tripalo and Pravni fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Zagreb pp. 7-21 [eng. “*Constitutional status of Croats after Dayton – continuity of depolitization*“ in “*Croats in B&H: constitutional status. Cultural development and national identity*“]

However, it seems that the process of de-subjectivization of one part of Croats in B&H was irreversible. This chapter argues that request for the third entity within B&H is not only a result of the historic experience of the endangered and discriminated Croats but also a result of the remainings of the politics that created an autonomous region of Herceg-Bosna. This implies that the main responsibility for such request lies on the political elites and not on the common people.

The answers of the interviewed subjects clearly show that “third entity” solution is mentioned only when the conversation became framed by the rhetoric forced by the political elite and mass media. In their life stories, while confessing the difficulties of their everyday life’s and how they think it could be improved, none of the subjects mentioned the creation of the Croat entity.

This factor, adding to the factor of the historic experience that conditioned strong Croatian identity, explains why Croats in Herzegovina opt for the third/Croat entity when asked about how the reform of the state should look like. The Croat political elite of Herzegovina and frame they set up hold the answer to this question.

4.3. Population Structure and the “experience of the other”

The remaining two factors are relevant because they explain why the alternatives are unattractive for Croats in Herzegovina and attractive for Croats in Bosnia. So far this chapter tried to explain why Croats in Herzegovina have strong Croatian identity and why they opt for the third entity, but little had been said on why they disagree with the “other side”.

It has been mentioned in the second chapter that one of the important characteristics of the Croat identity in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the “experience of the others”. Living with members of other religious/ethnic groups and sharing everyday life with them necessarily

influences the way people perceive the world and their reality. This makes their experience unique and adds to the way they perceive themselves as well. As much as the “experience of the others” adds a specific characteristic to someone’s identity so does the lack of such experience as well.

By examining the last population census from 1991 and ethnic structure of the population, one can easily establish that it is an overgeneralization to claim that the “experience of the others” is a typical characteristic of the Croatian identity in B&H. Already a quick look at the Map 5.¹⁶² shows that in some parts of B&H there are simply no “others” to have “the experience” with.

The map is divided into counties which are coloured with one or more colours, each of which represents one of the three mayor ethnic groups in B&H: red for Serbs, blue for Croats and green for Bosniaks. The colour(s) of the each county depends on the numerical relationship between the ethnic groups and numbers show what the relationship is. Those counties that are coloured in only one colour with number “1” in it represent counties with ethnically 100% “pure” population.

As it can be seen on the map, there were six counties in 1991 populated only with ethnic Croats and all six of them were Herzegovinian counties. In addition, two more counties in the Northern part of Herzegovina had a predominant Croatian majority with 8 Croats to 1 Bosniak; that is 5 Croats to 1 Bosniak. Only in the Mostar county Croats and Bosniaks were equal in numbers with a small Serbian population.

As opposed to Herzegovina region, in Central Bosnia Croats did not have majority in almost any of the numerous counties. Except in the two counties west from Sarajevo where they were numerically largest group and the three counties south of the Zenica where they

¹⁶² See Appendix 5

were equal in numbers with Bosniaks, Croats were minority in all other Central Bosnian counties.

Based on the 1991 census it is obvious that vast majority of Croats in Herzegovina lived in ethnically homogenous counties. The only exception was the city of Mostar where Croats mixed with Bosniaks. Contrary to this, in Bosnia Croats did not have any experience with living in homogenous counties and even more, in most of them they were the smaller group of the two.

Therefore, it is not surprising that in the interviews subjects from Bosnia often included neighbours of different religion in their life stories while majority of subjects from Herzegovina did not. The simple explanation for this is: they had none to talk about.

The lack of the non-Catholic neighbours in Herzegovina on the one side and a life in mixed communities in Bosnia on the other makes one of the most important differences between Croats in Herzegovina and Bosnia. It is also a source of misunderstanding between the two groups of Croats.

When interviewed subjects from Herzegovina described Croats in Bosnia as “servile” they did so because decided to evaluate behaviour of Croats in Bosnia from their own (Herzegovinian) positions that are based on experiences that lack the element of the “others”; an element quite present in the experiences of Croats in Bosnia. The same goes for those interviewees from Bosnia who were unable to understand positions and attitudes of Croats in Herzegovina because the experience of being a predominant majority is foreign to them.

The support for the concepts of the state reform favoured by Croats in Bosnia and Croats in Herzegovina is to a great extent conditioned by the “experience of the other” or the lack of it. In this case, Croats in Bosnia base their opinion on what they see as their reality and that’s a reality of a mixed community. In the same way Croats in Herzegovina do the same but with a different reality which is a reality of “the majority”.

Therefore, for someone in the hart of Herzegovina probably seems unreasonable to accept new regional structure with regions in which Croats would no longer have absolute majority. At the same time, a Croat in Bosnia doesn't understand why this would be a problem at all since, from his/her perspective, nothing would change.

The aim of this thesis is not to offer a possible solution to this inability of Croats in B&H to understand each other's positions but only to try to explain where it comes from. It seems reasonable to conclude that in this case misunderstanding is conditioned predominantly by the structure of the population.

4.4. The unstable society

The last but not the least important factor that should help understand differences among Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina is something that, paradoxically, all Croats share and that's the lack of belief in a better future. Interviews clearly showed that all subjects without exception don't believe in the central state institutions and their capability to push the country forward. Most of the interviewees couldn't say what and by whom should be done to make things better, some expressed their fear that the county would fall apart just like Yugoslavia and one even expressed his wish to see that happen.

Lack of the consensus in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not only present in the process of decision making but is also deeply embedded in the very foundation of the state. Circumstances under which present day Bosnia and Herzegovina was formed have already been explained in previous chapters. It is crucial to see that B&H as a state is not founded on consensus but rather on two entities in a latent conflict suppressed by the pressure from the outside with results that are, least to say, questionable.

It is important to note that there are no relevant political parties along the left – centre – right continuum (with the exception of SDP¹⁶³) in legislative institutions across the country. Political parties with ethnic based programs answer to their ethnic communities instead of citizens. As Professor Pejanović indicates, “(...) mono – ethnic parties revealed themselves as poor consensus builders”¹⁶⁴ and later on concludes that thus “(t)he parliament (...) did not reach consensus among its members on the majority of questions it was deciding upon” which resulted in that “decisions were most frequently made by the High Representative of the International Community”¹⁶⁵.

Above all of this, or better to say precisely because of it, the international community introduced The Office of The High Representative (OHR) as a powerful figure to political system of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Today, this EU administrator “has the power to impose legislation directly and to dismiss elected government officials and civil servants”¹⁶⁶ on behalf of international community. It would be impossible to find any important law passed in Bosnia and Herzegovina without direct intervention of OHR.

This in short outlines what is Bosnia and Herzegovina today and what it offers to its citizens. B&H is a country in a constant state of a latent conflict, a country whose right to exist is challenged not from outside but from within, a country that has more governments than all other Balkan states together, a country that runs thanks to the international community and OHR, a country unable to provide for its citizens... What can be seen as incentive for Croats to come together as citizens of B&H and not only as Croats? What kind of cohesion

¹⁶³ Social Democrat Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina attracts votes across ethnic lines but its success is yet to be confirmed on up coming elections.

¹⁶⁴ Pejanović, Mirko (2007) “The Political Development of Bosnia and Herzegovina in The Post-Dayton Period“, TKD Šahinpašić, Sarajevo pp. 9

¹⁶⁵ Ibid pp. 15

¹⁶⁶ Chandler, David (2007) “EU State building: Securing the Liberal Peace through EU Enlargement“, Global Society, 21:4, p. 605

can Bosnia and Herzegovina as a country offer, in this particular case to Croats, to overcome differences?

At this moment, the only real thing that all Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina share is pessimism and it just might be too optimistic to expect any time soon for this to become a factor of cohesion. As long as B&H is a step from being a failed state, as long as it is unable to be a state of its citizens, Croats in Herzegovina and Croats in Bosnia will not have incentive to even look beyond their differences.

CONCLUSION

The history of Croats/Catholics in Bosnia and Herzegovina is without any doubt, at least since the 19th century, a history of a constant and more or less visible duality. From the 19th century Franciscan Order split to the War of Yugoslav Succession history on several occasions treated Croats in Herzegovina and Croats in Bosnia in different ways, making their historical experiences and collective memories unique each in its own way.

The importance of the presence of the Franciscan Order and their work for the preservation of Catholicism on the territory of today's B&H is undisputable, as well as their strong and deep relationship with the local Catholic population. As explained in the first chapter, different monastery traditions and different mentalities of the Franciscans of Herzegovina and of Bosnia came to surface in the so called "Barišić Affair". The crisis that led to the administrative division of the Franciscan Province only confirmed and sealed what Džambo refers to as the dichotomy of the two worlds.¹⁶⁷ It would be naïve to think this dichotomy existed only within the Order and was not a result of broader geographical and socio-economic differences between the two regions that must have influenced all strata of the society.

As opposed to Christians in Bosnia, in the mid 70's in highland Herzegovina, due to (traditionally) low crop income Christian peasants started fleeing into the mountains to avoid paying increased taxes which provoked brutal measures by the authorities.¹⁶⁸ This rebellious nature of Herzegovina will be confirmed even after the arrival of the Austro – Hungarian

¹⁶⁷ Džambo, Jozo. "Stoljeće fra. Grge Martića: Dihotomija svjetova franjevac Bosne Srebrene." *Zbornik radova Znanstvenog skupa Fra Grgo Martić i njegovo doba, Zagreb, 8. - 9. studenog 1995.* (1996): 48 -50. [eng. "The centuries of Fr. Grgo Martić: The dichotomy of the worlds of the Franciscans of Silver Bosnia." *Collection of papers of Scientific conference on Fr. Grgo Martić and his era*]

¹⁶⁸ Malcolm, Noel (2002) "Bosnia: A short history", Pan Macmillan, London: pp. 132

army with the so called “robbers” attacking gendarme posts and army positions.¹⁶⁹ The difficult life of peasants in Herzegovina would not change in years to come and life conditions would even deteriorate with the WW I. The experience of a harsh life during the war and after it in the interwar period (oppression of the first Yugoslavia) is something all Croats in B&H shared. This would change already in 1939 when Herzegovina and its Croats were unified with Croatia while the rest of the Bosnia and its Croats were left out.

The Second World War was approaching and consequences of it would be felt throughout the Yugoslav state. However, as it has been explained in the first and the fourth chapter, the Herzegovinian experience of the war and even more importantly, the consequences they suffered in Communist Yugoslavia were unique. Herzegovina Croats were not allowed to exercise to the full their Yugoslav citizenship and were treated as second class citizens on the basis of their ethnicity.

The final and the most recent manifestation of differences among Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina came with the 1990’s and the war that engulfed the country. Even though faced with a common enemy and same threat of (physical) elimination, Croats in Herzegovina and Croats in Bosnia showed that they view reality in different ways. The most devastating result of this would be the establishment of the “Croat Community of Herceg – Bosna”, an autonomous region officially established as a form of protection of Croats in B&H although it excluded a significant amount of Croats in Bosnia.¹⁷⁰

The differing historic experience accompanied by particular mentalities constructed a border of two regional identities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, making the Herzegovina part of it much more than just a geographical term.

¹⁶⁹ Malcolm, Noel (2002) “Bosnia: A short history“, Pan Macmillan, London: pp.138 - 139

¹⁷⁰ Ibid pp. 241 - 249

In a best Gellenerian tradition it should be noted that these differences exist within a broader Croatian identity and do not present two separate national identities. Looking at Gellner's "onion", Croatian identity would be a layer above regional identities (of Herzegovina etc.). Although they all are Croats, being a Croat in Bosnia and being a Croat in Herzegovina was, it seems, never the same thing.

The Croat component of the identity of Catholics in B&H has never been contested.¹⁷¹ As it has been in length argued in the second chapter, Catholics in B&H were "caught into" the Croatian Revival Movement and consequently, although with a delay compared to the mainstream movement, became Croats. Thus they become part of the Croatian National Sphere¹⁷² in a same way Swiss Germans are part of the German National Sphere.

At the same time, they did not become part of the Croatian National State although such aims and desires could have been heard among the elite of the Revival Movement. In 1939 this changed but just partially since only the Herzegovina and small parts of Bosnia unified with Croatia while significant number of Croats in Bosnia remained "outside". Some arguments that could be heard in 1990s based the right of Herceg-Bosna to join Croatia exactly on the 1939 "Cvetković-Maček" agreement. Again, such ideas would leave significant number of Croats in Bosnia excluded.

The Dayton treaty and the international recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina confirmed that the borders of Croatian National State coincide with the state borders between Republic of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Herceg - Bosna was suspended together with a possibility of joining Croatia and Croats in Herzegovina with time accepted the new

¹⁷¹ Indeed, some Serb nationalist writers did try to contest it but not for the sake of proving that Croat element does not exist but rather to prove it is actually the Serb element.

¹⁷² The word „sphere“ is not used to describe any kind of sphere of influence that might justify cross border interference of any state into another. The term is used in a sense of an imagined community that believes to share some common characteristics.

reality. Indeed, being a Croat in Bosnia and being a Croat in Herzegovina could have never been the same thing.

That this is very much so, confirmed the results of the interviews conducted in April 2010 in Mostar and Međugorje in Herzegovina and Sarajevo and Fojnice in Bosnia. Differences in attitudes followed the line of division between the two regions and the two regional identities. All of the subjects without exception expressed their Croatian identity and marked Catholicism as its main characteristic. However, unlike those from Herzegovina, subjects in Sarajevo and Fojnice were predominantly referring to themselves in one of the three ways¹⁷³: as “the Catholics”, as “the Catholic Croats” or as “the Bosnian Croats”. Contrary to this, in Herzegovina 14 of 14 subjects used the terms “the Croat” and “the Herzegovinian”.¹⁷⁴

Interviews also showed that Croats of B&H are aware of these differences which manifests in the way they refer to each other. Croats in Herzegovina often spoke of Croats in Bosnia as people of “servile” nature, while Croats in Bosnia referred to those in Herzegovina as “the big Croats”. The differences had also been confirmed with respect to the reform of the state. While in Bosnia interviewees favored regionalization of B&H on purely economic bases, in Herzegovina they opted for the third entity and ethnic bases.

To explain such differences just by establishing the differences on different levels would be completely insufficient and actually wouldn't answer any of the “why” questions. It would follow that Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina have different attitudes because they are different. Would such loop make much or any sense?

Establishing where the differences are, how they manifested in the past, how they manifest today and within what kind of framework did they develop is, there is no doubt,

¹⁷³ In most cases, subjects used all of the terms.

¹⁷⁴ Cro. “Hercegovac“

important for understanding why do they occur. This was the aim of the first three chapters of this thesis. The aim of these chapters was to, each in its own segment; help understand the division of Croats in B&H. The first chapter provided historical background demonstrating how Croats in Herzegovina and Croats in Bosnia had different historical experience. The second one provided the context of the division by explaining how Croatian national identity developed and how it shaped in B&H. Finally, the third one provided some empirical data on how and where these differences materialize.

However, none of these provided possible explanations for the differences presented, nor answered why Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina disagree on particular issues. The fourth chapter therefore offered a four-dimensional explanation with each dimension explaining at least one segment of differences and together providing a more understanding and more whole picture of Croats in B&H and reasons of their ongoing disagreements.

The historical dimension emphasized that the historic experience conditioned strong Croatian identity in Herzegovina. It provided explanation for why Croats in Herzegovina today still favor their Croat and regional Herzegovinian identity over any other (that they never actually had a chance to develop) and why they act as though constant under threat. It also shed some light on why they believe third entity is necessary for their protection.

The political dimension indicates that the request for the third entity within B&H is not only a result of the historic experience of the endangered and discriminated Croats but also a result of the remainings of the politics that created an autonomous region of Herceg-Bosna. This adds to the previous dimension by explaining furthermore why Croats in Herzegovina opt for the third/Croat entity when asked about how the reform of the state should look like.

The population structure dimension ascertained that the lack of the non-Catholic neighbors in Herzegovina on the one side and a life in mixed communities in Bosnia on the

other makes one of the most important differences between the two groups of Croats and also a source of misunderstanding among them. The experience of being minority in Bosnia and experience of being in predominant majority in Herzegovina explains why Croats from Herzegovina and Bosnia find it so difficult to understand each other's positions. Their answers in the interviews are in consistence with the fact that groups with a status of regional minorities and groups with a status of regional majority do have different attitudes and views concerning majority-minority relations in general.

The last dimension provides insight into the current situation of the state of B&H and the society as a whole. Its chronic inability to function properly and provide for its citizens makes it difficult to develop any "warm" feelings towards it. Lučić refers to the state of B&H as a "stepmother" as opposed to a real mother.¹⁷⁵ As long as B&H is a step from being a failed state, as long as it is unable to be a state of its citizens, Croats in Herzegovina and Croats in Bosnia will not have incentive to even look beyond their differences and see a link between them in the state they share.

Therefore the different historical experiences, manipulation of the elites, the structure of the population and the ongoing instability of the state, conditioned different realities in Herzegovina and in Bosnia which is a main reason behind differing attitudes of its population. Because of different realities, Croats in Herzegovina and in Bosnia find it difficult to come to an agreement and even more, to even understand each other.

As Brubaker noted, groupness is a result of the way people perceive their reality. Considering the four dimensions mentioned in the fourth chapter, the existence of the two differing notions of realities should not be a surprise. It is precisely in these differing notions conditioned by the historic experience, influence of the political elite, structure of the

¹⁷⁵ Lučić, Ivo. "Ima li Hercegovine? (Tko i zašto negira Hercegovinu i Hercegovce?)." *National Security and The Future* 3-4, no. 6 (2005): 37 – 86. [eng. *Is there Herzegovina?(Who and why denies Herzegovina and Herzegovinians?)*]

population and the permanent state instability that one should seek for the sources of different attitudes between Croats in B&H. The dichotomy of the worlds of Croats in B&H, it would seem, continues in the 20th century as well

The aim of this thesis was never to offer a possible solution for overcoming these differences among Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina that clearly exist. The intention was only to provide a better understanding of those differences and why they manifest the way they do. I conclude that understanding different ways Croats in B&H perceive their realities holds the answer to differences among them. How to overcome it is a question left for some future thesis.

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Appendix 1

Map 1. Bosnia and Herzegovina



“Map of Bosnia and Herzegovina” [map]. Visual Scale. *Atlas of The World: Bosnia and Herzegovina*.

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Appendix 2

Map 2. The map of “Banovina of Croatia”



Draganović, K. Stj. “Banovina Hrvatska, 1939. - 1941.” [map 18]. In: Sančević, Zdravko. *Pogled u Bosnu*. Zagreb: Naprijed, 1998. (pp. 82)

Appendix 4

Map 4. Map of the post-Dayton Bosnia



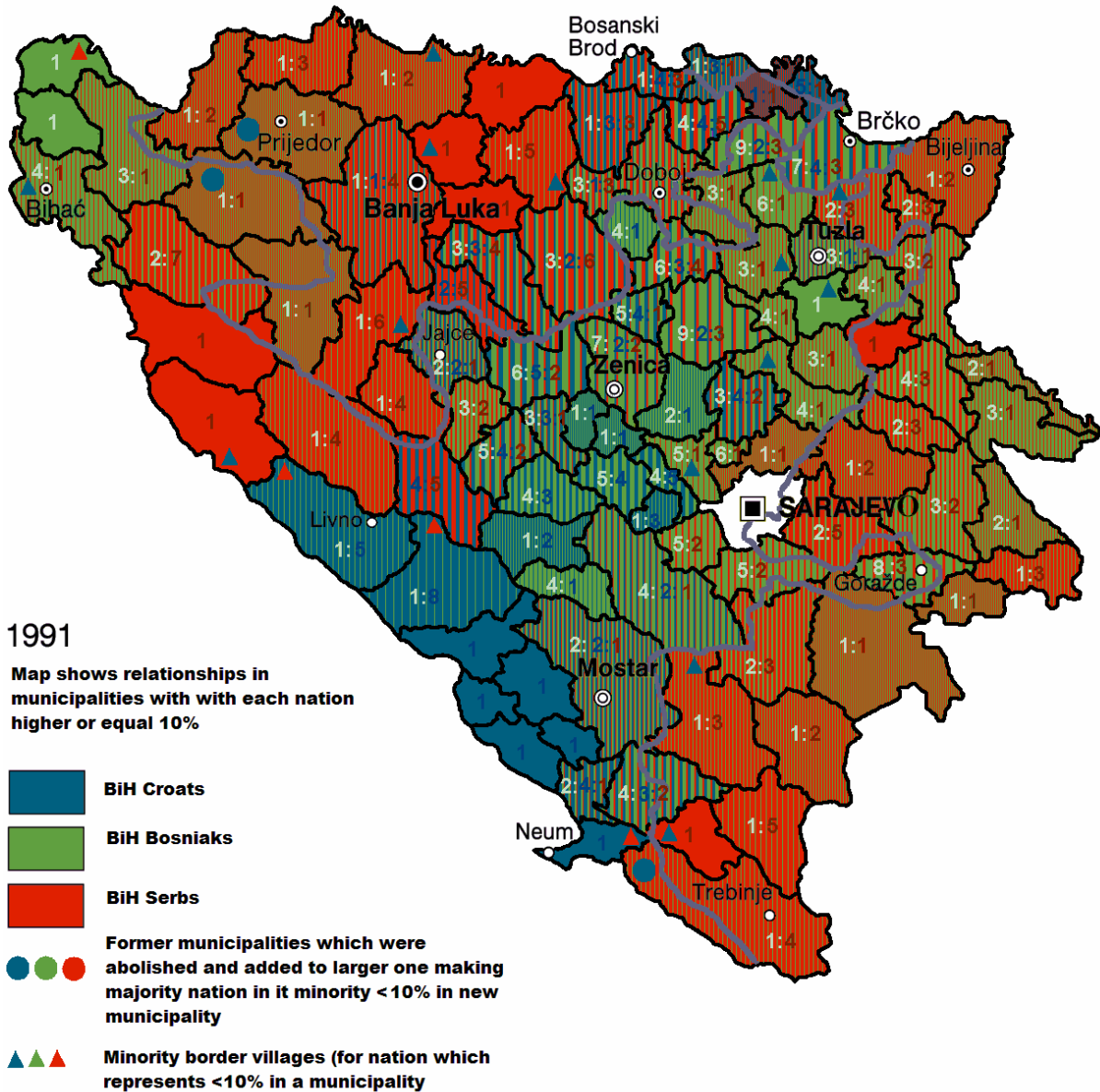
“Dejtonska karta Bosne i Hercegovine” [map]. Visual Scale. *Deutsche Welle : Bosnia and Herzegovina*.

http://www.dw-world.de/image/0,,3471801_1,00.jpg (May 22, 2010)

Appendix 5

Map 5. The ethnic composition of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1991

Ethnic composition before the war in BiH (1991)



Draganović, K. Stj. "Konfesionalna karta Bosne i Hercegovine." [map 17]. In: Sančević, Zdravko. *Pogled u Bosnu*. Zagreb: Naprijed, 1998. (pp. 79)