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Bosnian Women Focused Trauma NGOs Impact on Subject Formation With Regard to Health and Gender

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Bosnian Women Focused Trauma NGOs Impact on Subject Formation With Regard to Health and Gender

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Anthropology

by

Ivana Topalovic

September 2017

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Women Focused Trauma NGOs Impact on Bosnians’ Subject Formation With Regard to Health and Gender

by

Ivana Topalovic

Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in Anthropology
University of California, Riverside, September 2017
Dr. Christine Ward Gailey, Chairperson

The war in Bosnia officially ended in 1995 following outrage over the Srebrenica massacre, in which over 8,000 civilians were slaughtered over only a few days. Twenty years later, long after the foreign aid apparatus had vanished, the only two surviving Non-Governmental Organizations are focused on trauma and resilience of Bosnian women. However, while their work began with overcoming traumatic events, locally run NGOs find themselves as grassroots organizers and support mechanism for living with austerity and the political manipulation and constant revival of trauma. The state becomes further divorced from power because the triple presidency—a separate government for each of the major ethnicities in the region—tends to cancel each other’s decision. Moreover, the support superstructure --management and funding brought in from the outside to to organizations helping with rebuilding and basic services—that was created by departing
foreigners has largely been abandoned. The result is that the remaining grassroots NGOs face the continuing need with fewer or no external resources to help.

The study focuses on two particular NGOs in the region, Bosfam and Medica Zenica. While both are dealing with the same issues outlined above, the communities in which they are embedded make for two very distinct approaches. Tuzla, in which Bosfam is located, has a strong tradition of worker-managed factories, based in Marxist tradition, for which Tuzla has been famous over the past 50 years through the Yugoslav exclusive worker management programs. To this day Tuzla is the least ethnically divided of Bosnia’s larger towns and cities. Zenica, where Medica Zenica operates, had little exposure to warfare: the trauma here is deindustrialization—a loss of 20,000 jobs during the war which were never regained.

As the region tries to recover from the never-ending transition into a democratic civil society, Bosfam uses a return to unity through interethnic traditional female labor within the neoliberal construct of Oxfam, by selling their product and pulling themselves up out of poverty. Departure from the neoliberal model is shown in the way Bosfam conceptualized the effort as communal rather than individual support. Medica Zenica, on the other hand, provides medical and psycho-social support for the more urban community of the previously industrial town of Zenica. Their focus is on domestic violence and the perception of women within the community, courts, and politics. Both of the models tend to exclude young men and non-Srebrenica victims. Their success is seen as an affront to excluded groups and is used by politicians for divisive politics.
In this setting, the NGOs created different types of subjects in dialectical relationship to the circumstances of the communities and populations served. Typically, subject formation is theorized as a top-down imposition or an institutionally created process if seen as bottom-up. The project questioned these formulations and suggests a dialectical process of community-NGO subject formation, with resultant diversity in the kinds of subjectivity created.
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INTRODUCTION

“Whatever doesn’t kill you f***s you up for life”

-Facebook Post of a native of Zenica 2016

Although this seemed like any other attention-grabbing post on Facebook, my assistant--a young woman who had spent her entire life in Bosnia’s civil war and post-conflict Sarajevo--and I knew instantly what it meant in the context of the young people to whom the post was directed. We had spent many evenings in the company of a group of eight 20-35 year old young men in Zenica. These neighbors of ours had attended higher learning institutions and now found themselves unemployed in a post-conflict Bosnia. The young men had nowhere to go and nothing to do except loiter in the neighborhood and visit with neighbors. This group became the nucleus for a snowball sample of young men, so often overlooked by NGOs for reasons we will explore below. Some of their mothers had spent time in the anti-domestic violence safe house in Zenica. At times they would tell us about their fathers and grandfathers and their work at the formerly famous Zenica iron factory, knowing that there was no way for them to anticipate any kind of economic stability. Employment had dropped from 20,000 to 2,000 employees after the post-conflict privatization of the local industry. There is 70% unemployment even 20 years following the conflict (Horvat 2015, 17). Persistent unemployment and continued deindustrialization provided the context where Bosnians who read the Zenica native’s Facebook post would understand the frustration and bleak humor. The post implicitly decried 20 years of foreign involvement and the failure at reconstructing a functioning
state during that time, and the expectation that individuals should be able to pull
themselves out of the quicksand of the tripartite Bosnian state. Indeed, Bosnia’s first
postwar generation moving into adulthood today is not gaining strength through their past
suffering: although they wish to remain, leaving the country often seems the only option
if they wish to have any kind of economic stability.

This pattern of worsening conditions, unemployment, fragmentation of the state
and eroded state investment in infrastructure, as well as increased mental and physical
issues for many Bosnians brings us back to the Facebook quote. The expectation of the
donors—perceived as foreigners from “the West”—is that Bosnians should be stronger,
taking entrepreneurial advantage within the structure of the Free Market. Instead, the
“free market” experience has led Bosnians—judging from social media—to consider
themselves “f***d for life”, since everything seems to worsen year by year. They
experience symptoms of trauma, for which there seems to be no cure and, as we shall see,
are exacerbated by cultural and structural reminders of the initial trauma generated by
some NGOs and political parties. But at the same time, they face an economic future at
the level of bare survival. Politicians, even those who are not corrupt, appear incapable
of getting anything done without foreign aid. While I assumed, before going to Bosnia,
that communal trauma from the war, and the way Bosnian’s attempt to live with it would
be my main area of focus for this project, I noticed that unstable and divisive politics, the
economy play as large a part in impacting trauma symptoms as much as the actual
memory of the war.
In her work Kimberly Cole, an anthropologist who worked with NGOs aiding with Bosnia’s first post-war election, shows the attitude of foreign NGO workers towards the Bosnians, who were unprofessional, lazy and always late (Cole 2007, 34). As seen in the work of Katherine Verdery time in socialist countries was organized differently: punctuality was not conceived the way it is in Euro-American capitalist societies (Verdery 1996, 27). Similarly in Bone Woman, a book by a forensic anthropologist who worked on massgraves, the local population was dismissed in their request to stop opening massgraves dating to the 1990’s conflict, as they were coping with grief in their own way (Koff 2005, 12). Overlooking not only the different socio-economic environment Bosnians were raised in, as well as the fact that they had just survived years of brutal warfare, did not occur to foreign workers who attributed the failure of an economic Rostow style “take off” on Bosnians’ mentality (Rostow,1959, 5).

Foreigners’ lack of insight into the hardships of Bosnians can be elucidated by Foucault’s critique of liberal economies and his understanding of Naturalism, the assumption that the free market is natural. This theorization, coupled with Weber’s protestant work ethic, explains why the focus of international intervention was on management and the creation of an “environment conducive for freedom and peace to grow” (Foucault 2010, 63). More productive of community well-being would be efforts to forge an ethnically unifying country with investment in job-creating industries, as opposed to the privatization of local industries and their sale to the highest bidder. The approach taken, coupled with the fragmentation of the state, set up the conditions for the emergence of a cleptocracy, underwritten by the scrapping and selling of the
manufacturing sector, for the benefit of a few, without any regard for the community to which it used to provide employment.

The impact of this socio-economic and political situation deeply affected trauma survivors, as will be explored in subsequent chapters. Compounding the problem was the functioning of trauma-geared NGOs that turned to economic empowerment, women’s rights, and victims’ rights into legislative rather than community action. The result of this focus on legal solutions rather than local empowerment produced a continuing sense of powerlessness on an already traumatized population. This dialogue of influences on subject formation between the NGOs and their client base, as well as the population at large would become more visible as the project progressed.

DISCOURSES, LOCAL AND NATIONAL

There are several key discourses actively or unknowingly influencing subject formation. Beliefs and agendas from different national, local, and international backgrounds and ideologies have been channeled through Non-Governmental Organizations; these organizations are mediators between foreign donors and the local population. To the frustration of foreign policy-makers and many policy scholars, the local population pushes back against the creation of neoliberal subjects.

My key question before I went into the field was to explore the long term effects and local approaches to trauma as forms of subject formation, as they were mediated through local Non-Governmental Organizations. I soon found that the trauma of the recent conflict is not only an issue of mental health, instead it is embedded in a complex
tapestry of subject formation. Political changes following the war did not help people to overcome communal trauma. The plummeting economy and a government removed from effective control over reconstruction led political parties to focus on individual accumulation of wealth through corruption. The politicians used and continue to use ethnic or religious affiliations, memories of trauma, and economic uncertainty to manipulate the community. Foucault notes that when the state loses the power to regulate the economy, and in Bosnia’s case the police and military, as they are still under UN supervision, it resorts to Biopolitics (Foucault 2004, 21-22). Foucault’s concept refers to the physical control of citizens’ bodies to exert political power in the absence of other means for imposing power. However, the Bosnian state does not have the funding to enforce anything that could be conceived of as a Biopolitical agenda (reproductive rights, deserving and undeserving health care recipients, treatment of political and other prisoners, exclusion of populations based on perceived physical traits, and the like). A budget for the state is a precondition for control over people’s physical health in any manner save one: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Trauma can be activated and have numerous effects on the health of thousands in a post conflict setting through a number of means, including political statements meant to provoke fear of “the other”. Re-traumatizing groups through fanning fears of a return to active conflict helps ethno-nationalist parties, that in almost all cases refuse to work together for the betterment of the general population. These dynamics will be illustrated in subsequent chapters.

I timed my arrival in Bosnia for the 20 year anniversary for the Srebrenica genocide, which occurred in July of 2015. The civil war divided Bosnia into the Croat
Catholic/Bosniak Muslim Federation and the Orthodox Serbian Republic with Sarajevo at
the cross-hairs, literally a divided city. The anniversary was certain to be a major event
where a range of the political dynamics linking political parties and local communities
would frame the events. I hoped initially that some of the events at least might be
conciliatory. While I knew this would be a key event for my own research, I had
underestimated the impact it would have on the well-being of Bosnians from all
ethnicities. The Srebrenica massacre took a center place in this study after seeing the
reactions on both sides of the capital of Bosnia: Sarajevo. I visited two families on the
federation side and then spent my evening with two families of the Republic side, as I
anticipated that interviews would be fairly long, and they were. On the Federation and
the Republic side there was crying and acute tension within the families due to the
resurfac ing fear that the war they experienced would return. On both sides at least one
family member was taking Apaurin, a form of valium widely distributed by Bosnian
doctors to people experiencing stress symptoms. I did not expect the crying, the fear, the
memory of war coming to anyone over 20 who had some experience of it, or the younger
people who spent their entire lives hearing from their parents what it was like. The
proceedings surrounding the anniversary opened old wounds, and made obvious how
much built up fears and stress still have an impact after two decades. That day I did not
hear the clever, dark humor so typical of, and valued by Bosnians of all ethnicities. The
nationalist parties focused on the divisive history of the event. This stood in stark contrast
to the efforts of Bosfam, one of the key NGOs in my study, that planned to discuss a
unifying memorial rug serving as a backdrop for all the speakers at the anniversary event.
Bosfam had prepared a presentation, explaining the genesis of the patchwork rug and how it was made by women of all backgrounds. It was meant to emphasize the unifying history makes it Bosnian rather than Muslim, Catholic or Orthodox. The event itself drew coverage by online news sources, television, and a few days later, the printed press. The coverage walked through every second of memorials: Bill Clinton talked at the cemetery where victims were buried with the memorial rug as a stunning visual backdrop for all speakers that day. But there was no coverage of the conciliatory rug. This is where Foucault’s Biopolitics, with a low overhead cost for the state, came into play.

Here again we can see the preconditions for a particular type of biopolitics. In Bosnia as there are three presidents, cabinets, sets of ministers, each from a nationalist party and not willing to work with each other. The Serbian representatives are trying to become independent from the rest of Bosnia, showing just how divided the governments are. Economically the state has no oversight over the market due to the call for a completely open market by post-war reconstruction loans. This brings prevalently German products into Bosnia, with a high profit yield for German companies, as was explained to me by a Tuzla NGO leader, who was not part of Bosfam but instead part of the groups who protested against the Bosnian government in 2014. Indeed, markets are filled with German goods, and the subtly named “Konzum” supermarket franchise, has recently begun a campaign bragging about the 100’s of Bosnian-made products they carry. He noted the local frustration over the deals made with German companies to the exclusion of local industry as well as higher pricing. The government has not taken steps
to remedy the exclusion of whatever industry is left in Bosnia after conflict and
dismantling of what remained after the war on the newly open market.

State funding for health is also dwindling: there are 6 month waits for any kind of
appointment. Bosnia, thus, would not fall into the typical exercise of biopower by the
state. Instead state-affiliated agents and agencies deploy means to ensure their sinecures.
They are keenly aware of the impact frequent strategic reminders of trauma can do if the
trauma is prevalent in the majority of citizens. Fomenting fear has come to be expected
by the trauma-focused NGOs I worked with.

All citizens went through this every year on July 14th. The Serbs rallied their
people to the nationalist party as they would protect better than pro unification parties,
which could not be trusted to protect the Serbs from the revenge of the Federation. The
same played out on the other side. Nationalist parties were safe once again. All other
concerns fell away with the fear of war being returned once again. NGOs expect to see
an uptake in their clients’ trauma symptoms around election time and around the
anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre.

But Bosnians I interviewed in regard to their understanding of what constitutes, or
defines mental and physical health--key questions in my survey—did not identify politics
as a central triggering issue. Instead, my interviewees consistently talked about not
having stable employment as the biggest health risk for Bosnian residents, and not only
because of the monetary compensation, but also because of the importance of the dignity
and purpose that labor provides. Not surprisingly Bosfam, one of the two key NGOs I
focused on, has labor in its name: Bosnian Family, Beauty, and Labor. The dignity of labor was a significant aspect of national ideology in socialist Yugoslavia. Though the socio-political environment has changed, ideas of solidarity and the value of all labor persist in Tuzla, and is reflected in Bosfam. It remains a key point Bosfam’s leadership uses to help their clients.

The quote is a stark reminder that the nation and its citizens have not become stronger but instead feel like the war and following failure of reconstruction has made their situation precarious in ways they did not anticipate. I found three issues, namely, communal trauma, divorcing the state apparatus from political power, and an economic downward spiral, were being addressed by grassroots NGOs. The NGOs were aware of the harm done by memorial services and the aggressive fear-mongering by nationalist parties still in power.

This focus on the fear of a return of civil conflict conveniently deflected questions about the economy and employment, in spite of people’s complaints about how strongly poverty affects public health and in spite of protests against government corruption. This was demonstrated when regardless of protests and widespread dissatisfaction, nothing changed at the polls. Nevertheless, in answer to the survey, individuals viewed their employment or lack of it, and having money or not as the key determinants of mental and physical health. Good doctors and timely health care cost money: being unemployed or lack of money for such basic needs causes stress, shown in numerous studies to exacerbate trauma (Kleck 2006). In the initial survey (see Appendix 1) there was no option for economic impact on mental health, yet all of the seventy-eight regularly
scheduled interviews brought that up unprompted. These results made me revise and revisit the responses for a more detailed review of the way economics relates to the subject formation of Bosnians today. I linked subsequent responses through the programs designed and enacted by Bosfam and Medica Zenica, both of whom have not only built in economic help but also add the dignity of labor as essential to humanity into their outreach.

ECONOMY

The economic philosophy utilized by European and American development policy, channeled through the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to Bosnian NGOs, comes out of the Enlightenment. Rather than liberalization, Foucault terms the resultant philosophy a naturalization of the free market as natural and fair, with a need to have the government exercise as little control as possible over the market (Foucault 2005, 61). Contemporary Bosnia, however, is a prime example of a state in which the local government is powerless to regulate markets, and where the market is unrestricted to “naturally” play itself out, ostensibly to the benefit of everyone in the community and to sustain a free and stable state.

The market in the former Yugoslavia prior to 1991 was run with heavy state regulation, although with more freedom than most communist countries at the time. The factories were officially worker-managed, and often state-owned. Small businesses and international trade were allowed. The borders were open to all citizens and any foreign business they wanted to conduct, as opposed to the much heavier restrictions within the
Soviet Union. To understand post-Yugoslav economics, I turned toward Foucault’s discussion of the naturalized understanding of the market. We also need to consider the transition into globalized “liquid” capital discussed by Bauman as well as Ferguson’s discussion of development (Foucault 2010; Ferguson 1994; Bauman 2001).

Bauman’s work picks up where Foucault’s ends and explores the separation of power from politics, and the subjugation of the nation state into the service of “liquid capital” with low or minimal accountability to the population; this form of state emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union and in fact the whole Soviet Bloc. The subsequent state formations, this, were not as linked to cold war political interests, and allowed for continued aid to Yugoslavia. Bosnia relied on wealthier states of the Yugoslav Socialist Federation for its financial stability. In Bosnia specifically the separation of political power from the state has occurred on all levels and has had a broad effect on daily life as well creating a sense of precarity for the entire population. This is also why Bosnia’s conflict was the most brutal one, and its postwar situation economically the most severe (Horvat and Stiks 2015). Although this liquidity permeates most of the contemporary world, it is deeply affected by external political, and aid structures starting with the policies of the Bretton Woods Post Washington Consensus organizations down to the locally run Non-Governmental Organizations (Mosse and Lewis 2005, 5). These aid organizations fund mental and physical health care for Bosnian women that is not being provided by continually shrinking state social services. Foreign funding agencies like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, whose financial contribution is meant not just to stabilize the country, but as a foreign policy writer notes create an irreversible
democracy and create civic-minded subjects and Civil Society within the local population after the conflict (Belloni 2007, 12). Local Non-Governmental Organizations, also known as “Force Multipliers”, by the U.S. government. As stated by Collin Powell that: “The NGOs are such a force multiplier for us, such an important part of our combat team. (Rieff 2002, 236), are put in place to encourage and assist in the building civic society infrastructure shaped around a free market philosophy. Ferguson’s work is even more so critical of the work of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, though he is clear not to state that there is no sinister plot involved in these policies, but rather many well-intentioned people organizing together in a way that happens to depoliticize the state and poverty (Ferguson 1994, 256).

BOSNIAN POLITICS AND COMMUNAL TRAUMA

For the intended Bosnian audience, the opening quote resonates with endearing colloquial expressions and dark humor; it serves as a broad and multi-faceted commentary on and critique of, the hardships of living with war trauma, the trauma of deindustrialization, the deterioration of the state economically and institutionally, as well as daily struggles to survive in the chaos, while also calling to mind the hard-hitting, to-the-point, deeply ironic attitude of Bosnians. These are ingrained in Bosnian culture and assist people in coping with the “desert of post-socialism” and the ongoing aftermath of war (Horvat and Stiks 2015). Despite this, forty-seven of my participants have let me know that it is not all about the war, that the war does not define their lives. Frankly, many were tired of discussing the war, which is why I focused interviews on their contemporary situation. The economic situation and political landscape are in fact not
shaped solely by a conflict 20 years in the past, but instead reflect part of a continuing trend of Balkan politics over the past 200 years, as well as an outcome of foreign post-war policy of transition, and corrupt local politics using all of the above factors to manipulate the landscape to their own favor and set up an elite similar to those critiqued by Djilas during the communist era of Yugoslavia (Drapac 2010, 7; Glenny 2001). Many historic, contemporary, internal and international variables beyond the brutal conflict are shaping Bosnia and its inhabitants today.

BOSFAM AND MEDICA ZENICA

Over the past two years I have interacted with Bosfam, a Tuzla-based NGO, in place since the mid-1990s and created by refugees who came to Tuzla following the Srebrenica massacre which occurred in 1995. This event was considered the largest massacre of civilians in Europe since World War II. Over 8,000 Bosnians, mostly Muslim men of fighting age, were executed in the course of a few days within a declared UN safe zone. To this day this event is a key political marker and is used not only as a symbol of grief, or a call for justice, but also as powerful leverage in elections, negotiations, and funding requests. During my interviews, even direct victims of this massacre have not been happy with what many Bosnians perceive as the exploitation of these tragic events for the gain of individual politicians or political movements that are not to community benefit, or sometimes even directly opposed to policy that would benefit survivors. Some examples of that are politicians using Srebrenica on the Federation side to instill fear in constituents to get elected along ethnic lines.
Many refugees from Srebrenica also fled to Zenica, another Bosnian town that did not see as much fighting as some other towns and cities in the region. Medica Zenica was established to aid the rising population of predominantly refugee women in need not only of war trauma treatment, but also access to primary physicians as needed and gynecological services. Following the war as the need for the organization did not diminish, but instead changed course to incorporate job placement, education, continued trauma treatment, as well as a safe house and a full-on campaign for women’s rights and against domestic abuse (Medica Zenica 2010). The organization prides itself on its clearly defined modern feminist approach to their project. In a conversation with Sabiha Husic, the current leader of Medica Zenica, she discussed the basis of the foundation to be implementation of women’s rights based on European standards. This includes professional training for women, and not a focus on traditional rural crafts. Their medical approach, which includes gynecologists and of course their impressive safe house, they are not focused entirely on traditional rural solutions to mental health, economic and political solutions. Unlike Bosfam, which while it cares about women’s equality, and is organized by women, adopts a traditional Bosnian approach to women’s rights. This includes craft making and informal sitting down and chatting, as distinct from professional psychiatric and medical treatment, as well as memorial quilts which are the political aspect of Bosfam’s work. Both organizations are dealing with all three major issues (political use of trauma, economics, and mental and physical health) but in different ways. While the crafts, such as are traditionally Bosnian, Oxfam, the grant providers who helped start the program, have funded arts and crafts based women’s
economic post conflict empowerment since the 1960’s and this project was a continuation of that, although it has fitted well within the parameters of the needs of the local population and has been run exceptionally well on a local level, unlike the many organizations who closed due to mismanagement of funds, incompetence, or corruption, to the point that it has become self-sufficient today through using the Oxfam structure of economic empowerment from the ground up (Rugendyke 2007, 11). Bosfam, in its success, has survived unlike many similar programs which have closed their doors.

While these institutions both came into place during the civil war of the 1990’s, their continued existence, and the need for them, is what makes this project relevant to understanding the impact they have had on subject formation and the way gender, trauma, and the new free market democratic processes affect the ways Bosnians understand themselves, their community, and their place internationally. Subject formation through the influence of external agencies and as an extension of foreign policy in strategically significant locations such as Bosnia is nothing new, Bosfam and Medica Zenica however are more complex in that the leadership on the ground is, and has been since the outset, entirely from within the affected population. Due to the way grants and donations work and the philosophies of the local leadership, both organizations have had influence in shaping their local population’s subject formation processes over the last twenty years, on par with the local environment, and transnational politics linked to funding sources.
As most of the surviving victims are women, due to the rules of men seen automatically as combatants and women as victims, there are fewer deaths of women. As the organizations in their funding applications emphasized helping Muslim women, who are the “official” victims, the unofficial victims being the bystander civilians from the Serbian side, deemed officially as aggressors instead. In addition women were assaulted by UN soldiers, a topic that is rarely breached, much like Ringelheim’s discussion of Jewish women assaulted by those who hid them from NAZIs during World War II (Ringelheim 1990). There was no place where victimhood was crystallized as being a white European Muslim woman in Bosna than the Ms. Occupied Sarajevo beauty contest, where the young blonde Muslim woman in a bathing suit stood in front of a banner entitled: “Please don’t let them kill us” (Kothe 1999). This was a large publicity statement in tandem with diaries of two middle school-age girls, completely depoliticized accounts of their time during the siege. White Muslim women became the ultimate victims to be saved by West Europe’s patriarchal protectors, focusing on Serb atrocities, which were aimed at Muslim women. These women were to be raped in a twisted version of eugenic war time policy, to add purer blood to the next generation. Still these official dialogues on gender and victimhood become problematic as their official discourse and omission of other groups’ suffering is used to feed into political propaganda, discussed further in Chapter 2.

The concept of gender has become a dead buzzword, which everyone in development officially addresses though the results are often questionable or difficult to
assess. As Howard Zinn notes in his discussion of women’s rights in the Americas: “An oppression so intimate is hard to defeat” (Zinn 2004, 27). Within the world of funding agencies gender is always included, but without a concrete way to measure success considering that oppression of women is based within the family and rooted in religious patriarchy within their families, work environments, and friendship circles.

In Bosnia the view of women is complicated through the approach to gender inequality by the socialist state and its approach to creating equality. While there was a woman’s organization in the Former Yugoslavia, known as the AFZ, the Anti-Fascist League of Women. It was disbanded by the Yugoslav government 1953, in spite of 250,000 participating, because of its purported “excessive and aggressive involvement in politics.” The socialist state then used the excuse that the AFZ was no longer necessary, because legally as women were already considered equal to men. Of course, that was not the case (Horvat and Stiks 2015, 187). For example, fathers had more rights in court regarding child custody and women’s educational funding, which was supposed to be free to all citizens, was revoked if they became pregnant. International Women’s Day was celebrated with a day off work for all women and financial bonuses from employers. Unfortunately, in practice many men got drunk on International Women’s Day while the women were out of the office, and came home with predictable battering results.

Any complaints about a lack of equality was quickly silenced by the “but women are equal now” argument. Men, whom I interviewed outside of Zenica, believed that both husband and wife are responsible for domestic abuse, and that men not helping around the house was not a women’s rights issue, because they personally believed in
women’s equality so they could not be misogynistic. Women knew better, and complained as soon as they were away from their husbands in interviewing situations. Many younger women said they would never get married, because they knew it would turn them into domestic workers on top of their employment workload. Based on a survey done in the 1970’s among Bosnian women, social and self-managing engagement, meaning the socialist equality labor project in which workers managed their own factories, was a the key aspect of the specific socialism Tito was running:

35.7 per cent of respondents [women during the socialist period of Yugoslavia in the 1970’s] replied that it meant only numerous additional duties, for 16.4 per cent it meant nothing, 12.8 per cent expressed no opinion on the matter, while 32 per cent saw such engagement as a source of numerous benefits.

(Horvat and Stiks 2015, 245)

Medica Zenica claims Bosnian Women’s AFZ heritage as leaders in political and legal cases pressing for women’s rights, their biggest success being the establishment of rape as a war crime. Bosfam’s Beba Hadzic, in conversation with me also claimed the AFZ heritage, although it deals with women’s rights in a traditional way, by providing customary women’s crafts as a form of therapy and economic empowerment. Bosfam leadership does not engage in the political feminist project the way Medica Zenica does, by trying to change policy for domestic abuse or making rape a war crime, among some of their more famous projects. Bosfam instead uses traditional resources, by giving rural women access to craft supplies, and helping them with higher education resources for
their children. The income provided to women is one of Hadzic’s main concerns. The leader of Bosfam, remembers the AFZ and is highly educated, but she knows that broadcasting publicly about the supports given to women, might actually make it more difficult for women. These women may not be seeking a safe house, but still need help to have a safe place not labeled as a safe house. Labeling a place a safe house, Bosfam argues, would make it more dangerous in some instances especially for rural women.

Though Bosfam does provide referrals to broader services, they have created a safe zone hidden in plain sight, under the banner of traditional crafts. These two different approaches on the surface seem to be contrasting projects, but their leadership is equally well educated and concerned with the same women’s issues. Their differences may in part reflect serving, and being aware of, different populations.

POST-CONFLICT RECOVERY OR PRIVATE SECTOR ACCUMULATION?

While I focused most of my time and effort on Medica Zenica and Bosfam in my time in Bosnia I also interviewed staff from nine different NGOs in the area, all of them dealing with mental health and women’s rights; among them one addressed anti-corruption, one HIV patient and care-giver support, and one East Sarajevo group focused on adolescent health, including drug abuse. Three of them had closed in the mid-2000s and clients, donors, and staff have varying expectations from NGOs and what it is that needs to change within the country to regain stability and a higher standard of living. In two of the recently closed NGOs there was suspicion of corruption. Points of view differ not only based on whether they come from foreign government representatives, transnational funding committees, local NGO leaders, local politicians, employees,
clients, or ordinary Bosnians. All of these groups act on each other in different ways, though my focus here is how NGOs act as a conduit and a place of conflict for these different perspectives, how much of an impact they have, how much they push back on either side, and what that means for subject formation in Bosnia. NGOs, particularly Medica Zenica and Bosfam, are addressing distinctively different audiences simultaneously, local clients and funding agencies, local political and religious leaders and, of course, their own staff. Their engagement with these various groups, and need to reconcile them into functional projects for all sides, reveals the dynamics shaping Bosnian communities today.

Initially, starting post-conflict in 1995, most of the NGOs in place were funded by USAID, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund to rebuild the country. These NGOs were set up for the short term. Unprecedented sums were poured into Bosnia, making it the most expensive reconstruction project at the time. Later, international policy writers, like Belloni, would wonder why, with all the concentrate, neoliberal-inspired investment, Bosnia was off worse today than in 2002, four years after then end of the conflict. There are debates about corruption and mismanagement of funds all focusing on failures of the corrupt state, corrupt NGOs, or just lack of commitment in the local population. Bosnia was meant to be the proof that NGOs and the private sector, because of the naturalized argument by Adam Smith, assured funders that given a free market scenario, with property protection in place, the economy would balance itself and civil society would grow into the provided structure. State intervention, it was argued, would inhibit economic growth (Foucault 2010, 61).
I am wary of calling this state formation, as there is no effective state infrastructure being formed. Instead there is primitive accumulation of capital, in which publicly owned factories, equipment, and real estate get bought up and sold for scraps leading to accumulated capital in the hands of a few, who hold on to their wealth as they have no reason to redistribute or even let any of their wealth “trickle down” to the rest of the population. The population ends up unemployed and underserviced by diminishing state benefits. The result is the fracturing of the state in this case, in three, embedded and fostering deindustrialization, gangster capitalism or cleptocracy, corrupt governing parties using fear--mongering to extend their influence. All this is occurring within what technically is a UN Protectorate Zone.

The UN Zone has institutionalized largely undisputed ethnic segregation starting with K-12 students, who attend school in separate shifts, so they never have to interact with each other. This brings me back to the opening quote, and its statement that none of the events from the last century have heroically improved or strengthened the state, instead it is dismantled and paralyzed. According to Foucault this would be the point at which the state, having no other power available to exercise would turn to biopolitics, and seek to control the physical bodies of its citizens. The Bosnian health system is failing, with unpaid doctors and month long waits for even the most basic services. The only biopolitic enacted is the knowing abuse of war trauma, which is achieved through whipping up ethnic mistrust and is every nationalist party’s strategy for election.

Nobody’s life is easy. There are no winners coming out stronger after the war, or the subsequent economic catastrophe. Foucault’s separation of power from
politics, in which the state has no control over regulating the economy, can be found in Bosnia as a text book example: a UN protectorate government with three presidents, three sets of ministries and administrators to represent each major ethnicity, who while getting paid better than most people in the country do not govern. In addition, the free democratic elections seem no more than a way to solidify “veze”, or connections, the former Yugoslav term for informal social networks, which tend to be catalysts for monetary gain. Veze also serve social exclusion from vital services for unwanted groups. It can be helpful in some instances in creating community cohesion and reciprocal networks, though in Bosnian politics it is the former rather than the latter version of veze that wins out.

Only the dark humor of the Bosnian people and their ability to make do with what they have make everyday life livable. Eking out a living is not easy and there is no false optimism among the Bosnian population. Perseverance, borne of centuries of political instability, honesty, strong communal ties, the influx of remittances from transnational migrants, diminishing loans and grants from foreign governments, and local reciprocal economies hold Bosnia together. Sixty-seven of the people I interviewed have expressed something akin to: “This country would be dead [economically] without the diaspora.” Almost no one has a positive outlook for the future or any idea what it will bring at this point, a sense of uncertainty that has permeated the population, or to put it more directly a

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1 The term “Diaspora” is used often to refer to the abroad living refugee population, who return during “the season”, mainly the summer months. I was often asked if I was “iz Diaspore” (from the Diaspora) due to my use of language that has not been in common use since the 1990’s when I left the country as a refugee.
lack of a reliable future and a need for migration are facts of life for most people I interviewed.

THEORIZING SUBJECT FORMATION: LITERATURE REVIEW

Discussing subject formation in Bosnia with NGOs as a focal point leads me to the intersection of three major discourses within anthropological literature. First is how post socialist communities adjust to neoliberal economies of development based on the way IMF and the World Bank institutional ideologies and demand “free markets”. This discourse relies on the work of policy writers on the creation of free societies and civil society infrastructure, alongside minimal state regulation of markets. Some of these writers have addressed the Bosnia case while other analyses are critical of neoliberal ideology and practices, such as work done by Foucault and others as discussed below. The second discourse considers how to read the everyday experiences of people and communities of living with trauma in ethnically mixed communities that were only recently engaged in conflict with each other. The writers discussed in section two examine the gendered, socio-economic fallout due to the civil war. Third is how to understand the open political manipulation of trauma by the state and state-associated actors. Writers in this discussion have analyzed the way gender plays into the manipulation of victimhood and need, and the multiple links of political exercises to the creation of competitive mourning, disparate and antagonistic views of women and men, and divisive renderings of Muslims, Croats, and Serbs as victims or perpetrators depending on the nationalist rhetoric.
Policy studies of contemporary transnational humanitarian organizations have aimed to build communities which are: “irreversible democracies” (Belloni 2007) as the ultimate goal. Belloni, Richard Holbrooke, the United States Ambassador and Zimmerman the last US Ambassador to Yugoslavia all share one thing in common: the idea that entrepreneurship and an unregulated market will ensure a healthy market which will “naturally” benefit everyone and ensure peace (Belloni 2007; Holbrooke 2007; Zimmermann 1999).

Foucault’s discussion of Kant and John Adams changes the understanding of the liberalization of the market and instead considers how the concept of a “free market” becomes naturalized as inherently stabilizing and peaceful. Foucault views naturalism opposed to liberalism as reliant on the belief that: “perpetual peace is not guaranteed not by law, but by nature” (Foucault 2004, 61). In the case of Bosnia and its reconstruction by international powers who truly believe that a free market will save everyone as long as there is “Management of conditions in which to be free” (Foucault 2004, 63).

Subject formation in the context of Bosnia’s reconstruction was very blunt. There were 800-person lectures given through the American Embassy in Sarajevo on how to build up the country through the “entrepreneurial spirit” alone. Billboards with UNPROFOR soldiers calling for civil society.
2. VICTIMHOOD AND GENDER

I have emphasized sources that have a focus on gender as women are the target of most development projects because they are seen as victims, based on Enlightenment constructs of gender roles during wartime. In fact there were far more female survivors than males due to both targeting and forced conscription. Many widows have been dispossessed, and many rural women to this day are homeless, moving from relative to relative.

My analysis of Bosnian NGOs within a post-socialist, postwar setting necessitates an understanding of the construction of gender as it relates to perceptions of victimhood. Services that are provided in part reflect gender ideologies of organizers and the community in general, as well as the historic role of women in what NGOs cast as humanitarian roles in the Balkans. These ideas are key to understanding not only how structured the types of violence used to target men and women in specific ways were, and the effect this has on post-conflict society, but is also one of the reasons women are the predominant group to receive aid from, and work or volunteer within the organizations. Including gender as one of my key analytical categories is indispensable in this case. Since Enlightenment gender has been implicated in ideas of violence and trauma, which has become embedded in the everyday life of Bosnians (Mladjenovic 2001; Carpenter 2003; Das 2006; Fassin 20120; Kleck 2006; Verdery 1996) While many of these issues have been observed in the immediate aftermath, or even during the violence, later observations in this setting are infrequent.
3 POLITICAL MANIPULATION OF TRAUMA

The struggle to rebuild communities and individual lives following violence and economic crises are relevant topics today, as they pertain to several regions of Eastern Europe and other post-socialist settings around the world, and have a strong effect in the long term on the social reproduction of gender and ideas of what constitutes mental health, including of course trauma. Interdisciplinary post-socialist literature has engaged with the creation of antagonism towards minority groups as outgrowths of social opposition against the ruling party, and the changes in social reproduction of gender through the state, and later through neoliberal economies, which often follow bouts of violence. Much of this follows the historical trajectory of Bosnia (Verdery 1996; Lovrenovic 2001; Jasarevic 2012; Roudometof 2001; John M. Conley 2014; Borneman 1997). My work will add to this literature by discussing how trauma care staff, volunteers and clients experience the aftermath and persistence of creating “the Other”. This draws on Hague’s work regarding the creation of a dangerous, inferior, feminized Other as an enemy of the heteronormative ethnonationalist state (Hague 1997). I have observed Bosfam and Medica Zenica use “Others” to their advantage much as in the work of the of Lepa Mladjenovic. Mladjenovic is an activist in Serbia, who lists understanding the Other as key part of the recovery and reconciliation processes utilized by herself and many of the women leading local aid organizations (Carola 1995). This includes very unpopular memorial marches for those killed by Serb war time policy during the 1990’s war held by the Women in Black in Serbia. Despite their call for peace and reconciliation there is an overwhelmingly negative and violent response to the work
of the Women in Black in Serbia and Bosnia’s Serbian Republic. I experienced this first hand, as I asked about the organization during an interview in Republika Srpska, and the conversation quickly turned to anger and even tears from a local woman condemning the organization for existing, though when I asked as neutrally as possible what was the problem with the organization she could not give me a conclusive answer, just that I should know that there was nothing good about “…those women!” When I asked the same question on the side of the federation, I got positive responses to the organization that: “finally recognized the crimes of the Serbs!”. Historic events are understood differently depending on which shift the students attend, and what side of town they live on. This takes me back to Joan Ringelheim and her interpretation of understandings of historic events, and how some are ignored for the sake of others, depending on the needs of those engaging with the materials, as has been documented of women surviving the Holocaust (Ringelheim 1990).

The transition from socialist to neoliberal economies has been accompanied by the loss of a socialist safety net, the burden of which has fallen on women, as they are placed within the perceived traditional aspects of womanhood economically and socially (Verdery 1996, 54; Muehlbach 2012). At the same time families are trying to return to their prewar status economically in the midst of a post-war environment. Changes in the physical, visible environment, as well as a much worse economic situation for many survivors creates constant reminders of traumatic events, such as the intense and often triggering experiences surrounding memorial events, and the fact that most newly
commissioned communal art is about the war, something many of those I interviewed complained about. Built were prevalently ethnonationalist memorials, street names changed to reflect the new divisions of the landscape based on nationalist lines, and the constant building of new mosques and churches to demarcate the landscape once again.

On one occasion, I was walking with a group of Bosnian women to get some coffee and window shop around the center of Sarajevo. As we passed the public park we noticed a statue of a man calling to someone next to a grave site. The plaque next to the sculpture indicated that it was a man during the massacre of Srebrenica who was forced to call for his own son, who ended up buried in the grave he had just dug. This kind of memorializing, while artistically powerful, was causing everyone walking in the area to be constantly confronted with tragic and unsettling events, they had not that long ago lived through themselves. These memorials are not reconciliatory, they are reminders of crimes committed on specified groups by other specified groups and create an environment of never ending mourning and confrontation.

Vietnam era veterans, the most extensively studied trauma sufferers, are known to have their trauma symptoms exacerbated by being exposed to memory triggers. How is this different for those constantly surrounded by memories of lost family members, violent deaths, or injuries? Angela Garcia’s work differentiates between mourning and a Freud based idea of melancholy, as a sadness that, opposed to mourning, does not pass. She discusses melancholy in the context of an organization dealing with heroin addicts, in which her informant feels that the organization set up to help, deepens her melancholy through constant reminders of her addiction (Garcia 2008, 143). Not only that, but
Garcia also sets up melancholy to be embedded in a landscape carrying reminders of colonial violence, land dispossession, untimely family deaths, much like the post-war landscape in Bosnia, where, in addition to war related sculptures, nationalist reiterations of the conflict peak during every election cycle, and the fact that many lived in the city during the war and have memories of loss already in the landscape, the capital has invested in red plexiglas to fill mortar damage in the pavement as a constant reminder of those who were killed in the streets, and the constant requests to identify bodies of loved ones from massgraves, to this day add to constant never ending reminders.

The reasons for these constant reminders are usually the fact that organizations get most of their funding for war related work, and that politicians have the highest success rates through fearmongering on a sensitive topic, especially when their entire voter base has survived trauma, or is associated with it indirectly.

APPROACHES OF MEDICA ZENICA AND BOSFAM WITHIN DEVELOPMENT

Medica Zenica and Bosfam are both aware of the misuse of memory, and see firsthand that it impacts their clients, and their organizations. Due to the way funding is awarded by divisive political parties, and well-meaning foreign donors, locals have little input in the kind of art that decorates their communities, funds come from Saudi Arabia for Mosques, Catholic international charities for Catholic Churches, and the former Soviet Union for Orthodox Churches. Projects are labeled with thank you messages for the donors for the public to see.

Medica Zenica and Bosfam attempt to address economic difficulties in tandem with psychosocial and physical suffering caused by the war. Postsocialist literature
shows how organizations coming from a background of socialist solidarity incorporate and express their ideas through neoliberal structures. Even though there is no state-run socialist economic system, many socialist ideas, such as solidarity, labor rights, and the right to a social safety net prevail in organizations trying to bring these ideas to their communities although they have to do so by receiving funding from foreign neoliberal funding agencies with beliefs in less state involvement, and humanitarian charity rather than citizen rights to reparations and social safety nets (Caldwell 2004; Muehlbach 2012; Yurchak 2006). While Medica Zenica operates under a strict set of rules, of any larger European or US run clinic, Bosfam is a loose reciprocal network of locals, predominantly displaced refugee women, who organize themselves to help each other out in hard times, and are there when tragedy strikes in the community, as well as organizing their clients to sell craft items internationally as an additional source of income. Bosfam, unlike Medica Zenica, which has extremely successful grant writers, Bosfam prides itself on not needing any more external funds due to their self-sufficient structure. The NGOs I have observed, as much as the rest of the population I interacted with, were all to some extent affected by the concept of Brotherhood and Unity, which is either used to subvert the new capitalist economy, or supplement it through reciprocal support channels based on solidarity.

In addition to post socialist literature, literature on development ties directly into Bauman’s Late Capitalism, in today’s Medica Zenica and Bosfam, since humanitarian response and development overlap in this case, as the organizations not only provide long-term trauma care and economic development aid, but also continue to provide emergency response to domestic violence, which increased drastically with the end of
political violence as soldiers returned to their homes, heavy unemployment, drug use, and political involvement to provide protection to victims and improve women’s rights to build 'civil society'. The loss of a social safety net and the dismantling of factories, makes survival without organized aid structures impossible. While I am dealing with Non-Governmental Organizations they are both embedded in larger structures based in local government and foreign funding agencies, as well as NATO, which itself extends into foreign governments. Development is based in bureaucracy and an array of concepts going back to aid provided in reconstruction after World Wars I and II. Mosse discusses the importance of understanding the details and intentions inherent in the work of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, who ultimately are the sources of most international aid. Though there is much talk of the sinister forced spread of capitalism through global aid given mostly to post-colonial countries which are positioned to become new markets for global capital through aid packages, that is not a constructive analysis of a complex issue. It is true that the Bretton Woods institutions like the IMF, the World Bank and the US Treasury heavily promote the liberalization of markets, however those who created and run these structures do believe that they are the best option for struggling nations. There is no doubt to foreign donors that liberal market economies and deregulation are the way forward. John Williamson’s 10 points, representing a standard reform package for developing nations, represent the Washington Consensus, so named because of its wide popularity among the Bretton Woods institutions and politicians supporting them. In fact Williamson explained that it was a consensus because it was viewed as the: “Mother’s milk and honey [of international
development]” (Mosse and Lewis 2005). In the 1990’s the Post-Washington consensus was formed due to increasing criticism of deregulation, decrease in social services provided, market determined interest rates, among other factors which came to be seen as increasingly hazardous to stability and health of the poorest within the aid receiving nations, modifications were made for the prevention of poverty, during the “Make Poverty History” campaign, that was widely popular in Great Britain (Rugendyke 2007, 11). While development literature has acknowledged issues with using a “Western” form of thinking, some of the concerns with initial response NGOs that did not have positive or even useful results in the community were not only due to western ideology being imposed, but also due to poor organization and planning by rushed organizations who worked with multiple funding sources and had to do their best to appease all of their funders (Belloni 2007; Kleck 2006; Trbovich 2008).

Providing aid initiates a delicate balance of reciprocal expectations. The recipients cannot repay the giver materially, whether it is a staff member or client. It is based in socially embedded ideas of reciprocity though these do not play out on the local level, but instead involve tense reciprocal relationships with foreign donors involving negative reciprocity, meaning the perceived inability to repay favors in any meaningful way. While it seems that there is no ability to reciprocate, the local organizations in fact do provide a service to large scale donors, by giving them detailed reports the donor organization can use to bolster their own ability to continue attracting donations, and solidify and justify their own existence. I noticed that in Bosnia this power imbalance between donors and local leadership plays out through an inability to negotiate more
aggressively for what is needed; instead local leaders must accommodate strategies that they may not agree with in order to be able to have the leverage and funding to partially complete the work they do think is helpful, or at times even indispensable. Reports in this setting are key to what gets funded and what does not. In Liisa Malkki’s work on the treatment of refugees, after some time, due to the compassion fatigue that has been observed within the staff of organizations providing aid, social inequality becomes inherent within humanitarian structures, often exacerbated by the cultural, economic differences between staff and clients (Malkki 1995). Local aid workers did not show the problematic structures of compassion fatigue, except for one single interview in which the NGO staff member was a strict adherent of the neoliberal value of individuals “pulling themselves up by their bootstraps”. Everyone I spoke with was passionately concerned for the wellbeing of the population they serve, though they may have different ways of approaching these concerns, they nevertheless reflected similar key concerns as their clients, and the community in general in regards to what needs to be done to improve day to day lives. The NGOs that were solely interested in temporary profiteering from the outside donations flowing in, have, according to my informants, all but disappeared due to decreasing available funds and more cautious and guarded donors. The remaining groups struggle with decreasing funding and some like Bosfam strive to become self-sufficient. No funds are available from within the country. Compassion fatigue is real for these organizations, but it only affects them as far as it concerns foreign donors, who are easing out of the region.
The problematic structures found by Fassin (Fassin, 2010) and Tiktin (Ticktin 2006) can be understood through Zygmunt Bauman's critique of bureaucracies (Bauman 1988), which notes that the structure of bureaucratic organizations can act as an enabler of social injustices on its own accord and has significant power to shape culture and society. Bosnia did not show this as such, instead most of the population and organizational staff attributed the problem as due to corrupt politics, a failing economy, and the complex external bureaucracy of donors, which is external but whose structure does act on the subject formation of Bosnians.

The expectation that the country “should have transitioned by now” is what puts more pressure on local organizers to supplement needed services that the state cannot provide. All while putting Bosnia into the zone of convenient peripheral state to the EU providing a cheap and expandable labor force, and exploitable low cost resources, though this plays out not as a conspiracy instead it grows out of bureaucratic structures and their interaction with a recovering state and corruption at the local level. The outcome is still as Stiks and Horvat note that:

… the very concept of transition [is] an ideological construct based on the narrative of integration of former socialist European countries into the Western core […] hides a monumental neo-colonial transformation of this region into a dependent semi-periphery.

(Horvat and Stiks 2015, 16).

Bureaucracy and compassion fatigue can also come together in the long term and create environments of social abandonment, in which aid organizations end up as places
where those who are considered a social burden are put aside. In Joao Biehl’s work on “Vita”, an organization in Brazil, Biehl uses the concept of the “human pharmakon” based on the term Pharmakon derived from ancient Greece, meaning individuals that were expelled for illness or unfitness from the Polis once a year. He likens this to the social abandonment of the ill and impoverished and how their subjectivities get shifted once their environment is completely reorganized not only due to economic difficulty but also the inability of families to keep the ill incorporated, the social exclusion, and the interpretation of the ill as having mental health disorders when they critique the roles imposed on them, or have an adverse reaction to a violent environment (Biehl 2005). In Bosnia displaced, often widowed, women experience social abandonment in different forms. Homelessness is virtually nonexistent, in the sense of people living on the streets. In my interviews I spoke to several elderly refugee women who had not been able to find or afford a place of their own. The women do have someone, whether it was a friend, or distant relative with whom they live. The circumstances in these homes can be tense, but forcing anyone out onto the street would cause the family or individual at fault to become a social pariah, to the point that their family and friends would cut all communications with them. But if a family member cast one of their own out, someone in the area would offer their home and increase their social capital immensely by fixing the mistakes of the family who cast out the member, thereby incurring a social debt with those who are taking care of them. Social abandonment happens to drug addicts, since they are seen as immoral and at fault for their own situation. Even they are placed in group homes, however if and when their families choose to distance themselves from them. On a
community level, people see Bosnia as being abandoned and excluded from world politics as an equal. The participants share a sense of a complete lack of positive outcomes for Bosnia as a country and a sense that diaspora is the remaining hope of Bosnians for survival. Bare survival in the sense of Agamben is in this case applied to all of Bosnia’s citizens except for the “thieves” at the top. The creation of bios in the entire population is One of the most popular songs from the 1990’s in the Yugosphere, the time period of the war, echoes this sentiment. One finds the existence of a communal sense of social abandonment, as well as a strong sense of survivor guilt, a hallmark of PTSD, comes from the widely popular song written during the war and performed all over the former Yugoslavia, by Dzordze Balasevic, who went on to help with the overthrow of Serbia’s nationalist war time leader Milosevic through his series of concerts. This was one of his earlier and still most popular songs; *We are Guilty/ Go on Europe*:

Go on Europe, do not wait up for us, don’t ask much, you too will get a raspy voice

Go on planet, we were great friends

We have it good, just the way we have earned it.

The guilty ones are not the depressed, mad and psychopaths

Who destroyed and now offer us shovels.

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3 A rusty voice signifies speaking badly of someone.

4 The shovels have a double meaning because shovels were a common symbol for World War II reconstruction and associated with the communist regime. The writer is comparing the ruin of one regime with the recent civil war and the communist “Radne Akcije”
We are guilty

The guilty ones are not the sedatives which didn’t work that well, sorry old friend, we are guilty because we kept quiet

Go on Europe, and send us some pastries sometime

Go on planet, here the devil is being called on

We have it good, and indescribable image (Balasevic 1993).

Based on my experiences in the field the concept of social abandonment in Bosnia is relevant but needs to reflect a communal sense of abandonment and attendant hopelessness that has the economically depressed community.

According to Luc Boltanski's extensive work on social suffering, (Boltanski 1999) about a century ago trauma and suffering were key parts of lived experience rather than the more recent idea that suffering should not be accepted. To some extent suffering is accepted into the homes of Bosnians as a matter of fact, and something unavoidable. Similar to this is Veena Das's work (Das 2007) on the subtle yet potent ways in which social suffering is embedded in everyday life as she focuses her work in India following the violence of the Partition on women who had their lives fragmented by attacks against them, which, much like in Bosnia, were a strategic attack on the patriarchy of their ethnic
group (Mladjenovic 2001). Bosnian NGOs have dealt with these shifting patriarchal frames over time, and have encountered the difficulty of getting female victims involved. For example, obtaining aid was difficult for Muslim women in particular, as they are, in some cases, in danger of honor killings if their family finds out that they were raped or otherwise sexually assaulted. Das' work shows the difficulties in overcoming the kind of violence aimed at breaking the patriarchy of the 'enemy Other' through the bodies of women and is similar to the experience of Bosnian women in this respect. (Das 2006)

None of the women I interviewed, or even the organizations I worked with mentioned sexual assault specifically, even though their grant applications note that many of their clients experienced the mass rape centers during the conflict. The language used is vague and no one will bring up rape or any form of sexual abuse. It is an open secret, while other forms of loss are mourned widely and openly, even competitively.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Before beginning my field research in Bosnia I designed four key questions about subject formation as it is influenced by trauma focused NGOs in Bosnia. I had used the internet to find NGOs which were locally run and focused on the aftermath of the conflict today. After reading Fassin’s and Pandolfi’s work on humanitarian intervention I noted that their work was predominantly with a focus on the work of the humanitarian organizations from France and a few other select Western countries (Fassin 2010). While it was a critical evaluation of NGOs, it had not taken into account locally managed NGOs and how their work would differ from NGOs run by locals within Bosnia. On the
internet I found two major organizations which were locally run and had survived from the beginning of the recovery phase in 1993-95 and were still relevant and part of their communities today.

Andrea Muehlbach’s work on Italian Marxist NGOs and her careful analysis of the interweaving of ideas of Marxist Solidarity within the neoliberal structure of the contemporary austerity state (Muehlbach 2012).

*Question 1:* An important question for me is the meaning of solidarity, and “Bratstvo i Jedinstvo”, the Yugoslav ideology of “Brotherhood and Unity” following not only a huge economic shift, as in so many other postsocialist scenarios, but also years of violence within the community itself, which erupted often not only between neighbors but even family members, who are now once again living side by side.

*Hypothesis:* I expected to find a revival of ideas of socialist solidarity as well as incorporations into more liberal models by detailing administrative, economic, and other support structures provided by the organizations through the analysis of interviews within the organization, promotional materials, and by outlining the bureaucratic structure itself, including the steps through which services are provided, and the details of how and where funding to keep the organization afloat is coming from. Informal networks are more likely overall to be informed by memories of socialist solidarity across nationalist boundaries, while I found formal voluntarism is promoted by liberal ideas of civil society taught in schools and shown on billboards across Bosnia, as an act towards civil society focused subject formation. Within the organizations I found the same communal support
structures that may have existed before the transition to a free market. While the structure of an open market has forced adjuments they are done with solidarity, including veze which at the end turn into corruption and nepotism within the transition.

Question 2: Though both organizations focus on women, I observed how victims are gendered, which turned out be based in Enlightenment ideals, and how many, and in what situations, men and women become clients or staff or volunteers, and how each gender is included in the workings of the organization. How do these organizations themselves contribute to the way victimhood is gendered within their respective communities, and how do they deal with existing gender norms to accommodate the needs of their clients?

As expected Bosfam was far more focused on women, due to their work with traditional female crafts as a form of healing trauma and economic empowerment, also in order to provide a safe environment for their clients. Due to large-scale migration from Srebrenica to Tuzla, Bosfam also moved and continued its work with the refugee population. Medica Zenica from the outset had a broader base, though still mostly female, and proudly announces involvement of men as clients in their organization on their website (Medica Zenica n.d.). There are strong ideas of masculinity and femininity present in the traditional communities in Bosnia, as well as the distortions of gender, which occurred through the violence of the civil war and created justifications for violence by feminizing the unwanted Other and creating heteronormative nationalist masculinities in order to create a social climate in which ethnic cleansing was possible in
the first place, which remain with the population even after the war and are seen as the cause of well documented increases in post-war domestic violence against women (Hague 1997). However there have been active programs, focused mainly on combating the domestic violence that increased sharply following the end of the war, which have publicly promoted empowerment of women and the involvement of men in supporting women in a variety of ways to prevent domestic abuse. I found more male involvement and encouragement of male clients to seek aid, or become involved with the organization, and whether they are separated from female clients or treated with a different approach. I also expect that Medica Zenica, due to its heavier involvement of men, will address issues of gender inequality more, and be more likely to communicate a more gender-neutral idea of victimhood to the community, than Bosfam. I expect to see two divergent approaches based on my overview of available promotional online materials, clearly stating the

*Question 3:* Considering the documented impact of economic uncertainty and lack of social networks on the severe increase of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in survivors of violence (Kleck 2006), whether it is due to direct or tangential exposure to violent events, my research focused on understanding what health and well being have come to mean to this long-suffering community, and how these ideas of health and recovery play out in daily life within the organization and within the private lives of clients and employees.
Methods

In order to answer my research question and before I arrived in Sarajevo and thanks to a recommendation of a fellow Bosnian Anthropology colleague working out of the US, I got in touch with Ms. Turcilo, the Dean of the College of Political Sciences of Sarajevo, and a member of the Social Democrat Party of Bosnia, the current party in power. Ms. Turcilo is as such also a representative of the Bosnian state’s government. She was kind enough to write me a stamped and signed letter, on her official letter head outlining her and Bosnia’s academic and political communities support of my research project.

Immediately upon arrival in Sarajevo I worked closely with a local translator to translate my interview questions and consent forms. This process alone called for a rethinking of the questions. The term “subject formation” alone was too individualistic to make sense to even the translator. So I had to dismantle the concept and rework it to reflect what would mean a shift in the way I thought about subjects, as part of a system of community rather than the lone neoliberal subject.

I stuck with the original list of questions I had submitted to the IRB at UCR. After talking to local academics and my translator I felt that the questions would make sense to the intended populations. If a response to one of the standard questions needed elaboration or clarification I would improvise follow-up questions. Also people interpreted the questions sometimes differently, or felt the need to elaborate on their own part. However, in particular as it pertained to the last four questions regarding definitions of a mentally or physically ill or healthy individual, everyone was asked the same ones.
from the original set in order to be able to compare and contrast answers. This approach
allowed me to note that all sides, ethnicities, and religious backgrounds of Bosnians
considered dignified labor, and often though not always enough money to live
comfortably, which was defined as not having to worry about having enough for the
essentials such as housing, food and bills.

I lived in Sarajevo, Tuzla and Zenica for about equal parts, and had a few shorter
stays in several rural areas, as well as several fruitful interviews I conducted in the city of
Bihac, which borders on Croatia.

My interviews were semi structured and I had two separate groups I interviewed
with separate approaches, though everyone received the same questionnaire, in the case
of the NGO workers some questions were unnecessary, while others were added to focus
in on their specific backgrounds and experience in the sector. Interviews with officials
and NGO clients were more structured, and planned over the internet and local visits to
the respective centers, or often more took place casually at local coffee gardens, as all
conversations in Bosnia take place over a cup of strong coffee or some homemade
brandy. Interviews were extensive and ranged from one hour to several hours in one
sitting, or multiple repeat interviews over time, few were conducted online or over the
phone, though at least one of each of the interviews conducted was in person, usually the
initial one. I did not push aggressively for interviews, knowing that interviews by outside
officials have been known to have negative repercussions for locals. Organizational
representatives as a rule were happy to interview with me, as were clients in support of
them, or even critical of them. A part of this was shadowing NGO workers, as far as was
possible considering the incredibly delicate nature of their clientele. Organizations were ready to interview and aside from personal deviations their stories were embedded in existing organizational structures, which they for obvious reasons seek to protect.

The most difficult to interview, though more diverse, demographic were random population samples not directly connected to the organizations I was working with. This involved finding people from within the communities the respective NGOs served, who may or may not have interacted with them, and find out not only how much they knew about the organizations and what they do, but also to try and gage the impact they may have had on their communities and vice versa, the needs of the community that may have impacted the way the NGO functions.

These interviews were gathered using the snowball sample method. As I moved into a different town I met with the neighbors in my building, built rapport with them, and then branched out further, these are socialist communal buildings, and have their own hierarchies and social rules, which luckily for me my assistant was familiar with. I also met individuals for interviews at public events, playgrounds I frequented with my son, coffee shops, bakeries, stores and also on the many, luckily, slow moving forms of public transportation. Get-togethers and celebrations with neighbors, were also a frequent option to participate in the local community. Just parenting in public made me a part of stay at home mother communities, which organize small events, or just spend time in parks talking.

This was mainly due to suspicion and experiences with foreigners in one case, according to one of my informants, there were cases in which sensitive information was
published, after the interviewer had promised that it would never be disclosed publicly. Also there are the ever present fears of the CIA, I was openly asked whether I worked for the CIA on a few occasions. Even though I have roots in the community, my diaspora status placed me as an outsider economically and politically. After all I am exempt from the ups and downs of the local political climate. However, after some time of living in the communities and getting to know our neighbors, local shopkeepers, café goers, parents frequenting play areas, and of course through the use of public transportation, we built up relationships that led to fruitful and open interviews, as well as referrals, which provided for a diverse set of interviews and wove a more complex picture of the impact of NGOs on Bosnia, as well as the current socio-economic and political situation.

While I had a list of questions, I improvised based on the individual being interviewed, and added questions if it seemed pertinent. Building rapport was also key to speaking to informants, so I engaged in small talk about the weather, which these days also means a political indictment of the G9 nations and their failure to protect the environment, and often brought my son along, if I felt like that might help create a more casual environment and open up the conversation. Though I was skeptical of this approach at first, even though I knew about it from feminist methods texts I had read, I got some of my most open, and relaxed interviews with my toddler in tow. Often all that was needed was walking around town, or just standing on our street facing balcony/window, and my son managed to get me acquainted with a broader population sector, and provided even more interviews.
I always asked whether the person I was interviewing would want their identity protected or have their name included. For the NGO representatives, like Beba Hadzic and Sabiha Husic, who already in the public eye, sharing their information was not only acceptable but also might be helpful for future funding projects. They wanted their stories told in order to draw public attention to their work, and are used to it being publicized. Everyone else in the study, even personnel from other NGOs were adamant that their names not be listed in the study. For more precarious individuals I made sure to break up their narratives, and omit any information that could identify them, or expose them in any way. While this takes away from the study, it was imperative to protect the people who generously shared their stories. I had promised to write in a way that would not reveal their identities, and even if they shared information I did not take it for granted that it could be shared if it appears it might endanger anyone.

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

My chapters attempt to answer the research questions posed based on the experience of living with Bosnians and conducting interviews.

CHAPTER ONE goes over the history that led to the civil war as well as an overview of more recent post conflict Bosnia. Here I cover the impacts of colonialism by the Habsburg and Ottoman empires, as well as British influence in creating divided populations with the south Slav populations. I will cover the socialist period, USAID help, all the way up to the socio-economic transition of the last twenty years. Here I discuss varied discourses from the side of policy makers like Zimmerman, Belloni, and
Holbrooke, and compare it to Lovrenovic, Ferguson and Mosse who take context and culture into account on the donor and recipients sides.

CHAPTER TWO is heavily influenced by a class I took as a graduate student with Dr. Wendy Ashmore. Though the class was aimed at archeology it was flexible enough to imbue with an understanding of the complexity of political landscapes to influence subject formation. As seen more recently in the removal of confederate statues across the United States, the shaping of political landscapes has a strong influence on communities, especially when they act as social dividers. Here I use the work of Denich, Hendon and Das, Angela Garcia and Joao Biehl to understand the impact of a post conflict divided nation’s day to day landscapes as ways of acting on subject formation.

CHAPTER THREE discusses the continued presence of PTSD in part due to misconceptions of local stigma regarding mental health care. As a researcher, I went into the field assuming among other reasons, and some sporadic interviews I had taken from diaspora Bosnians, that there is a strong stigma, sign of personal failure and weakness, when it comes to mental health and wellbeing. This may well have been true before the war, at which point much of the diaspora I interviewed left the country, however after 20 years of a community dealing with trauma and observing it not only in themselves but also in their loved ones, the perspective changed. The NGO’s come in here as having a partial impact on subject formation through the assistance and narratives about trauma they share with their surrounding communities.

CHAPTER FOUR continues the discussion of NGO’s impact on gender and politics rather than just mental health. Here I discuss large scale impacts of austerity on
Bosnian economics, physical and mental health. This chapter also deals more in depth with civil society building as well as political and communal views on gender.

Finally the conclusion, CHAPTER FIVE, will address further research I hope to do in Bosnia after seeing the limitations, due to logistics, of my current study, I know have a more detailed plan to address not only the dangers of political manipulation of trauma, but also the resilience of grass roots movements in Bosnia. My future study will also focus more carefully, and through the use of cortisol stress level indicating samples, the impact of major political events as well as personal stressors on Bosnians.
Chapter 1

Effect of Past Colonial and Global Policy on Bosnian Subject Formation

In September of 2015 two weeks before I left the field in Bosnia, and following my time in Tuzla where I had worked with Bosfam for four months, an unexpected opportunity came up to visit the city of Bihac, which borders with Croatia, for a week. We stayed with a friend of A’s family, a young Albanian woman, married to a Bosniak. The couple was trying to make ends meet with little chance for employment. I had the opportunity to interview a group of young people together, in our hosts’ apartment. The topic of the nationwide teacher strikes in Bosnia came up quickly. This was a divisive topic the media was covering heavily, as many argued the teachers have no right to strike, and their priority should be the children. One young man noted: “We all have it hard enough these days, they should be happy they have work at all!” to which a young woman told the story of her aunt, a school administrator, who had not received wages for over eight months, she went on to defend the educator’s right to strike: “They have to eat and feed their families too! They went this long because of the students, but they have to draw the line somewhere!” My initial shock was at the fact that wages were unpaid to anyone for that long a period. Though I had read about delayed pay, which was not unique to Bihac, government employees were supposed to be exempt, and have some rare financial stability in the country. The group explained to me that people expected not to get paid in time, and that once (if) they are paid the pay is in a

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5 Bosnian Muslim, opposed to Bosnian; a citizen of Bosnia of any ethnic background.
bulk amount, and is usually not the actual amount owed to them. This is accepted as better than no pay. There are informal economies keeping people afloat, whether they are unemployed or faced with delayed wages. Bosnian informal economies consist of financial supplements from family and friends, as well as fresh produce from relatives in the countryside. Rents are low, compared to food cost, however housing cost is still prohibitive for the unemployed. While there are, organizations dealing with urban hunger issues like, “Merhamet” a Muslim run organization, which had a window handing out food, in the neighborhood I lived in in Zenica, it provided food based on Islam’s rules of charity all over Bosnia.

DIFFERENT WAYS OF REMEMBERING SOCIALISM

Based on the interviews with people of my own age group, between 25-35, who were children and had never worked in the socialist economy these economic injustices stemmed from the economic fallout of the conflict itself, and the liberalization and privatization of markets that followed. In my own upbringing as a diasporic refugee of the conflict my family had regaled me, and this was the norm for many post-war families, with tales of the economic wonders and freedoms of the Former Yugoslavia, speaking with unrestrained Yugonostalgia. The only individuals openly critical of the former Yugoslav state were generally those who favored the nationalist divisions, or so our parents told us, though I went in to the field as a critical observer, I noticed soon how many concepts I had taken for granted, though contrasting my own upbringing with diverse points of view, this only helped in highlighting the diverse and conflicting points of view between pre and post war generations, as well as diaspora views compared to
current Bosnian citizens. Ringelheim discusses the different memories, competing with official version on the treatment of women during war time. In this case it is not only gender as a cause of varying memories, but also intergenerational (Ringelheim 1990).

Coming back with the field data from Bihac, I reiterated my shock at delayed wages to my grandfather, who brushed my concerns off stating that this was nothing new. Delayed wages and smaller payouts than promised were, while not officially noted by the state, common in socialist prewar Yugoslavia. In one case my grandfather worked on a major engineering contract with b, and due to Cuba’s inability to pay the company, Energoinvest, accepted large quantities of Cuban Rum and handed that out in lieu of pay to their employees, including my grandfather. Even then there were informal networks based in bartering built on a system of reciprocity shifting valuables and necessities around in order to make ends meet for families. Government assistance with housing, in which companies provided large chunks of the money needed to provide apartments to their employees, free higher education, and free healthcare made it possible to create savings, and some sense of stability for most citizens. I came to realize in my interviews with older informants more detailed and complex views of not only the contemporary psycho-social landscape in Bosnia but also the past social structures on which the current situation was built. Initially I had assumed that the structure of Bosfam in Tuzla echoed socialist solidarity values, and was a continuation of specifically Bosnian attitudes towards labor couched in solidarity concepts from the socialist Yugoslav period. However, after more detailed probing into what constituted the socialist landscape I came
to realize that Yugonostalgia narratives were obscuring the extension of certain labor practices in contemporary Bosnia.

The people of Bosnia have a unique history that has had its share in shaping their attitudes and survival mechanisms. The Ottoman and Habsburgian imperialisms followed by World War II Nazi invasion, leading into a Communist Dictatorship opposed to Stalin on the outskirts of Europe, and being part of the Former Yugoslavia as it became a crucial founding member and leader of the Third Block all impacted the way citizens interacted with their neighbors, saw themselves as well as their relationship as a collective with the international non-aligned community (Hrdlicka 2015; Djillas 1999). Aspects of these experiences and histories are passed on including the way individuals perceive themselves based on their gender, class, worker status, as well as education and ethno-religious background. Socialist understandings of labor are one of the many concepts being contested today by the onset of an intense primitive accumulation of capital leading to deindustrialization and increasing underemployment.

In a post war documentary about the Srebrenica massacre of Muslims by Serbs the view of foreign donors and leadership is made clear to the Mayor of Srebrenica. It takes place during one of the annual anniversaries of the Srebrenica massacre, at which time any new mass grave victims who have been identified are buried at the same time. The mayor of Srebrenica, looking tired, asks the American embassy representative when aid for infrastructure that may bring relief to the chronically unemployed area will be forthcoming as it had been 10 years after the massacre and not much had manifested. The American representative looks annoyed and tells the Mayor that Bosnian’s problem
is their “negative attitude”. All that while the viewer can see a sea of green coffins to
which the representative has his back.

Donors were not forthcoming in interviews. The attitude of the tired mayor and
the outraged American, almost embarrassed for the Mayor, was something that tied more
significantly into my work than I had expected. Ideas going back to the Enlightenment,
understanding of the market by Kant, Adams and critiques of their work by Foucault in
regard to the naturalization of the free market as the ultimate stabilizing factor, and of
course Weber’s protestant ethic were all needed in addition to interviews to give meaning
to the opening quote (Foucault 2010). Foreign Western donors expect the free market to
provide freedom, stability, and even happiness. When that did not happen in Bosnia, not
only were Bosnian’s blamed, as well as their Balkan mentality, and official western
perceptions of the Balkans as an almost, but not quite. Not only did the economy tank
and continues to do so, trauma symptoms worsened for many survivors in the mid 2000s
when NGOs pulled out as funding was moved to the next global emergency.

OFFICIAL HISTORIES AND ORIENTALISM IN THE BALKANS

Over the past two centuries, external powers, such as Great Britain among others,
have consciously tried to sway the people of the Yugosphere to a more “modern” and
more “enlightened” outlook. To bring them over on the side of Europe and thereby also
strengthen Europe’s buffer zone against the Middle East and Russia. Non-Governmental
Organizations are just one group influencing shifting subject formation through the
permanent economic transition and post war recovery, as well as shifting views of
gender, while these three concepts are diverse they all converge on my research
population, namely women and men affected by organizations focused on women’s recovery from war and domestic abuse trauma worsening drastically during and after the conflict due to communal socio-economic as well as war related stressors.

The Ottomans were followed by the Habsburg empire, which favored the Catholic Croats—. Though much of the international community including Great Britain and later the United States saw Serbia as the best chance for protection against the Ottomans, Habsburgian power, and later Russia and communism, due to the romanticization of Serb battles against Muslim invaders, and the dislike by the British of Catholics, and Habsburgian Catholics in particular. This ideology encouraged overlooking monarchies, dictatorships, corruption, and mismanagement of the government of the Yugoslavs over the past 150 years as long as it was conducive to perceived international stability (Drapac 2010; Djillas 1991; Glenny 2001). Corruption, unemployment, missing pay, and so on, are nothing new, and not a result of a post-war, post-socialist environment that needs to be erased in a transitional process to modernity. This has been an ongoing set of issues over the past several centuries, where “transition” has been part of international policy since the Enlightenment, during which the always “almost civilized” peoples of the Balkans have been “close to” or “on the brink of” becoming a democracy and a capitalist success, but always in need of transitional aid, needed to their not quite “there” nature (Horvat and Stiks 2015, 14).

Roots of ethnic divisions in Bosnia, as in so many other countries, go back to the lasting effects of Ottoman and Habsburgian imperialism, as well as the presence of religious distinctions. However, these divisions especially in Bosnia are not in any way a
realistic portrayal of the intertwined nature of all recognized ethnic groups in Bosnia, especially in the larger towns and cities. Ivan Lovrenović, a Bosnian historian, has taken up the painstaking task of detailing a cultural history of Bosnia with a focus on communal unity that transcends ethno-religious boundaries. His writing took a darker turn in recognition of the understanding “the West” has of Bosnia:

What a terrible strain – to remain morally alert, to always have your uneasy conscience plugged in! So just as Europe finally succumbed to sweet indulgence, to the idyll of prosperity and affluence, the fairy-tale of democracy-boom: the Balkan slaughterhouse! You can just imagine how much they hate us in European parliaments – each and every one of them, and all of them together (no kidding). Irretrievably, mercilessly, with wanton irresponsibility, their whole dream has been ruined … Isn’t there perhaps in this hatred just a nuance more rage vented on the victims than on the murderers (even without taking into account the fact that everyone knows precisely who is who)?

(Lovrenovic 2001, 10)

What Lovrenovic is talking about between the lines here, as the rest of his work reveals, is denial of complicity of the international community, and the fact that national politics rarely end at the borders of any nation. Vesna Drapac talks about the impact of Weston-Suton, the British prime minister around WWI, who disparaged the dangerously Catholic Croats and dangerously Muslim Muslims as backwards while favoring Serb leadership in the construction of Yugoslavia before it became the state meant to buffer the remains of the Ottoman empire and Russia into Europe. Serbs were pushed as
leadership and Croats and Muslims, were expected to fall in line as dutiful minorities aware of the nation as the solution to everyone’s needs. Serb abuses of power, and Croat resistance to it, internationally played out in Serb favor. As Drapac explains Seton-Watson’s approach:

…. [he] admitted the Yugoslav ‘salad’ had been difficult to mix but it was clear ‘it can never be unmixed again’. Still recovering from the wars and upheavals of 1912-19 the Yugoslavs, he wrote, ‘virile and highly intelligent’ people that they were, would eventually recognize cooperation was in their best interests. Such blurring of the lines between the Serbian and ‘Yugoslav’ experiences of war was, as we have seen, the norm. Moreover, Seton-Watson was privy to the extent of the maneuverings prior to the formation of the state, and he was not about to entertain the idea of exerting anything near that effort on ‘unmixing’ the salad he himself had spent enormous energy tossing

(Drapac 2010, 129).

The involvement of the British in the creation of the “Yugoslav salad” is a point often omitted. However it ties into the impact of NGO’s early on. Initially wealthy British women took time to travel to the not yet tossed salad, and offer aid, in the form of healthcare or at times even British women joined as combatants during WWI and II along Serbian sides. Most British women preferred the Serbs as a group to reach out to, and felt that they could not relate to the Croats, perceived as cowardly and of course catholic, and the Muslims, perceived as backwards and of course Muslim, in addition both of those groups were aware of the British attitude towards them, so they may have been wary in
interacting with wealthy Brits. Serbs were more welcoming and still pride themselves on being superior to others within the Yugoslav salad, due to the recognition of the British and French of their bravery and progressive nature over time. This led to the execution of a Croat politician, early on in the formation of Yugoslavia, and the exclusion of minorities, as well as a growing sense of self for the Serbs, which continues today in the narratives Serbs give to their children, about how good they are at sports, about how foreigners recognize the Serbs as the most progressive and important of the groups in what Yugoslavia was. This also included the treachery of the Croats during WWII, at which pointed they and Muslims sided more against the Serbs than with Hitler, as well how many more terrorist attacks the Croats committed, but everyone only unfairly remembers Gavrilo Princip, who shot Franz Ferdinand to liberate all Yugoslavs from the Yoke of the Habsburgs.

These historic interpretations and much more is what is told to this day in Serb families to their offspring, when no one else is around, only to fellow Serbs though. I had these kinds of responses flowing from Serb informants, along with the recent “Western” conspiracy to ruin the Serbs “…after all we did to help them defeat the Germans, now the Germans have it better than we ever will!” This artificially constructed, but very real, superiority complex is what led to the idea by Biljana Plavsic, my mother’s Biology professor, a prolifically published Fulbright scholar, who worked at Cornell, that though Serbs and Muslims come from the same genetic population, those who convert to Islam have a genetic defect, and that Islam in general attracts the genetically defective. Of course the natural logic of this type of argument led to a justification for concentration
camps, ethnic cleansing, and rape of Muslim women, as a patriarchy, Serb believe that
the father of the child provides the Serbian essence, being raped and forcefully
impregnated, as well as forced to stay imprisoned until the pregnancy was irreversible, to
create more viable Serb stock, and diminish defective Muslim genetic deficiencies.
Though acts of rape were rampant, there were also organized rape and pregnancy camps
for which highly educated and intelligent Muslim women were selected, and where they
were raped repeatedly on a daily basis until they became pregnant. Once the pregnancy
was in place the women were no longer raped, however they were kept imprisoned until a
legal abortion could no longer be done at 4 months into the pregnancy (Hague 1997).
This does not mean that these boundaries are not real or consequential in daily life due to
divisive histories between the nations, a major one of them being the Ottoman Empire
and the laws it imposed on Bosnia, that favored Muslims as well as all those that
converted to Islam, though they mostly left the Raja\textsuperscript{6} to their faith as long as they paid
increased tax burdens and were excluded from certain socio-political positions and
functions.

ENLIGHTENMENT VALUES AND SUBJECT FORMATION

According to Hayden, Lovrenovic, and Drapac Yugoslav state formation was
pushed together using Enlightenment concepts, which in the case of the Balkans mostly
consisted of a need to prove a level of civility, and democratic maturity to outside forces
shaping the nation (Hayden 1996; Lovrenovic 2001; Drapac 2010).

\textsuperscript{6} Christian Subjects, today used as an affectionate term for everyday people, or social groups, that applies
to Bosnians of all faiths, as long as they are socially considered part of the group in question
Of course this is an elusive process only the locals seem to know will never be completed. Leading politicians in the former Yugoslavia have a long-standing and uninterrupted tradition of getting what they want over the heads of their constituents by engaging with the outside world, worried about the strategic position of the Balkans for varied reasons over the decades. The current state of the Balkans, as much of the world today, has grown out of the Bismarckian school, a very pragmatic and sometimes dangerously Machiavelian way of conducting politics, of Real Politik (Zivkovic 2015). Real Politik, in the case of the Former Yugoslavia, included public romanticization of certain groups, or geographic regions, was custom fit to push for certain agendas pragmatically needed for specific socio-economic and political goals of whichever nations were powerful and wealthy enough to force their influence through local power brokers, who on their end supplemented their own agendas and used the outside power to establish themselves, and justify agendas benefiting often only their own interest. This allows for corruption and even incompetence at local levels to flourish, as local decisions were impacted more so by outside interests rather than local ones. The pattern I observed translates into my own experience with contemporary NGOs whose local workforce is regularly frustrated by the power imbalance of needing to appease foreign aid providers interests, which often only marginally coincide with what local aid workers find to be necessary for their local client base.

While some NGOs were more successful than others at pushing their agendas, these attitudes certainly contributed to constant, though changing, transition narratives,
for the Balkan populations. Authors of the recent conference on the economic transition in the Former Yugoslavia note that the researchers taking part in understanding the transition have come to the conclusion that:

…the very concept of transition as an ideological construct based on the Narrative of integration of the former socialist European countries into the Western core actually hides a monumental neo-colonial transformation of this region into a dependent semi periphery.

(Horvat 2015, 16)

These narratives, coming with promises of Western and local powers which never seem to manifest into a stable state, have according to Bauman been:

triggered by the horrifying signs and prospects of durable things falling apart and of a whirlwind of transient ephemera filling their vacancy.

(Bauman 2007 xii).

The constant reaching out for modern development has not only been a plague for what is know by outsiders as the Yugosphere, but also for modernity as a whole. Following the industrial revolution in Europe, which brought not only technological advances and increased food and energy outputs as well as medical wonders, also brought mass genocide, the holocaust in particular and remote controlled warfare. Bosnia is only one of many regions in which individuals are playing the hand they have been dealt and twisting and turning the international aid and political lending machines to their own personal or regional benefits. Within local communities in Bosnia, as in any others,
social norms are policed and enforced through mechanisms of reciprocity and social
capital, however the impact of foreign political influence and the influx of external
capital to local causes is disproportionate, and allows many local social rules to be
circumvented, or breaches to be overriden, disrupting an equilibrium of pragmatic micro
social system justice. While local social norms, and sense of justice, as anywhere are
imperfect, a foreign based intervention in the form of major capital, into a deeply
economically depressed environment creates strange social chimeras reflecting the
mixture of external and internal influences pushing against each other, and causing an
unpredictable, as well as generally downward pulling sense of the future.

Like the Soviet Union, and many of its former satellite states, Bosnia is considered
a developing post-socialist state with a continuing large-scale development project meant
to make it into an: “…irreversible democracy…” (Belloni 2007, 4). In the 1990s Bosnia
broke off from Yugoslavia as a result of a bloody civil war. Though the former
Yugoslavia was never part of the Soviet controlled Eastern Bloc. It was instead part of
the non-aligned nations (Drapac 2010, 147). A Socialist Dictatorship carrying strong
ideas of solidarity in the ideology was imparted on citizens from an early age, affecting
the way they would later react to the decay of the state they were raised to take pride in,
and their position as a respected part of the international community.

POST-COLD WAR RISE OF NATIONALISM

Nationalist divisions in the Former Yugoslavia starting to gain force in the
1980’s, continued on until they erupted into war in the early 1990’s (Roudometof 2001,
216-218) as a result in part of the fall of the Berlin wall, and the increases in national
debt, which skyrocketed into inflation and unemployment. Inflation was a direct result of the decreased diplomatic value of small socialist "buffer" nations following the cold war:

Tito’s [Yugoslavia’s life time dictator] strength was not propaganda or charisma it was his ability to negotiate well with foreign powers to set up a state that was considered stabilizing for Eastern Europe and gave him access to international financing. (D.A. Dyker 1996, 157).

The instability after a call for centralization from the IMF and the World Bank starting in the 1980s broke rules within Yugoslavia's own constitution as strategically used by fear mongering politicians to push into the splitting of Yugoslavia into many nations, starting with the peaceful, though tense, secession of Slovenia, the ethnic cleansing campaigns and splitting of Croatia, and finally the battle over Bosnia between Serbs and the Croat Muslim Federation (Zivkovic 2015) (Roudometof 2001, 218-219). Since, Serbs, Croats and Muslims are fairly integrated in Bosnia, ethnic cleansing became the most intense and divisive of communities and even families through violence until finally, and officially, the Dayton Agreement in 1995, headed by British Lord Owens, was signed by all involved parties in Dayton, Ohio and brought on an official cease fire. While the agreement ended most fighting in Bosnia, it has been criticized more recently for its encouraging of divisive nationalist politics, by requiring ethnically divided political entities, rather than being integrative and encouraging of reconciliation (Belloni 2007, 7).
The organizations I have engaged with in this project, and the issues I have come up against, are seen by many, though not all of my informants, politicians, and academics, as a specific outcrop of recent events, when in fact even the involvement of women in providing aid goes far back to the involvement of foreign women in assisting local populations in earlier conflicts for varied reasons. The more popular and widely supported of those women, are the ones that exclusively helped the favored group at the time. Though many engaged with all sides, these stories are often omitted from the official heroic women’s narratives, which also shift over time as deployed for particular state or international agendas.

Foreign women, predominantly British, have an established history as connected to powerful outside nations for funding and moral guidance sets up the groups I engaged with certain expectations and burdens toward not only providing on site needed aid, but also specifically geared for subject formation, as funding went to groups helping Serbs British the favored population at the time (Drapac 2010, 37). Creating a certain type of citizen that will embrace democracy and liberal capitalism as imagined by foreign donors, while also of course improving their own wellbeing. Again this is for the best, and for helping the transition of the almost there deserving population that has so much potential to be an open market and democratic nation.

My research in this project explores the subject formation through the influence of the funding agencies, the actual local organizational staff and their understanding of the impact they would like to make, and the way all of this plays out with participating and
non-participating populations in the impacted areas. Bosnia has been a strategically contested region for a long time in Europe, as have most of the Balkans, creating very specific roles for these buffer countries just on the edge of Europe and impacting state and subject formation in the region. In fact many Serbs have embraced their position as a buffer state by openly opposing Muslims and “protecting Europe from the muslim Scourge” (Eric 2015).

CIVIL WAR IN THE 1990’s

Ethnic cleansing was a major aspect of the warfare, which meant countless civilian casualties and massgraves, all built on eugenic ideologies resurfacing for the first time again since World War II, this was similar to the German, and before that American brand of Eugenics from the turn of the 20th Century, in which some groups were considered better than others biologically, and used that to disown, imprison or eradicate the group in question.

One of the most violent events during the four years of conflict and the one having the most impact on my research sites, of Tuzla, Zenica and Sarajevo all full of internally displaced refugees of the Srebrenica massacre. It took place in 1995 in North East Bosnian small town of Srebrenica, a predominantly Muslim town, in an area known as the Serbian Republic, and the Serb controlled part of Bosnia (Pollack 2003, 701-702). Serbian forces, led by Ratko Mladic, took over the city and placed Muslim women and children, including boys under 16, as well as all elderly, including men over 65, on busses to be shipped out of the town. All Muslim men considered to be fighting age were executed in an organized manner and buried in massgraves in the area. The body count,
so far, is estimated broadly at 8372… (Helge Brunborg 2003, 229). Only in 2011, 17 years following the war crime, Mladic was arrested (Sam Jones 2011), and many bodies are still being found and reburied in Srebrenica, indicating that healing of trauma is still an ongoing process, in which traumatic events constantly resurface publicly, and privately for those asked to come out to massgrave sites to recognize the bodies of potential family members, who were lost decades ago (Kleck 2006, 351). Many of Srebrenica’s inhabitants, and their children, have chosen not to return, and instead comprise refugee populations in Tuzla and Zenica, for economic as well as trauma related reasons. While Tuzla and Zenica saw their own share of violence, it was not as destructive as the Srebrenica massacre, considered the most violent event of the civil war in Bosnia. Thousands of women lost their sons, husbands, fathers and brothers all in one terrifying day, in addition to their homes, livelihoods, and much of their social networks. This is just one large scale massacre that affects much of the population of refugees seeking help, but it is not the only one. Many of the women were injured themselves, or were victims of Serb militia’s organized rape culture, a big part of the war effort.

Mladic focused on men, because he knew the international community was watching, and thought that it was within the rules of conflict to dispose of enemy soldiers, which have been at least since the enlightenment, considered men of fighting age. Women were considered victims, and any reporting on massgraves considered the finding of adult male remains as part of the military conflict, while women and children

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7 To this day bodies are still found in the area, and many are still missing. Every year the newly found remains are ceremoniously buried with the whole community. In fact the finding of new bodies is a constant retraumatization for families, who are routinely called in to identify possible family members in massgravesites. (Kleck 2006, 351)
were counted in reports as victims, innocent, and civilian (Bowcott 2013). Using this logic Mladic actually did not expect, what he considered appropriate military action, to be considered what it in fact was; a serious and heinous war crime. This aspect of the Srebrenica massacre illustrates the deep aspects of gendering victims and perpetrators, to the point that gender alone identifies one or the other, without any consideration of actual involvement. The “gendered victim” can be traced to Enlightenment ideas in which it was presumed that the innocence of women, children, and others presumed to be unable to bear arms was “natural law”, while all military age men of the enemy group are seen as guilty until proven innocent (Carpenter 2003, 661). One of the ways the persistent idea of the gendered victim manifests itself is in the evacuations procedures among other decision-making processes. Carpenter discusses how these ideas were formed in the Enlightenment and ended up influencing policy shaping today (Carpenter 2003).

Since the late 1970’s official Geneva Convention rules mandate that treatment of all civilians during war time should be equally protected independent of Gender. However Carpenter found that in reality policy is enacted very differently on the ground. The opening quote of her paper makes that clear: “‘Larry. No men under sixty, ok?’ UNPROFOR General Morrillon to UNHCR official Hollingsworth, Srebrenica 1993” (Carpenter 2003, 661). Of course, this was preceding the massacre of Srebrenica in 1995 where almost 8,000 men, from teenagers to elderly, were left unarmed and systematically executed within 24 hours, while UNPROFOR looked on, and immediately after they had evacuated all women, children and elderly (American Psychiatric Association 2013). Humanitarian organizations reflect these gendered ideas of victimhood by focusing their
services on women. In addition, men internalize the idea that they cannot be victims and refuse to seek help, as victimhood is culturally sanctioned. Though, I did find that men did not discuss their own war trauma ever, they were quick to acknowledge that it affected their friends and male family members and were concerned about their wellbeing, and showed interest and full empathy for their struggle.

To this day, the gender division of victims and perpetrators that emerged during the war impacts the way men and women understand their own place in their communities, as well as how they are treated by outside donors.

ETHNICITIES IN BOSNIA

While there are divisions within the population based on religion and other socio-economic backgrounds, as in any other nation-state, or large scale community for that matter. In Bosnia, at least to outside politicians, they have a sinister connotation because of the recent conflict, those were impacted strongly by diplomacy due to the strategic position of the Balkans, extending through to current politics, Bosnian history, as well as the lives of the people I interacted with over the past two years. Their lives, as much of South Yugoslav history, cannot be extricated from international economic and political movements, and events. The organizations I focused on both received their funding from organizations that are linked in some way or another to Bretton Woods institutions, and the outcomes of interventions though locally led, are based heavily on the restrictions and requirements for outside funding.
RELEVANT HISTORY OF PTSD

PTSD, or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, is the official designation by clinical psychiatry and is defined by symptoms caused by traumatic events. Originally known as Shell-Shock, from WWI, the concept of PTSD emerged as it is understood today following the mental health fallout of the Vietnam War among returning US soldiers. Since then, and especially in the latest official definition (American Psychiatric Association 2013, 265), it has been expanded to account for the different ways effects of trauma are understood in different cultural settings. Humanitarian intervention has faced difficulty in the more recent endeavor to assist not only with physical healing, but also with mental health showing that socio-economic needs and social networks are big aspect of trauma care. McNally (Richard McNally 2003, 73) warns about the dangers of interventionists in creating more damage through ignorance of social and cultural networks already in place, as well as realizing that the: “…main goal of the victims is first to establish safety and then to restore their community and culture, not to process traumatic memories...”.

Aside from the opposition by many perceived victims of trauma, including those within the US military, and Bosnians, to being pathologized, there have been debates within the psychiatric community as to the need for more inclusion of a variety of cross-cultural approaches. This debate intensified as the newest official Diagnostic Manual8 was underway:

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8 The DSM-5, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, was published in 2013.
The authors of DSM-5 are facing a difficult challenge. They aim to construct a diagnostic manual with world-wide applicability, but at least in the area of trauma they are starting with a diagnostic construct that was developed out of the specific posttraumatic experiences of the Viet Nam war

(Philips 2010, 2)

In the final version of the DSM-5 a short, but relevant, paragraph showed up addressing the cross-cultural aspect of PTSD ending with:

Cultural syndromes of and idioms of distress influence the expression of PTSD and the range of comorbid disorders in different cultures by providing behavioral and cognitive templates that link traumatic exposures to specific symptoms. For example, panic attack symptoms may be salient in PTSD among Cambodians and Latin Americans because of the association of traumatic exposure with panic-like khyâl attacks and ataque de nervios. Comprehensive evaluation of local expressions of PTSD should include assessment of cultural concepts of distress.

(DSM-5 Pg. 278)

In an interview from 2009 Allen Young by Duclos, an anthropologist whose work in PTSD has become influential to Anthropology and Psychology, Young notes that PTSD comes out of epistemic cultures. He differentiates between a Vietnam veteran epistemic culture opposed to a Holocaust PTSD epistemic culture, among others, all of which would be different (Duclos 2009). He calls for an increased interest among
Anthropologists for these different epistemic cultures: “PTSD is not owned by psychiatry. It's the co-production of a number of institutions and social interests, the most important of which, in addition to psychiatry, are legal institutions. (Duclos 2009, 110).

While I agree with Young's proposal of multiple epistemic cultures, which anthropologists can study to provide backdrops to various developments and approaches to PTSD, I diverge from his approach to the field, and his acceptance of the term PTSD, without complicating the Disorder aspect, though he does critique the culture of science out of which PTSD has grown to be recognized and perceived as what it is today, he does not go far enough in incorporating it as a non-pathological healthy response to unhealthy environments. Instead I draw on Good, DelVecchio Good, Hyde and Pinto, Pandolfi etc. for their analysis of perceived "disorders" as an aspect of "Postcolonial Subjectivities" (Good, et al. 2008). The authors, in the introduction to their book on this topic make a distinction between clinical disorders and:

…disordered states' of individuals and polities, exploring how and why the language of rationality and madness is so commonly used to make sense of political violence

(Good, et al. 2008, 8-9)

One example of the connection between politics, liberalizing economies and personal views on health are discussed by Larissa Jasarevic, who has worked in North East Bosnian refugee communities in the Tuzla area, the region where most of Bosfam’s clients and participants reside. In her paper “Pouring out Post-Socialist Fears” she
focuses on a traditional therapists work with different kinds of “nervoza”\textsuperscript{9} and “strava”\textsuperscript{10}. Strava is treated using Coca Cola, a symbol of power and wealth according to Jasarevic within post-socialist Bosnia. She links the rise of popularity in Strava cures since 1990, not only to war trauma, but also to the economic shift away from socialism, reinforcing my argument about the link of economic shifts and struggles to the increase of experience of what is seen by medical organizations as PTSD symptoms. Jasarevic uses Latourian ideas about different ways of complicating assumptions about what is valid and official in science and applying it to ideas in psychiatry and more specifically trauma treatment. More recently the psychiatric community, as seen in the DSM V updates, has acknowledged the importance, especially in trauma care, of a variety of valid approaches outside of a western medical tradition (Jasarevic 2012, 917).

Over the past decade feminist therapists have been talking about rape trauma as a specific form of PTSD requiring specific treatment protocols. (Brown 2004) (Ballou and Brown 2002). Due to the complications in applying the definition of PTSD, a specific set of symptoms, to cross cultural settings, I prefer to use the term trauma as it is more neutral and applies to a variety of different approaches rather than just a medicalized diagnostic perspective, unless of course I am discussing the medicalized perception of trauma.

After reading the cross-cultural critique literature of the epistemology of trauma I was fairly convince once I enter the field that Bosnians would have a strong stigma in

\textsuperscript{9} Nervousness, anxiety.
\textsuperscript{10} Can be loosely understood as a form of trauma, or at times, terror.
regard to mental health problems, and that they would refuse treatment on a cultural basis. In my interviews that turned out to be far from the truth. Bosnians have spent the last 20 years as a community living an environment permeated with memories of the conflict. Within families there is a strong awareness, especially that the younger people carry traumatic memories, and are not shy or show any stigma associated with post war stress. The awareness and open discussion of the trauma in families was matter of factly and even joked about. Information about symptoms and possible solutions, including medication, a walk outside, or more sleep were noted as ways of overcoming feelings of stress or anxiety, which included an acute knowledge of the concept of misplaced anger. Outbursts of overwhelming anger at times get families caught of guard, but are quickly brought under control, by talking through them or using Apaurin. For some people I interviewed self medication did not stop at alcohol or even drugs to deal with overwhelming stress, mostly not caused by the conflict, but instead worried about unemployment, income, and other existential concerns. The biggest surprise for me was, after asking the question whether there was a strong stigma about consulting a psychiatrist. Immediately interviewees would offer up: “Well if there was someone I could see once a week and talk to them I would do it!” (author conducted interview July 2016).

The reason I choose these two organizations specifically is because they provide, not only consistent long term presence allowing for a review of long term trauma effects on the community, but also because they use distinct approaches, each embedded in their definition of what trauma is, varying from clinical approaches to PTSD to Strava, which
results in contrasting approaches to providing assistance. My interest for this project is to see how these varied approaches intersect within each NGO due to their own philosophy and as they relate to donors who assisted in the startup of each group, as well as the long term impact on the surrounding communities subject formation.

Understanding the varied approaches to trauma, and the understanding of economic effects within both organizations will allow me to answer questions about community building, and the construction of ideas of wellbeing and gender on the intersection of these varied views on, and causes of trauma in North East Bosnian populations.

OVERVIEW OF NGOS IN THE REGION

In the aftermath of the civil war, record numbers of aid programs, and historically unprecedented floods of aid money were put in place to address the humanitarian emergency brought on by the devastating violence and destruction caused by civil war, as well as the sudden economic and governmental shifts this brought about, such as a massive economic downturn, which began before the war and only worsened to the point of complete economic collapse. Even though the aid effort has been unprecedented, it has been widely criticized for its shortcomings:

International agencies focused on top-down discrete projects leading to clear and measurable outputs, which could be touted as a ‘success’ [such as organizing elections], instead of long-term structural initiatives [such as reforms to the system to make elections more than an ethnic count].

(Belloni 2007 Pg. 5)
The same organizations that focused on only these short-term goals, also felt it appropriate to leave early on, while help was still needed and the economy continued to unravel. This is why the NGOs that remain and specifically the two I am focused on, are locally run, and are the only two large organizations with their specific focus to remain in the region. Researching these two particular groups will be invaluable in understanding the shifting needs of the community, and how these shifts reflect the impact of living in a post-war post-socialist setting on social networks as well as individual self-perception in the long run, past the initial chaos of war and a large scale humanitarian crisis. I argue that the community's needs do not simply reset to what they were before the conflict, but continue to change and are in need of continuous complex social adjustments and improvisation by all involved actors. Moreover, the needs of the community are in the approaches of these NGOs read largely through the needs of women survivors. To examine how these two NGOs employees and clients negotiate the situation engendered by trauma and lack of resources, my work will focus on two NGOs in North Eastern Bosnia; the most intensely affected region.

Over the past 20 years, the two NGOs; Bosfam and Medica Zenica, have offered uninterrupted engagement within mainly, though not exclusively, women refugees in the communities of Tuzla and Zenica respectively. While many organizations have stopped providing services in the early 2000s due to the perception that the fighting was over, and increasing economic constraints, the two NGOs mentioned above continued their work. Medica Zenica went as far as getting involved in political battles for their client base, in the late 2000’s they helped win recognition of rape victims as official victims of war with
the right to compensation, a right that was previously denied, as rape was not considered a war crime (Medica Zenica n.d.). In addition to the NGOs themselves, I aim to focus on mostly women, and some men who utilize their services and look at how their needs have shifted over time, and how their shifts in needs have lead to changes in the role of NGOs within the community, not as a practice of exclusion, but simply because these agencies are mostly interacting with women. As it became apparent that this population was dealing with the long-term effects of war trauma, the organizations started addressing mental health issues, and aspects of communal reconciliation, in addition to desperately needed economic aid, including rent assistance and help with employment, education and free child care.

In the mid 2000’s a psychological study was done by Kleck, in North Eastern Bosnia, evaluating the impact of economic stability or lack thereof on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Her conclusion was that in fact “material poverty magnifies PTSD” (Kleck 2005, 350). She visited Tuzla and Zenica, working with exclusively adult refugee women, and noted that the symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) such as paranoia, insomnia, depression, suicidal thoughts, etc., had severely intensified for many women who had lost economic support once many available aid organizations left or experienced decreases in funding; this resulted in an inability to provide additional help. In addition to the loss of support from humanitarian organizations, the intense privatization of industry caused job-loss in a time of already high unemployment and this brought on extreme poverty and eviction for many refugees who were only able to rent a room or just stay in someone else’s home to begin with. The stress of uncertain living
conditions was to be the most likely to magnify PTSD symptoms according to the study. Kleck showed that women who faced eviction and unemployment had increased trauma symptoms, while the few who were more stable economically, had none or at least fewer symptoms from before. While Kleck’s work is based in a medical discourse and is likely to omit many of the complexities of regional perceptions of trauma, it is nevertheless evidence that even a decade after a cease fire, trauma is still a key component in day to day life and can worsen with additional stress brought on by an economic downturn. Without denying the significance of economic disadvantages, my research aims to show that there are other aspects than economic difficulties needed to explain the resurgence of PTSD and that there is more to it than the withdrawal of NGOs and loss of work in itself. Economic downturns are not isolated from overall life experience. They interact with the social structure of the community, and are often embedded in networks of reciprocity and have social effects (Caldwell 2004). To show how this unfolds, I investigate how the social relations resulting from participating within organizations or having a routine at a place of work helps alleviate insecurities, and how social networks provided in NGO settings, family, or professional settings intertwine with economic opportunities, and in the end assist in forming the subjectivities of women and men who have experienced PTSD in the war.

These findings are echoed in more recent studies of refugees from conflict in South Africa, where economic concerns and a stressful political climate have been shown to exacerbate stress.
Medica Zenica has a biomedical approach, while Bosfam fosters traditional women's crafts as help against post-war suffering and take a psycho-social approach, accounting for daily stressors as much as trauma recovery, Medica Zenica, as the name states, has a highly medicalized, professionalized approach. With most of their funding coming from a German funding agency, which sets up “Medicas” world wide, based on a medicalized approach to trauma, it is a full service center. Medica provides a full set of services from two different locations, and of course the safe house is the center of operations, secluded in the hills above Zenica, gated and secured, a safe haven, for women who are these days dealing more so with domestic abuse issues rather than war trauma directly.

Both organizations are dealing with very specific constructs of women as victims, and are taking opposing approaches in the recent feminist debates on women and victimhood, as well as incorporating socialist ideas of female empowerment and the Antifascist Women’s Movement (AFŽ) which existed in the former Yugoslavia, as a government sanctioned association, until it was deemed redundant as women were seen to already be equals under socialism, though this was not the case in any real sense. As Elissa Helms notes in her recent book on “Innocence and Victimhood” in Bosnia, it is not the label of the victim that is relevant as much as “the associated moral goodness” of certain groups that gives them a sort of social capital in the post-war rebuilding processes on all sides (Helms 2013, 10). Whether it is the role of victims in rousing nationalist rhetoric, reconciliatory projects, humanitarian aid distribution, or any other major political project, women are constructed either as mothers of the nation, pure victims of a
male created war, or honorable and deserving mourners or their menfolk. In all cases there is a politicization of gender necessary, in order to advance any broad political agenda.

The debates Bosfam and Medica Zenica engage in and how they choose to embrace understanding of gender and health as they relate to society and postwar life. While Medica Zenica embraces 2nd wave feminism, a movement against the oppressive confinement of women to domesticity following World War II in the United States, which focuses on women obtaining careers outside of the home, and contributing to society on equal terms as men. Bosfam falls more closely into 3rd wave, where local traditions outside the United States in regards to women are not dismissed while attempting to empower women through the means and structures already present within local communities. In my work I noted that both approaches were valid and useful in Bosnia, though some women, depending on their upbringing preferred one method over the other one. Preferences for one model over the other was, often, though not exclusively, generational and on the rural/urban divide. Older rural women preferred the Bosfam model, while younger working urban women preferred the services offered by Medica Zenica. Both organizations are widely perceived in the broader community to provide a necessary service, as every single individual I interviewed from all sides either enthusiastically or begrudgingly stated.
Chapter 2

Space, Place, Gender, and Memory as Context for Psychosocial Intervention NGOs

“‘But what was this world created for?’ said Candide

‘To drive us mad,’ replied Martin.”

- (Voltaire 1947, 95)

My son and I landed in Sarajevo late on a May evening in 2015. I had not been to the city since the summer of 1992, when the civil war broke out. The mortar damage was still visible on my grandfather’s apartment building, once we drove up and tried in vain to find nearby parking on the narrow street. The Ice Cream shop I ran to hide in with my father when the snipers first shot at us from the surrounding hills in 1992, was still there. The heavy green door to the building looked older but unchanged from when the building was still shiny and new. The stairs to the basement, where we hid from mortar attacks with our neighbors were now gated off, but still visible. Though I was excited to be there, my reaction was unexpectedly intense and visceral. That night the nightmares did not cease. Sleep was not an option.

The space was imbued with memories often purposely molded to be part of state or local propaganda, clearly most history anywhere including Europe is propaganda in itself and even with precise data, there is always a bias. Similarly Ferguson and Moore both address this issue and defend that all cultures have different ways of representing and experiencing the memory of past events, their meaning to present populations and individuals (Moore 2005; T. J. Ferguson 2006). Example is “the Pigeon Cave” in Croatia.
where a massacre of Croats occurred which was denied any kind of memorial by the government at the time, because the victims were on the loosing side in World War II and their official commemoration was prohibited. However it was sites like this that were subversively commemorated by the Croats and were cited as reasons for the aggression against the Serbs in the 1990’s as symbols of oppression by the Serbs whose majority fought on the winning side and was allowed official commemoration of their dead (Denich 1994).

Some landscapes that allow for significant indexical connections and have a strong impact on communities. A contemporary example is “the Pigeon Cave” in Croatia where a massacre of Croats occurred which was denied any kind of memorial by the government at the time, because the victims were on the loosing side in World War II and their official commemoration was prohibited. However it was sites like this that were subversively commemorated by the Croats and were cited as reasons for the aggression against the Serbs in the 1990’s as symbols of oppression by the Serbs whose majority fought on the winning side and was allowed official commemoration of their dead (Denich 1994).

POST CONFLICT LANDSCAPE IN SARAJEVO 2015

I had been gone over twenty years. The next morning the sun shone, no one minded the mortar damage, which had never been patched in all these years, and children played outside in front of the buildings. Teenagers laughed and strolled around the small stores in the area, and neighbors chatted. My personal experience of returning to a place of childhood nightmares, and joy, was not affecting today’s inhabitants of Dobrinja 4.
Dobrinja is the name for the suburbs built during socialism, as housing for workers of major companies. Each Dobrinja has its own central plaza, which houses small businesses and acts as a bomb shelter in case of emergencies. The shelters were meant by the Communist Party for defense against external attacks, but came in handy during the civil war. Playgrounds, schools, and essential services are located within each of the small communities. Dobrinja 4 is particularly close to Sarajevo’s airport and is cut in half, as one half lies on the federation side, and the other half is considered part of Republika Srpska. When returning from the Serbian side graffiti written in English on the walls reminds the Serbs of the separation: “This is D4 Cetnici\textsuperscript{11}. Welcome to the city”.

In only 24 hours I went from experiencing my own war-related memories to seeing a peaceful and pleasant day to day life, which was nevertheless full of reminders of violence and division. It was clear that these were both extremes not representative of routine living in Bosnia for its residents. In order to function on a daily basis resilience and humor are second nature to most Bosnians, and to expect anyone to act as if the war happened only yesterday is absurd. There are many layers and a variety of sources that makes Bosnia what it is today. In my research I focused on women-run NGOs in order to understand one aspect of contemporary subject formation, as it connects to external funding, varied understandings of the relevance of the conflict to daily life, and of course

\textsuperscript{11} Cetnik is the word for Serb fascists during World War II, and continues to be used as a term of derision used place Serbs into the category of war criminals much the same way Croats are called “Ustase”, after the name the Croat Fascists carried during WWII. These terms are not only used to disparage ethnic groups, but they also revive memories of war crimes committed, and induce fear of a repeat of said crimes.
opposing views of the place of women within Bosnian communities. Though this was
my focus the landscape I found myself in frames and contextualizes the organizations
within it.

Allan Young’s work on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in returning US soldiers
has set a precedent for dealing with trauma in anthropological terms. Young's population
has been removed from the places of trauma and relocated back to a peaceful homeland,
in which their war-altered subjectivities no longer fit (Duclos 2013). The work of Angela
Garcia, however, in spite of its lack of involvement with overcoming war trauma, is
much more useful for the dynamics I observed. Garcia’s work does not deal with
warzones, but the experience of the “Elegiac Addict” she discusses, along with the
difficulty of living in a symbol laden landscape, filled with constant reminders of
violence, injustice, loss, and dispossession mirrors the experiences of the people I spoke
to much more closely than the clinical analysis of soldiers being reintegrated into life far
away from the places in which they experienced trauma (Garcia 2008). Young’s work,
while it is key to the discussion of trauma and PTSD as a clinical disorder, is of little help
in this context. To understand the complexities of the impact of strategic physical
violence on an entire civilian population, with severe socio-economic consequences, I
turn to the work of Joan Ringelheim on varied and gendered experiences of violent
histories, and their embeddedness in contemporary life (Ringelheim 1990). The work of
Angela Garcia on the dispossession and loss of Native communities in the United States
resonated with the trauma of deindustrialization, and the loss of not just Agamben’s bios,
but also Zoe, as the state and belonging to the international community crumbled for Bosnians (Agamben 1998; Garcia 2008).

Landscapes of loss are embedded in Yugoslav historic narratives. Starting with the battle of Kosovo, where Serbia is said to have lost its Holy Land to the Ottomans, and the now sainted Car Lazar lost his life. The reclaiming of this sacred land was the reason for the NATO bombing of Serbia in 1999, as Serbian troops were removing Albanian Muslim minorities from the area. The Socialist Party tried to quiet down any ethnically specific claims, and encouraged the solidarity of the Yugoslavs, opposed to the unity of Serbs, Croats, or Muslims. As noted in Chapter 1, the divisions in Yugoslavia started before political unification and the fears of the minorities were exploited easily by Hitler’s Germany during WWII, at which time Serbs were slated for extermination along Roma and Jews. Serbs were close to Russia, both culturally and politically, and shared a commitment to communist ideology. The divisions were not a result of the famous “ancient ethnic hatreds” line, used so often to cover the complexities of Yugoslav politics over the past several centuries. These “hatreds” were more often based in complex international politics, to which the populations in what was to be known as Yugoslavia, were strategically significant to one major power or another, and local politicians, who were well versed in using this leverage to their own benefit.

The Golubnjaca cave was a site where Croats during WWII had placed the bodies of uncounted numbers of Serbs exterminated during the war. This site was well known, although the socialist government prohibited any kind of memorial to be erected due to the divisive ethnic nature of the massacre. In the late 1980’s when nationalisms were
making a return, a play about the horrors that occurred at Golubnjaca was written, and the
government canceled the play, explicitly because it might erode the cohesion of the
nation as a whole. In the spring of 1991 a Serbian novelist and nationalist, Vuk
Draskovic, stated publicly:

If war comes, I fear most for the Croatian people. In Bosnia-Herzegovina
and Croatia there isn’t a Serb to whom the Croats don’t owe several liters of
blood. There isn’t a house in which someone wasn’t massacred… So, I
understand why Serbs, if war comes, would like to fight against the Croats.

(Denich 2005)

The sites of WWII massacres, along with the sacred sites of Kosovo, continued to index
either of fear or pride, depending on the population viewing it. The site of Potocari, the
burial site of the Srebrenica massacre, for instance, evokes sorrow and anger for
Muslims, and fear and a sense of injustice in many Serbs, though there are also those who
mourn for the victims regardless of their own background. Politicians on all ethnic sides,
are well aware of the way these sites affect the populations whose support they will need
for elections, which is why every NGO personnel member I interviewed bemoaned what
the election cycles and their constant reminders of massgraves do to their clients mental
and physical health.

Sarajevo, Bosnia’s capital, through which runs the line between the Muslim-Croat
Federation, has many sites of politicized memories, each one indexed differently
depending on the observer’s own background.
The streets of Sarajevo are covered in what are known as the “Sarajevo Roses”, red Plexiglas embedded in the streets where the mortar shelling or sniper fire from the Serbs that surrounded the city during the longest siege of the 20th Century, lasting over 1200 days and about 300 days longer than the siege of Stalingrad, shot and killed random citizens running through open spaces. Aside from personal memories that anyone who has lived through the siege may have, politically reinforced and divisive memorials take many forms within Bosnia. Politically these sites are used divisively to favor or demonize one ethnicity over others, even as they focus on indisputable loss and suffering of individuals that no one would openly denigrate. This effectively places all debates into informal spheres, in homes among families and friends, where, much as popular disaffections in socialism, frustrations are vented. Open discussion that is not inserted into particular politicians’ agendas, does not occurs. Even those attempts at memorializing which are not created with nationalist agendas in mind are frowned upon by the general population as exploitative, and needless reminders of suffering. I noticed this as many of those I interviewed complained about a museum of war childhood was being setup up at the time I was in the field.

Out of 12 interviews in regard to this specific project only two were hesitantly positive, most were politely dismissive and one was: "They want war mementos? All I have is nightmares, I don't want to memorialize that!!". I spoke to the organizers who found that the museum would be cathartic, though I cannot say that was the response I received at the time. Local government tried to prevent the setup of the museum, but
after a successful Facebook and international media campaign the museum was given a permanent space and funding.

While ethnic divisions seem clean cut on the surface, because of the history of socialist nationalism and accompanying ethnic mixing before Yugoslavia’s collapse, relations among neighbors, friends, and family complicate and crosscut divisions. Medica Zenica and Bosfam both proudly assist Serbian women as much as Muslim or Croat women. For Bosfam in particular, helping Serbian women in Srebrenica is a major task, as few Muslim women remain after the ethnic cleansing campaign. Though Beba Hadzic, head of Bosfam, disclosed that some Serbian women told her, “Why would you help me? We are Serbs,” she also noted that the woman asking her this became a close friend over time. “Bosnian tradition and work,” Bosfam’s motto, is meant to be unifying, as Bosnian women’s crafts produced by Bosfam are specifically meant to be conciliatory and a reflection of the value of female labor and socialist solidarity across ethnic boundaries.

Ms. Hadzic was an elementary school principal in socialist Yugoslavia during the war. Her work at Bosfam was born out of her time as a Srebrenica refugee in Tuzla. Beba found herself in a school gymnasium crowded with other refugees, sleeping on thin foam mattresses. Many of the children from her previous school recognized her, were happy to see her alive and, as she told me, looked to her as though she still had authority. Though she herself had lost everything she began to use the memory of her authority to organize with the children’s parents, to redistribute resources as needed. Soon a knitting group was started to provide clothing for children, or to mend clothing already available,
or even take apart donated wool sweaters to make other ones for children. Her background is strongly embedded in the generation that valued communism, even though they were aware of its shortfalls. Like many people I interviewed, who had had successful long term careers before the war, they had a strong understanding of socialist values, and mourned the lost state. Everyday stability, predictability, and order in the former Yugoslavia, as well as a sense of togetherness and equality permeates the memories of many of the older survivors.

While Beba was organizing and taking a leadership role to assist families, and in the process taking her mind off her own sense of loss and confusion, she met an Oxfam International representative, surveilling the situation within refugee camps all over Bosnia. Oxfam already had a history of providing aid in conjunction with local leaders on the ground. In the 1990’s there was a movement in the West grown out of ideas of decolonization, and the creation of new nation states from former European colonies all over the world. The idea of local ownership of aid goes back to the 1967 Arusha Declaration in which the governing party of Tanzania, stated that they would refuse monetary aid, as it would not be sufficient, and would curtail state independence. According to van Gastel and Nuijten, the idea of local ownership and the attached socialist ideology became increasingly popular among liberal European youth in the 1970’s, some of whom would end up in leadership positions within organizations like Oxfam, or governing European bodies, with decision making power on the disbursement and allocation of international aid. (Mosse and Lewis 2005)
Beba’s placement as a socialist-educated strong leader, with knowledge of the refugee community, lent itself well to the philosophy of Oxfam, and they supplied funding to her project, until Bosfam was established and able to subsist on its own. While the premise is embedded in socialist ideology from its British donors and Bosnian recipients, the project itself is inherently neoliberal in nature. Socialism in this view involved the state providing for the community. Though the value of labor was key, citizens were not required to “pull themselves up by their bootstraps” and find a way to make income out of nothing, as current NGO’s do with pride.

Exemplifying Zymunt Bauman’s concept of the neoliberal liquid state, politics are divorced from power within the community, and capital flows all over the world in many forms. While Beba told me she expected Bosfam to not be needed for socio-economic support at some point, the lack of state services have made Bosfam an ongoing, necessary source of income and stability for women, even though the conflict that displaced them was over twenty years in the past. While Bosfam's leadership and staff harken back to the time of Titoist socialism, and claim to follow its tenets, the structural realities do not support its being socialist. The state is constructed as a NATO protectorate, with a tripartite, shared presidency. Although the personal commitment to solidarity with neighbors and friends is demonstrable not only in Bosfam but also among recent protest movements and translates into local grassroots action, it is more often than not critical of the current state and external funding sources.
POLITICAL EXPLOITATION OF TRAUMA: DEPLOYING LANDMARKS

The landscape is littered with symbolism from all sides. In the very center of Sarajevo, there is a statue of Tito, which is always surrounded by freshly placed flowers, in spite of the rumor that the fenced area in front of "Tito's Bunker" is a literal minefield, in itself an interesting combination of the past with very real physical violence in the present. Several memorials represent those lost in the war. The fountain of the dead children stands in a popular park in the center of town, across the street from the biggest multi storied shopping center to be found in Bosnia. Next to the fountain a new sculpture was added as part of the 20th anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre. It is the image of a Muslim man standing in front of an open grave; according to the accompanying plaque, he was forced by Serbs to call for his son to come to him, and both of them ended up slaughtered by Serbs and placed in the grave he had been forced to dig. It can be difficult even on the sunniest of days, to walk past this sculpture representing despair, hopelessness and loss. The annual procession of the victims of Srebrenica to the burial site at Potocari, outside of Sarajevo and closer to Srebrenica, reinforces ethnic enmities and fears. The processions did not begin with the Srebrenica massacre, however: initially they were used by the Serbian government prior to the beginning of the war to remind Serbs of the losses they suffered at the hands of Croat fascists, Ustashe. The Serbian government sponsored marches to Jasenovac, the main camp where Serbs, among others, were held during WWII and sites of massacres, in which bodies were exhumed and grotesque details conveyed. The impact of these marches and displays was to instill fear in the Serb population of Croats, whose ethnonationalism was also making a
come-back in the early 1990’s as the heavily Serb controlled socialist party’s power was waning. It was a time of upheaval and record unemployment in Yugoslavia, which made fertile space for resurfacing of old grievances that in the socialist era had only been talked about in family homes behind closed doors.

The memorial marches, plays, and mass grave exhumations, continue, sponsored by the Federation. Many of those complaining today of the over politicization of the Srebrenica massacre, are not aware of the similarity these events. In a way the revenge was successful. Now the Serbs of Republika Srpska fear retaliation. The memorials and accusations of genocide are not acknowledged and are considered attacks on the character of the Serbian people. As a matter of fact there are many websites dedicated to “the conspiracy against the Serbs,” alongside websites that claim Serb exceptionalism and superiority. As mentioned earlier, the The story of Car Lazar is part of the Serb sense of superiority. Told since the battle of Kosovo Polje in the 1300s, the story today resonates with nationalist Serbs, seeing themselves as defenders of the Occident, attempting to guard the gates against the Ottoman Empire. Car Lazar was said to be given a choice at the field by a celestial messenger: either he wins the battle against the Turks or if slain, guarantees a place for himself and the Serbian people in heaven as martyrs for the protection of the West. This makes Serbs “Celestial People”. Of course most of these tales were revived during the 1800’s when all of Europe’s nations experienced nationalist revivals. More recently Mladic was seen as a reincarnation of Car Lazar, saving the Serbs and an ungrateful Europe from Muslims, whom Dr. Plavsic had deemed as a genetically impaired or even doomed population, which due to their genetic defect finds
itself gravitating toward Islam. Random selections of Serb magazines in Sarajevo stores, reflected these beliefs bluntly, with articles from 2015 titled “We are leading the battle for the existence of Christian Europe” (Eric 2015) against the “scourge” of Muslim migrants and other “Islamic dangers”. While these magazines can be purchased by anyone, they are written in the Cyrilic script, which since the 1990’s is only taught to Serbian children. The hate literature is thus illegible, at least to the younger generations of non-Serbs, hidden in plain sight.

Politics made visible in Bosnia extend past memorials of the recent war. A statue of Franz-Ferdinand has been erected on the Federation side, to make a point about the Croat-Muslim Federation’s disagreement with the murder of Franz-Ferdinand by Gravrilko Princip, a Serb, and an event which triggered WWI. In response to this the Serbian side of Sarajevo created Gavrilko Princip plaza and park, with murals of Gavrilko Princip, and a life size sculpture Princip to complete the setup, with a large historical plaque explaining the importance of Princip’s act to the Serbian people and the foundation of Yugoslavia.

By Dobrinja 4, where the boundary itself is drawn, there are several mosques, a new Catholic church, and just on the edge of the Serb Side, on a small hilltop a Serbian Orthodox church with an increasing number of fairly loud bells. The Catholic church bells, and the Mosque’s Iman are not to be outdone, to my grandfather’s dismay, who exclaimed: “Be done with all of them and their noise!” While some residents laugh about the spitefulness of the competing sides, they are at the same time mournful, because they know what these petty spiteful acts represent; political incompatibility, wartime grudges,
the current disarray of the country, and the diversion of state funds on both sides into
these “spite projects”, as I have started to call them, serving to reinforce ethnic divisions
while funding is needed for schools, hospitals and other essential services. In any case
ethnic tensions translated into the landscape through allocation of infrastructure of funds
are almost a welcome distraction from the lack of employment and the deindustrialization
plaguing the country.

Bosfam’s Beba is aware of the complex landscape of memory in Bosnia. While
she lives in Tuzla, a majority Muslim town, she is not exposed on a daily basis to the
many civic sculpture projects invoking war time memory. The need for what I like to
call "spite projects” seems much lower in areas where the Serb Republic is not sharing
half the city. Instead Tuzla memorials are sparse and then focus on solidarity and
overcoming suffering together. Beba's experience with a landscape of mourning is less
political and more personal. While we were having a cup of coffee in her office, she told
me the story of her sister’s teenage son, who became separated from the rest of the family
during their forced evacuation of Srebrenica. The boy was missing for years. Beba then
smiled and told me of a lake house she had with her husband outside of Tuzla, a place she
would go to get away from the heat of the city in summer and where she loved to swim.
A few years back a major drought left the lakebed exposed. Bodies were found to have
been dumped here. One of the bodies in the lake was identified as Beba’s nephew.
Needless to say she has not visited the lake house since, or even considered swimming.
In spite of this disturbing pollution of the landscape, in a literal way, Beba distributes
food and supplies to Serbian women in Srebrenica, has Serbian friends, and expresses that reconciliation is the biggest blow to the dangers of nationalist rhetoric.

In 2015, during the 20th anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre, Sarajevo was full of well-guarded limousines. People in Sarajevo told me: “No one would look at them twice if they took the Metro.” Dignitaries from all over the world came to honor the dead of the largest massacre in Europe since WWII. This included former US President Bill Clinton, who was stopped on his way to the podium by an elderly Bosnian Muslim woman who told him with all the authority of a Bosnian matriarch: “Since you didn’t help us then, can you at least do something now?” This little moment was widely publicized as a humorous story in Bosnian news.

The event was intense, for both sides. The President of Serbia, Vucic, was to give a talk about the events at Srebrenica, though he denies claims of genocide. In addition a YouTube video was making the rounds at the time showing Vucic saying
loudly to a group: “For every Serb, we will kill 100 Muslims!”. A group was at the event holding up a banner with Vucic’s quote (Fig 1).

Individuals arrested were condemned for the attack and an official apology from the side of the federation was issued. At the time of the attack on Vucic, Beba was waiting to be interviewed as a representative of the Bosnian women who had made the Memorial Carpet, decorating the back of the stage in front of which all the leaders spoke (Fig 2). She had planned to speak about the diverse group of women from all Bosnian ethnicities who had worked on the carpet, and that though they mourn the genocide, their goal is

journalists got word that Vucic was attacked and left to cover that story. This event is emblematic of the obstacles to reconciliation in Bosnia.

After the incident in Potocari, the burial site of the Srebrenica massacre, ethnic tensions in Sarajevo intensified. The event itself was intrinsically stressful, given the reminders of the bloody division of Bosnia, and so many lost lives. The attack on the Serbian president, whose attitude toward Muslims anyone with access to YouTube could
indisputably see, instilled fear on both sides of Bosnia. I made a point of visiting Republika Srpska and the Federation that day. There was crying and fear on both sides. On Serbian T.V., the attack on Vucic was an attack on Serbia and showed a wish for revenge on the Serbs for the massacre. The Serbs were terrified that they would be attacked by mobs, wanting revenge for the events from 20 years ago. One young woman, born during the war, through tears told me that she had nothing to do with the war, but that her family had suffered just as much as anyone on the Federation side and that she felt her and her family’s situation, of poverty and underemployment was not relevant. This is a popular sentiment that Srebrenica massacre victims get most of the aid, though everyone should be getting it equally.

On the Federation side, the rumors were flying that Serbs had thrown the rocks, to give Vucic an advantage of becoming a victim, instead of apologizing for the genocide, which he still denies ever happened.

Most of these tensions and fears of the resurfacing of the war, while prominent throughout Bosnia, are centered in on the capital Sarajevo. Tuzla and Zenica the respective seats of Bosfam and Medica Zenica, are affected by the politics coming out of Sarajevo, but they experience memory through their surroundings without the highly charged and expressive, competitive public politics conducted in Sarajevo on both sides of the border. The border itself can be crossed without any difficulty, and structurally if not symbolically is the equivalent of a county line. The symbolic divide, however, is deeply felt and has concrete, material implications. Serbs cannot easily find work on the Federation side, which occupies most of Sarajevo, especially the old downtown Sarajevo,
while the Serbs are pushed out to the rural areas past the Dobrinja housing projects. In what has been termed a “Vukojebinja” \(^{12}\), most of the constructions in East Sarajevo are new buildings, as most of it was uninhabited land until the area became the center of Republika Srpska. The very existence of East Sarajevo is a reminder of the exile of Serbs from the center of Sarajevo, that began during the siege in which Serb-led military forces assailed the city for years trying to take it over and cleanse it of non-Serbs.

Sarajevo and its complex landscape have a strong effect on the rest of the country. Tuzla, however, is majority Muslim and does not have a line drawn through its center. Tuzla is also famous for its commitment to communist worker movements, and even in 2016 I saw fliers on street lamps inviting passersby to communist worker monthly meetings. In this Tuzla is exceptional. It is known as the town with the least tension, despite the many Srebrenica refugees. Moving to Tuzla with my assistant from Sarajevo, my assistant was shocked, and happy, to see neighbors from all backgrounds sitting together in front of their buildings at night and drinking together without much thought given to ethnic backgrounds. More recently Tuzla has been in the news for its activism, as in the protests against the inefficient and corrupt local government were led by activists from Tuzla. When we arrived the buildings of the administration still had broken windows and traces of where the buildings were set on fire by angry protesters. While there were similar signs of destruction in Sarajevo, the feelings about the protests were divided in the capital, whereas in Tuzla, there was an unmatched optimism that at least the attempt to improve the state was worth it, though like all Bosnians they curtailed

\(^{12}\) “The place where the wolves fuck” meaning out of the way of civilization.
their enthusiasm. As Larissa Kurtovic noted in her talk at the American Ethnological Society in 2017 about political activists in Bosnia, the people she works with confided in her that they had no hope of actually improving the country, but instead felt it was their duty to try so they could tell their children that at least they did all they could. This Sisyphean attitude is the strongest form of hope for a stable and prosperous future in Bosnia. Tuzla has managed to organize labor and re-open a dish detergent factory, which advertises solely through social media as the company that Bosnians should buy, as it is returning work opportunities to Bosnia. In an intense viral video a man buys a German product instead of a Bosnian equivalent and is surrounded by people chanting "shame" at him wherever he goes. Again while this is socialism it is far removed from the state or the Tito era, it is a grassroots, pulling ourselves up “together in solidarity” by our bootstraps, much like the philosophy of Bosfam, that is strangely Emersonian in its socialism, and where ultimately all citizens can do against corporate interests is vote with their wallet.

Zenica’s trauma landscape is more so based in the trauma of deindustrialization. Zenica is predominantly Muslim, and has 70% youth unemployment. Many of the Srebrenica refugees made their way to Zenica much like they did to Tuzla, as both towns are fairly nearby. Zenica was a major industrial steel center. Within the former Yugoslavia it was the leader in the building of large scale transport ships with around 20,000 employees shortly before the beginning of the war. While there is still some minor work being done within Zenica’s steel industry, employment has gone down to 2000 employees. The city motto is “Eternal Love of the City of Steel” and is painted in
large letters across a wall on a major intersection leading to the newly built highway. The local soccer team is called simply “Celik” or “Steel”, while its fans are nicknamed "Robijasi" or robbers, as a nod to the fact that the largest prison in the Former Yugoslavia was based in Zenica, and still flourishes. After the war the state lost control over the industry and it was privatized. This meant that wealthy investors bought the remainders of the factory for a fraction of its pre-war value and sold it for scrap in order to make a quick profit. Larissa Kurtovic, among other Post-Socialist scholars from the region, has called this: “Primitive Accumulation of Capital” (Private Correspondence 2014). And as such it has indeed created a large standing army of unemployed and dispossessed workers with nowhere to go except for temporary trips north for various work projects in the European Union, or even at times in Dubai.

Socio-economic support services in Zenica were set up originally for female victims of the war, though Medica Zenica makes a point of including male clients most of the services are utilized by women. Young men are a population that has been left out of support structures. Though I came to Zenica to meet the women of Medica Zenica, access was by necessity restricted, and interviews with staff and members were available, but mostly in controlled settings. My assistant and I spent most of our social time in between interviews with unemployed young men loitering in the areas where we took my son to play in the evenings. While the women’s experience was frustrating, they had access to funds and job placement, so it was mostly the women in the household with any kind of reliable income.
A middle-aged public school teacher lived with her two sons in an apartment in our building. She had been through Medica Zenica, due to her abusive husband. Her older son had stayed with his father, which caused discontent between the brothers at times, though they were now living together with their mother. The mother was a strong figure in the family and confirmed that her recovery and success were due to her one year stay at Medica Zenica, which included safe living quarters, therapy, education for her and her younger son, as well as job placement once it was deemed safe enough for her to move out of the secured facility in the hills overlooking Zenica. The Center is not easy on a secluded road, fenced off and gated. An intercom is used to evaluate whether a visitor will be let in and only with a prior set appointment. The center itself is peaceful, and in a rural area, with little traffic. Though everyone in Zenica knows about the safe house, only those who have visited it know its exact location, even when given the address I was lost a few times before I finally found it.

Zenica’s post-industrial landscape at first glance seems quaint. In spite of claims of high levels of pollution of the Bosna river and the air in general, the town is nothing but parks, fresh air, and plenty of fishermen around the river Bosna, around which Zenica has grown, to indicate healthy wildlife in the water. The park surrounding the river has been equipped with playgrounds, and decorative sites, whose plaques explain that they have been donated to Zenica by the city of Istanbul and the Turkish government. Children are out playing and the stray dogs seem well fed, though they are scruffy. The town has a favorite stray, Vucko, or little wolf, and everyone I spoke to knew about him and spoiled him. There was no political graffiti in the area, unlike the anti-government
slogans in Tuzla, or the ethnic-based hate speech found in Sarajevo. All Zenica graffiti was romantic in nature and consisted of messages professing love from one partner to another. This prompted my assistant and me to name Zenica, the “Paris of Bosnia” to the amusement of locals.

Our building in the suburb just in front of Zenica named Radakovo had its resident stray dog. At all times of the day the building was surrounded by groups of young men, chatting, laughing, and wandering back and forth. Whenever we took my son out for a walk the young men were happy to play with him, and to chat with my assistant and me. They became our neighbors and friends soon and, due to their lack of employment, they were always available to show us around, help us get interviews, or even provide interviews themselves. This was unlike Tuzla or Sarajevo, where most were busy working insecure day jobs and only were around their homes in the evening, while in Zenica, unemployment and youth crime were far higher.

Soon it became clear that the clean air and water meant the industry was dead in Zenica, the many stray dogs were kept by communities because, as our neighbors told us, people could barely feed their own children let alone afford a pet, and the state provided no pet shelters or neutering services, so everyone made sure to feed the stray animals to keep them friendly toward people. Graffiti was depoliticized in Zenica, because there was no labor movement, or hope for one, and all the Serbs had left or been forced out during the war. As a result, Zenica was in fact a fairly homogenous Muslim community. Ethnic cleansing had worked in that ironic and limited sense: there was no one to scare off with anti-Serb messages. The new mosque being built at the entrance to town
overshadowed a decaying elementary school right next to it. While the city was not shelled as much as Sarajevo or even Tuzla, there are personalized depoliticized memorials set up by families to lost relatives in particular spots around town during the war, with short inscriptions and an image of the always young-looking person.

Though we made friends everywhere we went, the unfortunately drastic youth underemployment allowed to make our closest connections in Zenica. The most prominent aspects of the Zenica landscape are the frequent, large and carefully done murals celebrating the local soccer club Celik. It is an identifier of the community and particularly the young men organize their schedule around club events. Other favorite activities are found in the countless gambling shops found on every corner of any town in Bosnia, or spending time in coffee shops/bars. Another reminder of the few opportunities, and the fact that many people will sink what little they make into gambling, as the only way out of the bare minimum they have.

Zenica’s citizens enjoy the parks and the fresh air. One time we took a walk along the river front, with our son, and met some of the young men who lived in our building on the way. We talked about the lovely weather. Their mood took a turn at this, and they reminded us that, while they enjoy the fresh air, it is also a constant reminder of the lack of industry and work, that Zenica and their fathers used to have. Zenica does not mourn the war, they mourn the loss of the steel industry and Ford-style factory that gave stability and lifetime employment to its citizens. Privatization of industry has not worked to the benefit of the workers in the region. The dismantling of the state and its influence on industry is felt in Zenica more than anywhere else in Bosnia. Most of the violence
that Medica Zenica deals with, as its safe house indicates, is no longer the violence perpetrated against refugee women during wartime, but instead domestic violence exacerbated by a collapsed economy without any potential for improvement. Many people I interviewed in Zenica in particular women working in the service industry, stated again and again, that they can have temporary jobs in the service sector, but that they are painfully aware that those jobs are few and fewer because there is nothing concrete, aside from the diasporic remittances and some UN funding, bringing any income into the town as a whole.

While all the towns I worked in look lovely, green, and like most other European towns on the surface, over time I found indicators in the landscape that reminded the residents of the stark differences in their daily lives opposed to their past and those of most European countries. The memory of the divisive war is still remembered, more so through the broken state and lack of any economically stable future, which the landscape of the three cities reflects in its own way. Even driving from town to town, there are burnt homes along the road on the Federation and Serbian side, indicating where ethnic cleansing took place. Enormous rusting factories are reminders of an uncertain future and the fact that an industrial modern past did not bring the linear increase in success and wealth accumulation as many assumed it would. Much like Angela Garcia’s landscapes of communal as well as personal dispossession can affect subject formation, so is the post-industrial, post-socialist, post-war landscape laden with complex stories in which the inhabitants see their own lives reflected (Garcia 2008). Bauman’s liquid modernity with its capital “on the run” and the loss of stability or purpose, has hit Bosnia intensely. The
inhabitants of this space are aware of what it was, what it could or should have been, based on past socialist ideologies, but the hardest part of this is that there is no predictable future economically. Economic stability ranked highest in my questionnaires on mental and physical health as a positive and crucial influence on both. The population itself has no purpose beyond being sustained by concerned outsiders who have left, and declining external funding only provided to keep the region “stable”. Where there was a purpose to life in socialism, where the work of laborers mattered to the state as well as to their families, and when Yugoslavia saw itself courted by powerful parties of all three economic blocks as a path to the future, now the citizens feel abandoned as a whole. Like the Elegiac addict, the loss of Agamben’s Zoe, a purposeful political life, and step down to Bios, bare biological life attributed to refugees and inhabitants of camps, (Biehl 2005) has disoriented the population and lent them, even in their day to day resiliency and bravado, a deep sense of melancholy and dispossession as a community.

While Agamben discusses all of modernity to be a movement towards concentration camps, it is more towards a lack of stability and sense of purpose or progress which causes melancholy and creates public spaces overly determined by the conflict which has come to stand for a breaking point in the community and has been emblazoned on the community landscape.

The division of Sarajevo is not just a division in space, as in Serbs are here and Croats are there, but also through time. For students of the Sarajevo school district, Serb students attend the same school as Federation students but in different shifts. Depending on the school one group will show up in the morning and leave, only for the next group to
come in and be taught by their teachers. This divides the space into two places, which are not compatible and not meant to mix. This does not mean that all children are divided by these lines, but it does make a reconciliation and the creation of a shared place extremely difficult for future generations.
Chapter 3

Perceptions of Continuing Need

One of the first questions I asked on my standard questionnaire was: “Are mental health and trauma recovery NGOs still needed?”. Twenty years after the war, I wanted to gauge local views of what, if any, mental health care and psycho-social and economic supports were necessary. I knew that there were many stories of NGOs pushing for services that were maybe not as needed as other forms of support—the perception being that continuation was requested in order to line their own pockets. I also knew, from extensive readings about trauma care all over the world, that Western style medical treatment of trauma was not only a stigma, but also not considered effective in some cultures (Phillips 2010), prompting the DSM V writers to add a note about the need to explore cross cultural approaches to trauma care, as symptoms as well as treatments may vary from place to place. Based on interviews with the Post-Yugoslav diasporic population, completed for my methods course at the University of California Riverside with Dr. Schwenkel, mental health care remained a stigma, considered a scam at best.

As much as mental health stigmas are real in Bosnia, every response indicated that the people I interviewed for this project would welcome a chance to sit and talk to a psychiatrist and take prescribed medication if needed. Though Bosnians said that they used to think of trauma as a stigma or sign of weakness, years of living in a post-war
zone has made it very real. The diaspora however still holds on to the values held by pre-war Bosnians. Many, if not most, Bosnians had prescriptions of the popular drug Apaurin, used for panic attacks, handed out by their primary physician. The problem was not a cross cultural difference in mental health care understanding, but simply a lack of access. There were no readily available therapists. In Bosnia today, for anyone with government provided healthcare, who cannot afford to pay for a private doctor, waiting periods are extensive, paperwork is frustrating, and rumors circulate that it is best to bring presents to doctors and nurses, or use "veze" to get better treatment.

A young woman in Bihac, who admitted to having difficulties dealing with her war trauma, told me her experience of going to see a specialist. She had been referred to a local psychiatrist, after insisting to her primary care physician that Apaurin was not enough, or a long-term solution. After several sessions with the therapist and confiding delicate information to them, she found out that the therapist knew her mother and had shared with her details of these sessions. This caused problems in her home, as she still lived with her mother, and found herself in a precarious position, as she was still unemployed. While she did not share the details that the therapist had shared, it was enough to show the reason many Bosnians feared going to therapists.

An older woman from a mixed Serb/Muslim marriage, I will call her Milica, in Sarajevo confided in me that she had attended a knitting group similar to the ones that Bosfam holds, and that this group did wonders for her mental health. She had applied for disability due to progressive osteoarthritis combined with a slew of chronic diseases. At an advanced age, Milica had spent the entire war in Sarajevo during the siege, with a high
cost to her mental and physical health. Before the war she had a high level position within a Yugoslav institution, but when the Serb attacks started she was let go, in spite of her husband being Muslim. She hid Serb family members in the Serb besieged city, filled with a local make shift militia patrolling the streets trying to find Serb spies, who might be infiltrating or helping the snipers shooting at the city from the outside. There was little food, no heating and high levels of day-to-day stress. After the war she experienced periods of sudden weight gain and weight loss, attributed by her doctors to glandular disorders brought on by stress. Still at her age, nearing 70, she was the only one with solid employment in her family providing in home care for a foreign diplomat's family.

Disability pensions are only granted if the patient shows up for therapy and doctors appointments which can be hard to come by or work into a schedule if you have to work, due to not yet having disability. The state will deny the claim if the patient does not show up for treatment for a prescribed amount of time, or misses appointments. This is how Milica came to participate in the therapy group she may not have had the opportunity to seek out. She made special mention of the fact that through this group she got supplies to make clothes that she could then give out as gifts. She stopped going to the group when she was considered only 70% disabled, and did not qualify for disability. Seeing that she could barely move due to joint pain, and hearing from her family that she would cry at night from chronic pain.

Milica's family was concerned for her health mentally and physically, but unable to survive without her income, so she kept having to walk long distances uphill with
aching joints exacerbating her rheumatoid arthritis. She had been taught intricate knitting and crocheting in traditional Bosnian style from her mother, so she enjoyed the knitting group and found comfort in it. Milica also appreciated that there was no need to talk about anything war related, but just a comforting place. Though she did not hear of Bosfam, she shared this story with me and told me that she was sure that would be the best way to go about helping trauma patients, and that similar programs were provided by the state, but only to those that qualify through a complex bureaucratic maze, unlike Bosfam who accepts anyone who happens to wander in gets as much or as little support as the organization can provide.

Medica Zenica on the other hand requires a police report noting domestic violence for safe house admittance, though they will provide other services by appointment to anyone regardless of background. In general younger women tried to see psychiatrists or took Apaurin, and did not care for knitting circles, feeling that they were backwards and for rural women. Many self-medicate with alcohol or illegal drugs in order to manage their mental health as best they can. Nervous breakdowns, drug addiction, or alcoholism, as well as mental disorders presenting with dissociations and hallucinations and considered locally to indicate schizophrenia, are in fact still stigmatized, albeit in different ways, depending on whether the individual can be held liable for the disorder, such as drug addiction, or whether it is a genetic disorder such as schizophrenia, which would result in pity, but nevertheless a stigma.

Drug addicts in particular are highly stigmatized though common place based on my interactions. Trauma, stress, and related disorders however have become so common
that no one I met took issue with them in the way diasporic Bosnians –those who left during the war and now live in environments were trauma is not prevalent – discussed the problems. Traumatic stress, whether it is directly related to the war or to subsequent deindustrialization and unemployment, have produced community-level melancholy and hopelessness. The only individuals who had trouble empathizing with these disorders where from the diaspora, high status economically or politically, or had moved to Bosnia from neighboring areas, and had not lived through the war. In particular, those of high economic status could not relate to the crippling economic depression, and tried to blame the "mentality of the Bosnian people" for the failure of the state.

This does not mean that Bosnians are moping around all day long. Resilience is a point of pride and communal understanding of individual cases of melancholy is helpful. Resilience is found through social support, and "visiting with" neighbors, friends, or family, to talk, laugh or even cry. Watching television was never acceptable during social gatherings, though music never seemed out of place. Suffering is shared, there are always neighbors who may have been there as support before, during, and after the war. Neighbors share stories, tears, gossip, and dark humor. In my interviews, however lighthearted they seemed on the surface, interviewees always reiterated that life was hard and that there were no future prospects; they made sure I did not forget that, in spite of the humor, and resilience, their lives were not something they wanted to accept as such, but they had little option in changing structural conditions.

Based on my surveys keys to mental and physical health are embedded in socio-economic stability rather than continual exposure to social and economic instability. The
questions for this part of the survey were open ended. When asked why finances and politics were relevant to mental and physical health there was a range, but also patterns, in the answers. Some answered that having a sufficient income reduces daily stress, others that having extra funds can also allow for better health care and living conditions, which reduce the likelihood of what people consider stress-related diseases. Indeed, respondents consistently attributed most diseases to economic problems and attendant stress. Aside from existential fears, such as ‘how will we eat tomorrow’, socio-economic deterioration and joblessness was blamed for increasing stress by bringing about the constant “Freudian melancholy” Angela Garcia talks about in her work (Garcia 2008). A middle-aged man, who was a teen enrolled in a physics degree program during the war, now worked random day jobs, and occasionally worked as a bar tender told me:

After the war we had hope that it would get better, but then it just did not, it only kept getting harder to find work, and humanitarian agencies disappeared. I have no more energy for hope. It has been twenty years. I only hope that our children will be able to leave this place, and have a decent life with a future. This, what we have, this is not life.

Though most Bosnians have enough to eat and manage to procure most needed services, there is a memory of being more embedded in the community, a sense of purpose that has evaporated.

Most people insisted that I conduct the interviews within a family or friendly gathering setting. The explanation for this was generally that I could get several interviews at once, but I believe it was also more comfortable, this worked well for me as
it allowed me to watch interpersonal interactions. One of the first interviews I conducted was in Sarajevo. I was sitting down with a family--grandparents, their daughter and granddaughter--a household that had survived the last thirty or more years in the same apartment, during the war and now on the Federation side. The grandparents had a mixed Serb-Muslim marriage. One of the standard questions I asked was: “How would you describe a person who is physically ill?” The entire family laughed and pointed to the grandmother, who also laughed along with them. To the question of mental health the answer was similar, except that they pointed out that the entire family was affected by mental health issues. That was the kind of dark humor I noted in Bosnia, self-deprecating, but showing solidarity. Again I was told, as I had been told on the Serbian side of Sarajevo, that if there were therapists available even just for talk therapy, they would gladly take advantage of that service.

This family was predominantly female and I thought that maybe a more male dominant setting might display the kind of mental health stigma and reluctance to pursue treatment that I had observed among diasporic Bosnians. So, I asked the same questions when sitting outside in the evening with predominantly men from the surrounding neighborhood in Tuzla, and though they had been joking and seemed comfortable, one of the young men started crying. I insisted that we did not have to go on, however, he wanted to tell his story and reassured me that it was all right, and even necessary to tell. He spoke about his father, a cab driver, who had had several car accidents in a row. He was traumatized and put in treatment with one of the few locally available psychiatrists. The treatment seemed to improve his state, however when the psychiatrist went on a two
week long vacation, without providing for any emergency psychiatric care contact for his father in the mean time, the father committed suicide. Following his father’s death, this young man’s pregnant wife suffered a miscarriage due to what he considered a hospital error. His wife and he had grown apart as she had a hard time being around him: He said she thought of him as a constant reminder of their lost child. While the doctor had prescribed Apaurin for both of them, they did not think it was sufficient treatment and were unsure how to deal with the problems they were facing. He did note that during his father’s funeral -“the Women of Srebrenica” (which I found out later were Bosfam representatives, though they did not advertise themselves as such) came by to pray with him, bringing with them food and other comforts for the family. That was one way I found that Bosfam was trying to return a spirit of solidarity and neighborliness to the community. His face lit up when he spoke about how he felt, that these women, who did not know him personally, had found out what had happened and came to lend support, understanding loss and the need for community due to their own wartime experiences.

While Bosfam was not known by its official name to most citizens, the organization seemed to find ways to the women who needed them, mostly the group of refugee women and their friends who had met at refugee centers and struck up friendships right after being chased out of their homes. They spread their help and support wherever they found it necessary through informal networks. This included but was not limited to providing food to families in need from all sides. One aspect of traditional trauma care, such as Strava\(^\text{13}\), a traditional way of healing trauma among other

\(^{13}\) A traditional way of dealing with mental trauma in Bosnia. Not utilized by Bosfam or Medica Zenica, nevertheless very popular in the region. It is discussed in great detail in the work of Larissa Jasarevic. A Strava “reader” would read the body, even from great
illnesses, is that advertising oneself or asking for compensation in any shape or form, means that the service rendered is disingenuous, and therefore cannot be trusted. Even when having my tarot cards read by an older Bosnian woman, who offered to do this on my interview visit as a kind of fun activity, she indicated quickly that anyone who charges for a reading must be a charlatan. This contributed to the low key and subtle effects Bosfam was having on Tuzla. Its ideology is embedded in a deeper ideology of Bosnian “traditional values”, including inter-ethnic cooperation and a lack of self-promotion. Personal referrals would guide those perceived to have need of Bosfam to their door, where they welcome anyone during daytime hours for coffee, snacks, or even just a nap in the comfortable sitting area, which can be a godsend to exhausted mothers who struggle to find sleep at home. While there is no professional psychiatric service provided, the women who have utilized Bosfam, often in addition to Apaurin, speak highly of their improved mental and economic well-being as well as improved view of their own value and ability to create sought after items, which can provide supplemental income. The access to supplies, and the ability to sell their handiwork right after completion for cash, after which Bosfam resells it to customers for a small markup, can make the difference between being able to feed a family for a week, pay rent, buy school supplies or not.

Medica Zenica operates differently than Bosfam in many ways. As already noted they provide psychiatric, gynecological services, as well as actively working in politics to ensure the rights of their clients within the state and the international community, which

distances, and then put mercury into warm Coca Cola, in order to realize the illness affecting the concerned individual and would prescribe a cure.
at the end of the day is what has the most power over the state. Before Medica Zenica’s campaign there were no post-war reparations paid to rape victims of the Bosnian war. This funding is invaluable to many survivors and their families, although many women are unlikely to address their trauma, in order to avoid the immense stigma, not of trauma from the war per se, but the shame of rape. Both Bosfam and Medica Zenica leadership is concerned with the impact of untreated rape trauma, knowing the intergenerational impact of trauma on children, and children’s children of the affected women. No one I interviewed brought up experiences of rape. I did not ask directly, as that would be more than inappropriate in the setting, however the center’s staff did provide some information about the needs of these women. Central to these needs is confidentiality during treatment. Ensuring confidentiality is why Medica Zenica’s mobile gynecological clinic doubles as a mobile psychiatric intervention center, and why Bosfam’s location and purpose within Tuzla is only known to very few in the community, and apparently, no one who is not somehow affiliated with them. People know about the “Women of Srebrenica” who commemorate their dead publicly with woven memorial carpets on the anniversary of the genocide, and who show up to funerals to assist families, and who operate through networks to help families in need of food, or scholarships, or referrals to schools for the youth of Tuzla. This does not mean that the public is aware of the mental health services and safe space that Bosfam provides. If anything, it is considered a craft shop by those who do happen to walk past it. Though it is not a safe house, some women use it as such on occasion.
A large part of the “treatment” Bosfam provides according to Beba Hadzic is encouraging women to “stop crying and get to work.” While this sounds callous, it is representative of two things: Bosnian belief in blunt honesty and a pervasive and deeply held belief that dignity and recovery lie in labor and the process of creating useful items. Being productive and useful is valued, as is the consequence: getting some additional income. Beba, the founder of the organization is usually the one who encourages this in women, and provides this unpatronizing “tough love”. The women who had been clients or otherwise participants within Bosfam remember the moment when Beba helped them get to work and, although this did not solve all their problems, it did improve their mental health and self-image. As a former educator Beba goes out of her way to encourage the children of the women she works with to push as far in their education as possible. Several of the women who had been with the organization for a longer amount of time, had children who were completing higher education degrees.

The work of Bosfam at the end is an intuitive product of what people consider to be traditional Bosnian womanhood, providing communal support in a time of crisis. This is tailor-made for a support organization like Oxfam that is seeking to support grassroots organizations and empower leadership directly from within the affected community. When asking people of Tuzla if the services of the “Women of Srebrenica” as I found out they were known more widely, twenty-some years after the war were still needed, the answer on the Federation side was unilaterally, yes. The reasoning behind the answer ranged from knowledge that many refugee women were still on the verge of poverty and awareness of the deep loss during the war and the need for advocacy that Bosfam
provides. Not one person that I interviewed expressed that psycho-social services were less needed this long after the war; indeed, the consensus was that they were even more needed, but jobs were needed even more so. When I asked why there were needed more, the answers varied but the theme was, and seemed obvious to anyone I bothered to ask, that there was less hope and fewer resources now than right after the war, when the country was flooded with aid, or even during the war, when everyone hoped that things would return to a pre-war state, so they bore their suffering believing that things could only get better. Today, I am told, the economy is declining and ethnic-based political bickering is a constant reminder that a new war could be just around the corner. When probing more carefully on this topic, the difficulties of the people who are perceived to still need psycho-social support from NGOs do so to a strong extent, because the state has no ability or interest to provide for them.

On the Serbian Republic side, the opinion on Bosfam was divided. While everyone I interviewed acknowledged the need for psycho-social services and outreach and noted that many of their kids volunteered in after-school organizations concerned with youth mental health and drug abuse prevention, Bosfam was seen as too divisive because of its focus on the Srebrenica survivors. Many Serbs felt that Bosfam excluded them and reinforced negative political tensions by reiterating the focus on the Serb-perpetrated massacre, for which mainly the Serb Romanija Corps, from the region which is now near East Sarajevo, has been held responsible. Many Serbs from East Sarajevo felt that their suffering had been underplayed, that they had been exiled, and that organizations such as Bosfam and Women in Black are opposed to reconciliation. This
attitude stems from a historically grounded fear of retaliation, as the Serb attacks on
Croats and Muslims were themselves retaliation for WWII camps and the imperialism of
the Ottoman Empire. Most Serbs I interviewed denied personal participation in any
attacks, and felt disenfranchised by the Dayton line separation, as well as the image of
Serbs as the aggressors. Most respondents reminded me that there were atrocities on both
sides.

Bosfam claims a reconciliatory message and their involvement and aid to women
from both sides is a strong indicator of their dedication to this process through deploying
pan-ethnic Bosnian traditions of labor, in particular weaving and knitting styles.
According to Beba these traditions As the Srebrenica massacre is what brought these
women together, they commemorate their loss annually. They do not politicize their
events, but media coverage generally omits their speeches on reconciliation from the
news. The women are aware of polarizing energy being forced on their work and, as
Beba and some of her long-term clients have told me, they are increasingly worried about
their message of peace being misappropriated for essentially divisive ethno-nationalist
politics.

Medica Zenica received more neutral responses, though some men,
predominantly from the Sarajevo area, felt unfairly blamed for domestic abuse, arguing
that it “… takes two people to create.” and that it can often be the woman’s fault. Tuzla
was supportive of both grassroots programs. One young man stated,: “Even if there are
overpayments or privileging of the Srebrenica Women, they deserve all our community
can give them after what they have been through.” Zenica however was unified in the
male and female response to the needs not only of mental health care providers for both
genders, but also for aidspecifically for gender- based violence, whether domestic or
linked to wartime abuses. Overall women had been more sensitive to the needs of
domestic violence survivors, as well as often silenced wartime rape victims, whether it
was in Sarajevo, Bihac, Vares, Tuzla, or any other Bosnian town in the study. The only
exception were the young men of Zenica.

Medica Zenica is a self-proclaimed feminist organization. In our initial interview,
Sabhia Husic, the current head of the organization, emphasized that overt feminist
approaches were more productive than the work of Bosfam, which she considered limited
in its reach. Ms. Husic wears a head scarf and is Muslim, but her methods are rooted in
the ideas of Second Wave feminism, particularly in regards to its focus on domestic
violence and bringing women into the workforce, as well as legal representation for
gender based crimes against women. This type of feminism has also been criticized by
authors such as Bell Hooks for its focus on middle class white North American women.
Part of the critique, which is relevant to the distinction between Medica's and Bosfam's
core approach, is finally the difference of rural and urban women in Bosnia, where not
one particular type of woman exists. In contrast Beba Hadzic’s approach in Bosfam
works with Oxfam’s “local tradition” approach. The funding apparatus of Medica Zenica
is a German-based feminist organization concerned with women’s health and women’s
rights. The education program for the children of the women who lived in the safe house
included feminist views. The children also received mental health care, acknowledging
the trauma they experienced in the war or in tandem with the abuse of their mothers.
Medica Zenica held radio programs discussing the problems of domestic abuse, was involved in promoting laws to protect victims, and cooperated with local police to assist victims. Their clients are often referred and even driven to the center by local police from surrounding towns.

The young men of Zenica that I interviewed were keenly aware of all of these efforts at to provide temporary safety for their clients and to educate the children of victims and the community at large about the realities of domestic abuse. Their answers were distinct from most of the answers I had received and particularly contrasted with the attitudes toward domestic abuse in Sarajevo. In interviews and in everyday casual conversations they spoke about women's bodily integrity, emphasized passionately that violence in relationships was never the answer, no matter what the outcome. Of course there is no real way of knowing whether this translates into their personal practices, but their stress on not being violent toward women was notable, especially among those who had lived within Medica Zenica, with their mothers. They had been taught that their mothers were not at fault, and they spoke about their mothers as strong resilient figures in their lives, instead of as victims. They blamed cowardice and weakness on the abuser. When I asked them about the need for psycho-social support the answer was a resounding yes, not only for abused women, but also for themselves, this included. They were all unemployed and with an entirely uncertain future. Although they were old enough to work and had been through trade school or had enrolled at the university, there were no job prospects. All of the young men were acutely aware of the stability their father's and grandfathers had enjoyed before the war, that contrasted with the current climate of
increasing uncertainty in which they are attempting to build their lives. Several of them had travelled into the EU on short-term labor contracts, which gave them some money to help their families out with during the year. Most of them had been involved in some illegal activity, and a few had spent time incarcerated in Bosnia, or within the EU while occupied as laborers. One young man, who had been to trade school and had been unable to find steady work for over five years after completing the program, explained to me matter of factly:

If you need food, or need to smoke, or just want a beer, and you have no way to make any money to buy, you are just going to end up taking it. I tried to work, to live a good life, but that is not something I can do, its not up to me.

Due to the long history of strong socialist government and labor unions, the working class is aware of the structural impact of the privatization of state industry on their lives. This awareness alone, I was told by these Zenica youth, does not help with the drain it takes on mental health.

Apaurin and in some more intense cases Benzodiazepenes are drugs of choice prescribed by local doctors to the youth of Zenica, to help them cope with depression that is a steady and constant presence in their lives. One young man admitted to almost killing himself with Benzodiazepenes, after his girlfriend’s miscarriage, due to stress, and this is not the only story of miscarriage I had heard from Bosnian youth. These young men, my assistant, and I spent many evenings playing Remy or Risk with our neighbors while they shared openly their mental health struggles as much as any other items discussed such as music, gossip, politics or sports. Stress and trauma have come to be
normalized in Bosnia, so this was not something that would be unusual to mention in any get-together. People visiting with their neighbors for coffee or card games (watching television, unless a soccer game was involved, is considered rude) and what can be done to deal with stress, to feel better, which doctor to see, and the like were frequent topics of discussion. The tone of the conversation did not change drastically when trauma or mental was brought up. Advice was exchanged, jokes made, and it was all done matter of factly. Sometimes the discussion would grow more intense, but this was as likely to happen in any other day to day topic. In fact some of the more intense arguments and anger outbursts I witnessed in gettogethers were usually over trivial items. When talk of more serious topics came up, people tried to hold back and keep calm knowing that anger outbursts on a serious topic could really get out of hand, or end up in violence.

Bosnian culture is known for open discussion of everyone and their neighbor's medical concerns (Jasarevic 2015). This kind of communal openness can be overwhelming and helpful at the same time. As supportive as it can be to have communal support, it can also backfire, by exposing one’s problems to family members who may not respond well, like the young woman from Bihac. This is why many Bosnians told me they would be open to private talk therapy, as they would be able to unburden their struggles and get advice from a source that would not notify everyone in their community of their struggles. While stress and trauma management are acceptable, sexual deviation, such as women have many sexual partners, homosexuality, or infidelity, and drug abuse are not acceptable, and often accompany stress-related problems. Young people in close groups of friends might discuss some of these, but not in family settings.
Most of the interviews were conducted in groups. When outbursts of anger occurred, the individuals blamed the eruptions on stress and trauma. Anger is common currency, particularly in Sarajevo, but prevalent all over the Bosnian landscape. Frustration and anger over small transgressions are oftentimes quickly resolved, but sometimes end in abiding feuds. Apaurin is sometimes consumed to calm down individuals who are so overtaken by their anger that they are about to engage in destructive behavior; people considered this emergency pill-taking effective. I have been told by families who got into intense arguments during interviews, that they did not used to be like this, that the stress had gotten the best of them, after which almost everyone reiterated the need for professional mental health care. Another informant called Bosnia "the El Dorado of Psychiatrists".

When we initially moved into Tuzla, the more peaceful and optimistic of towns, our first experience with neighbors almost ended in a fist fight between my female assistant and a Tuzla native, who figured out she was from Sarajevo and told her: "Fuck your Sarajevo!", After the assistant made it clear that she would not back down from a fight, they laughed and hugged it out. He became a close friend, and was the young man who relayed the story of his father's recent suicide, noted earlier. Hair-trigger tensions and frustrations in the community are commonplace in everyday life, and the incident also shows that women in Bosnia do not shy away from physical fights with men, while I had heard stories of mixed gender physical fights erupting publicly, and not really being questioned, witnessing it confirmed it even more so. While this varies with locality, only in Zenica was violence against women something that was explicitly considered immoral,
as most Bosnians saw women capable of physical violence. In one instance, before the war, a middle school girl broke a boy's leg in secondary school because he slapped her, because he mistook her for someone else. A book, which has been mercilessly critiqued within Bosnia, talks about women war criminals, and the violence perpetrated during the war by women. To paint women as simply victims and not acknowledge that they are capable of aggression, in self-defense or as part of a militant movement, would be naïve at best. A UN general even claimed that women were some of the fiercest warriors during the Bosnian conflict in the 1990's and of course women are very capable of internalizing the tenets of ethno-nationalist patriarchy, and feel in some cases even more strongly than men about upholding it, to assert their dedication to the nationalist mission and their equality with men, something that was seen in female NAZI party supporters during WW2 and the intensity of atrocities they committed. Though women are socialized into certain roles within their community meekness in the face of physical violence is not "natural" to women.

While Media Zenica, and Bosfam both painted women out of necessity within the gendered dichotomy of female victim/male perpetrator as discussed by Carpenter’s discussion of Enlightenment understandings of combatants as necessarily male had a strong effect on what kind of help men could receive in the aftermath of war (Carpenter 2003) The neglect of male victims of trauma can be connected to the rise in domestic violence perpetrated by men, while women have internalized their role as victims to male violence through the many workshops, presentations, and other trauma aides they have received, aside from media rhetoric. Males who had had some form of professional
intervention—the underage children of abused women within the Medica Zenica complex—were exceptional in their understanding of feminist values and their abhorrence of violence against women. At the same time they also struggled with the problems of unemployment, crime, violence among men, and rampant drug use. Still NGO's and most humanitarian post-war institutions, doctors and therapists were forced to couch the way they presented gender notions to their clients within the male/female perpetrator/victim dichotomies, which may have in some ways cemented notions of violence against women by men as natural.

Everyone I spoke to in all three sites from a variety of backgrounds agreed strongly that there is a need to deal with mental health care issues in Bosnia. How they thought it should be dealt with and the lack of resources are where the complications arose. The professional therapists I spoke to, who work in Sarajevo, Zenica, and Tuzla, noted that the most effective currently used methods is not necessarily talk therapy, but instead CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy). While effective as an approach, knowing that this can work well does not address the paucity of therapists available or disappearing NGOs that provide the kind of psycho-social mental health care approach needed in Bosnia.
It is clear that Bosnians actively seek ways to manage anxiety in their day to day lives. While most funding for mental health care is attached to gendered ideas of abused women or post-war trauma, much of the anxiety is according to those I interviewed related to post-socialist deterioration of state services, uncertainty about any regional economic improvement in the future, and the consequences of these stressors for families and individuals. Young people I interviewed had certain shared goals: generally to leave the country at some point in order to be able to live what they called a “normal life”. Many times they termed life in Bosnia today “not normal”, their umbrella phrase for everything they disliked about the state, and living in the region in general. Framed by this widespread characterization of the environment the implications of subject formation based on the stress factors in today’s Bosnia, that people consider “not normal”. How does the "not normal", or "nenormalno", articulate with grassroots Medica and Bosfam treatment services? How do analyses in critical medical anthropology by DelVecchio-Good, Allan Young have relevance to this case (Young 1995) Are post-war traumatic memories, especially when politically fanned for present day ethno-nationalist purposes, usefully considered to be a community-level mental health crisis? How do we
analyze the mental health consequences at all levels of living in a chronically and constantly renewed, economically, socially and politically stress-field habitat? More controversially in what ways might the documented responses to continuing crisis be a healthy reaction to an unhealthy situation?

In Allan Young’s ethnography of United States Vietnam veterans, a pattern emerges in the way clinician staff evaluate the patients. The patients that are doing well and adjusting without difficulty or need for intervention, i.e. work on the clinicians’ part, are individuals who accept the violence and the atrocities they committed. The “problem” patients are the ones who do not accept the violent and gory landscape of the Vietnam war as “normal”. They are the ones who are falling apart and in need of treatment, because the experience of war is too far removed from what is “normal” for them. In my study, however, it is not the post-war experience of exclusively Muslim women’s wartime exploitation that defines Bosnia’s gender landscape. As noted in the work of Elissa Helms the Post-Yugoslav region’s gender aspects have not been studied on-site, but instead have been evaluated based on wartime reports, which due to the gendered construction of victimhood by perpetrators and humanitarians alike, have omitted the complex post-war landscape (Helms 2013). The analyses thus ignore men who are not perpetrators, women who are not war victims, and an entire country which had survived the violations of wartime reconstruction war time reconstruction involving intense privatization and deterioration of the state. This upheaval is only offset by the few remaining NGOs, that are forced to provide aid through the specific lens of Muslim women in need of war trauma recovery.
As in Fassin’s work, that is critical of “Humanitarian Reason” (Fassin 2010), many Bosnian NGOs try to find the middle ground between what they can justify funding for, based on external perceptions of need, and what is needed on the ground. This point was made poignantly when I had the opportunity to interview two Sarajevo native women, who worked for an NGO assisting AIDS patients in Bosnia. Due to a comparatively low number of patients, compared to other countries (in this case around 180 individuals) the NGO was about to be shut down at the time of my interviews. They noted that the shutdown would hurt their patients and possibly result in more or worsening cases, as the Bosnian government did nothing to prevent the spread of AIDS, and the ostracizing of AIDS patients as homosexual, exposing the clients to violence in everyday life. The staff women I interviewed shared stories of what kind of work their organization did, which was providing medication, mental and physical treatment, as well as helping with day to day struggles, such as paying bills, transportation, or obtaining groceries.

One client, a woman with a serious case, asked specifically for avocados from the grocery store. The organization bought among other groceries, some rather pricey and hard to find, avocados, knowing the serious nature of the case, this seemed a small, but worthwhile purchase, which the organization included in their invoicing to their foreign donor. The donor refused to process that months invoicing, due to the avocado purchased being perceived as an unnecessary luxury. Many hours of additional labor had to be spent to write a detailed justification, and to redo the paperwork to justify the purchases including the fateful avocado. A similar issue arose with the purchase of a watermelon.
once. The staff was frustrated with the lack of support, and the tedious funding paperwork, required to justify continued funding, which was eventually completely revoked. Their concern was for the patients who would now lose sorely needed support. The misfit also involves service providers brought up in a system where people were to having small luxuries and not being treated as paupers. The avocados and watermelon acknowledged that recipients were seen as full citizens, or zoe, as part of a worthy community. The funding agency personnel misread this as an undesirable entitlement, waste, or even graft, reducing the clients needs to bare life, or bios (Agamben 1998).

While this example is particularly jarring in its pedantism and removal from reality on the ground, it is a theme that runs through all NGO staff complaints. Medica Zenica is managing this, by having a dedicated team just in charge of funding. Smaller organizations that cannot afford this kind of scrutiny and additional staff just for funding paperwork in addition to the staff actually doing the work for their clients, either fell apart, or like Bosfam found their own stream of income through sales and donations, as well as a more low budget approach, and frugal management. Medica needs to pay to keep psychiatrists, medical professionals among others on staff, much like the smaller AIDS focused organization did, so they need to work on funding sources constantly, as money is not automatically allocated, and new sources of grants and support need to be found on an annual basis.

In the first few years, up until about 2002, there was dedicated funding to help with reconstruction and many NGOs thrived in this environment, where they were the
only source of solutions needed to rebuild the country as the UN set out to do, to stabilize
the region and prevent future warfare. There was little investment in permanent
infrastructure; instead, they focused on outsourcing the work to Non-Governmental
Organizations. Almost everyone I spoke to, including the NGO workers I interviewed,
admitted that the NGO sector had prolific and well recognized corruption issues. When I
asked what this meant more specifically or for examples, I would get stories of NGOs
applying for international funding during the NGO boom in Bosnia, requesting funds for
setting up offices, the cost of which was exaggerated. For example, they would produce
receipts for office furniture that cost 5000 Euros, when it actually cost a fraction of that,
and pocket the difference. In many cases collecting signatures, consent forms, proof of
participation, which had not yet occurred, and showing populations that aid was being
provided to was required to continue receiving funding. Many Bosnians remember being
promised services or goods, or even cash if they filled out forms, and confirmed the NGO
was helping them, only to find the NGO had disappeared and only used them to collect
funds, which were never disbursed to them. Some were caught by the local special police
and arrested for fraud, though many more people just never heard from again.
Interviewing participants and getting their war stories, or other stories of struggle was one
way to provide evidence of communal need and involvement by funding agencies.
People shared their stories of cooperating with agents with the promise of funds or other
forms of relief, only to find out they had been victims of a fraud that would have no
repercussions. I found out about this only after months of doing research, and having
serious difficulties getting interviews. I knew that journalists and UN representatives had
collected interviews to survey the damage done by the war, which was not always done with proper debriefing, however I had not heard that NGOs were also doing interviews. Once I arrived in Tuzla, although the people were very friendly and supportive of us as newcomers to their town, they were wary of being interviewed. Only after a month or so spent going visiting for coffee or treating visitors to food and drinks in our apartment, again a common Bosnian pastime did my chances of collecting interviews improve. Acknowledging that I was a student, not affiliated with a government or NGO, or promising money, as well as my own family history in the area, and relationships my parents or grandparents with some distant relative of another person, also solidified my presence and allowed me access. Much like traditional Bosnian healers my insistence that no money was involved in the project reassured people of my genuine request for knowledge, a kind of social capital of a scholar who would neutrally judge events. This along with admitting to my own shortcomings in knowing the region and asking for help in understanding what was happening in Bosnia was what really reassured interviewees. My assistant, a young Bosnian woman, was often present, and reassured those I spoke with by telling the story of her own family experience, to show that she understood the frustration Bosnians shared about the war, NGOs, their own failing government, and the world in general.

Not all NGOs were obviously fraudulent some were not quite, or partially, or just a-little-fraud-here-and-there. In one interview with an elderly man he told me immediately he had it "…up to here with NGOs…". When I asked why he told me that him and his wife had returned shortly after the war to Sarajevo, to reclaim their apartment
as part of the Dayton agreement. They had acquired the apartment through their combined housing credits of the respective companies they worked for in a part of Dobrinja 4. When they arrived to their apartment their son, who had work in Germany, sent them money to repair wartime damage to the unit, and to install a new radiator heating system, with some "top of the line radiators". Shortly thereafter representatives of an Italian NGO showed up and told him that they would take the old radiators and install new ones provided by the NGO for the entire housing district. After he explained that his radiators were new and he did not need any, they insisted and told him they would be in trouble if they did not do the work. This conversation went back and forth, until the elderly Sarajevan gave up, on one hand because he was frustrated and on the other hand because he was an old man alone in a post-war zone in which he had not been since he was imprisoned in a concentration camp nearby, for which he was picked up from the same apartment the Italian NGO members were standing in. He let them take the far more expensive radiators his son had installed, and put in some sub-standard ones which he was honestly not happy with. Years later he was still angry about this, and how these organizations cared more about their paperwork than actually doing anything useful in the area they were paid to work in.

Though NGOs were installed to help stabilize the region and often were run by foreigners, the disconnect between foreign funding and people’s expressed needs, seemed to continue the tradition of corruption prevalent during socialism in the Former Yugoslavia. Milovan Djillas, an initial supporter of Tito, who ended up turning his back on the regime after noticing the corruption and the creation of a communist ruling class,
wrote about his concerns with this new elite extensively. Djillas also predicted the
downfall of the Yugoslavia:

    Our system was built only for Tito to manage. Now that Tito is gone and
our economic situation becomes critical, there will be a natural tendency for
greater centralization of power. But this centralization will not succeed because it
will run up against the ethnic-political power bases in the republics. This is not
classical nationalism but a more dangerous, bureaucratic nationalism built on
economic self-interest. This is how the Yugoslav system will begin to collapse.

        (Kaplan 1993)

    In many ways the distrust against the state and its nepotism from the socialist
period were reaffirmed in the way NGOs interacted with the population. In addition to
distrust of NGOs there was also widespread distrust of the UN, since it is common
knowledge that bribes were paid during the war to get people out of the besieged areas of
Sarajevo to UNPROFOR\textsuperscript{14} soldiers. The humanitarian intervention in Bosnia began with
more than enough fund to reconstruct the country, but due to severe mismanagement and
fraud it only provided a minimum to offset the fact that there was no other economic
structure to provide stability. Moreover, after the aid sector was slowly pulled out from
under Bosnians, all that has been left over has been a bureaucracy divided on ethno-
nationalist lines, which incapacitates the state and furthers a sense of instability.

As the new state continued to form, many of the NGOs involved were led by foreign
leadership, mostly people who were brought in for the short term and had little regard for

\textsuperscript{14} United Nations Protection Force assembled by the UN for the 1990's war in the former Yugoslavia.
the local population's ability to organize on their own and annoying local organizers by their patronizing. This is shown in Kimberly Cole's work, as the author herself, in a position of leadership for organizing the local elections after the war, finds herself frustrated and angry with the locals who are never on time, and do not seem to put in the work needed (Cole 2007). Similarly in a book written by a forensic anthropologist uncovering hidden sites of mass graves to help indict war criminals in the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the author describes the dismissive attitude toward the local population by the foreign team working on the sites. In one instance she describes a Bosnian woman crying while cleaning for the team, because she has not been paid (Koff 2004). This is ridiculed by other members of the team. The local debates on whether graves should be exhumed to revive grief and divisions are ignored, because the people do not know what is good for them, and the ultimate sentences of the court after all the grief and testimony it took to get to them, are no more than 8 years of prison time. In addition the ICTY is removed from local politics, making Bosnians feel that justice has not been served, but has instead been outsourced yet again to foreigners. The courts sentences are not translated into Bosnian (cite court records).

Although there was a Truth and Reconciliation Commission set up in Bosnia, it as short-lived, primarily because it was headed by war criminals, including the infamous eugenicist Biljana Plavsic, who was later convicted for acts against humanity by the ICTY.

In the late 1990’s to about 2002 Bosnia was covered in billboards advertising the need for a creation of Civil Society. Many foreign based intervention experts do not
understand why civil society is not forming in Bosnia considering how much money has been invested in the reconstruction process (Belloni 2007). The call for Civil Society is framed in neoliberal discourses of the individual subject (cite neoliberal individualism article here!) The subject is expected to shape itself into a responsible, honest, civil citizen, which through an unspecified process will improve the economy, create jobs, and make an EU-worthy nation out of Bosnia (Horvat and Stiks 2015). The failure to create this subject is placed on the shoulders on individual Bosnians and, with few exceptions, analysts blame the culture, or even the people’s “mentality” (Horvat and Stiks 2015).

The result of the failure discourse is a kind of Orientalism, one in which Bosnians should be able to be just like Europeans, but they just don't try hard enough or are incapable of change.

Bosnians are aware of this judgment against them. They have heard it in talks about entrepreneurship given at the US embassy, on billboard reminders that it is up to them to build a "civil"society, from foreign news sources wondering what it is that is wrong with Bosnians. Some people have internalized this orientalist assessment: one of our neighbors in Zenica told me, "We are just a chaos of people, we cannot be a decent country, it’s not in us, that ship has sailed. We just know how to kill each other." Others resort to conspiracy theories of the CIA destabilizing the country, which of course cannot be proven, in order to destabilize the head of the Third Bloc and assert the supremacy of capitalism. Some use the lens of nationalism and blame other ethnicities, never their own, for the events that transpired. In all cases there is a finality and hopelessness that results from trying to understand this "lack of civil society" Bosnians are blamed for as a
population. There are few, mainly found in Tuzla, who are aware of the loss of labor solidarity and the deindustrialization of the sector to not be their fault, but instead a structural failure of the system. People who are aware of the structural rather than personal responsibility fall into two categories. One is very "Tuzla" in its approach and insists that solidarity of labor and working together, across nationalist boundaries, can slowly reinvigorate the industry and improve quality of life for everyone. These are the people who have in fact resurrected a laundry detergent factory through the power of organized labor and are now selling it on the Bosnian market as a Bosnian-made product, which is selling because it is giving hope that Bosnia can industrialize again. Their subject formation is shaped by Marxism, and a strong belief in communist solidarity as a more humane and neighborly option than the neoliberal capitalist alternative. Tuzla natives practice this solidarity that is viewed as being neighborly: this is the only place where we were freely offered several wifi passwords to share in the building so we would not have to pay for internet, while in the rest of Bosnia private wifi access is guarded carefully and not even shared with family or lifelong friends. In addition to wifi of course there were offers of food, homemade brandy, a Bosnian specialty which I found is enjoyed by Muslims as much as anyone else, and lots of sweets for visiting children.

Bosfam represents that spirit of labor, dignity, and Bosnian tradition of solidarity, which is what makes them succeed in Tuzla. Of course this is no longer truly the spirit of communal socialism, but a kind of collective neo-liberal “pulling ourselves up by our boot straps” without state or outside intervention approach, in spite of it being called socialism and communism by locals. While Bosfam has some impact locally on
perceptions of the Bosnian self, as being able to be traditionalist, labor-focused and pro-
women's rights in the sense of political and socio-economic independence for women, its
impact is only part of the movement already strong and present in Tuzla. Most of
Bosfam's impact on subject formation is for refugee women who come to its doors.
These women walk away with a sense of being supported and valued with regard to their
traditional craft knowledge as well as their need for socio-economic independence.
Bosfam does reinforce a sense of community for those outside its immediate circle, by
giving support during funerals and setting up memorials for victims of Srebrenica.
Locals find these women, that show up randomly when needed, to be a symbol of the
typical Bosnian grandmotherly matriarch reaffirming this view of elderly women
includes notions of care-giving, but also as the community’s needed and valued
reinforcers of morality and solidarity. Notable is that the “grandmothers” are from all
religious backgrounds, and come out in support of both Muslim and Christian holidays.
Even if the residents of Tuzla cannot recall the name Bosfam or describe their services, as
the residents of Zenica can for Medica Zenica, they note that the Srebrenica women
showed up to exhibit their memorial carpet, that they have a shop in the center for crafts,
that they have been there to support someone when they needed the help, though they are
not sure whether the group is the same women or just random similar appearing women.
Bosfam has made its impact over the last 20 years on the subject formation of Tuzla in
subtle, comforting, ways, which dovetail well with the workers movements and anti-
nationalist protest and activist groups that have sprung up in Tuzla since the end of the
war. In fact Tuzla has been a favorite with anthropologists studying activist movements
within post-socialism ever since the riots that began in Tuzla and spread to Bosnia in 2014 (Jasarevic 2017).

Zenica has not shown the labor organizing power of Tuzla. While Zenica had a large industry it was run by the state and provided employment to the town, and labor movements to make change were unnecessary. Today, with the industry privatized and unemployment at an all-time high there are three successful institutions in Zenica: the State Prison, the local college campus, and Medica Zenica. None of these provides the scale of employment that can sustain the small town. Among contemporary Bosnians, Zenica is known mostly for its prison. There is a famous satirical song call "Zenica Blues" about a man who hates "Zenica's every rock" because he is imprisoned there. Bosnians’ image of Zenica is built around that and the expectation that it is a dangerous, polluted place. Many in Sarajevo were shocked I planned on spending time there, though those who have visited know that it is neither polluted nor any more dangerous than Sarajevo. Sarajevo and Zenica have a well known rivalry. It is based in soccer, according to most, which is an additional reason why Sarajevans warned us not to go there. The people of Zenica, while admitting that they detest Sarajevo, especially the soccer club Sarajevo, made a point of being courteous and neighborly to us, to show that the people of Zenica are welcoming and above petty rivalries. While we did not find the kind of labor movement in Zenica that was as active in the community or as pervasive as that of Tuzla, there were small groups of solidarity in Muslim neighborhoods, Mahale, that seemed at odds with each other. Since we lived in Radakovo, we noticed that Radakovans were close with other Radakovans and no one from outside the
neighborhood. This was especially true of the young men we knew, most of whom had spent time in the Zenica prison, and were affiliated with Medica Zenica as children. While we interviewed women and elderly residents, the young men were more divisive about their neighborhoods and would not enter certain areas without a compelling reason. Due to high unemployment, groups of young men too old for high school congregated around the building they shared, a socialist era high-rise apartment building, looking to find ways to pass their day. In Sarajevo or Tuzla this was not nearly as common due to higher rates of employment. Zenica's record unemployment rate was prominently on display through this loitering in the streets. Women were not seen as much out on the street, as they either provided elder care, child care for their own children or those of friends, or worked in the “women’s work” service industry. Over the summer many of the young women would also seek seasonal employment in seaside resorts a few hours away from Zenica.

The impact of Medica Zenica on its clients, has been life changing. Not only in my interviews with previous clients I ran into in shops, trains, parks, or the neighborhood we lived in, but also in its annual reports Medica Zenica makes a positive difference in women's physical, mental health, education and employment chances, as well as overall confidence and sense of safety. Those were all points that were reiterated by former Medica Zenica clients, as well as discussed as the focus of the organization by staff. Medica also imparts feminist values of socio-economic equality for women within their clients along with a sense of bodily integrity, deemed by workers and clients as necessary after abuse, and the breaking of the cycle of return to abusers through self blame. All of
this accomplished by separating women into the safe house, providing group therapy, individual therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy, family therapy, medical treatment, including psychiatric drugs, all based on "Whatever the woman feels works best for her..." as Sabiha Husic, the leader of Medica Zenica, told me during an interview in 2016.

As an organization Medica Zenica is deeply aware that their one-on-one work with women coming out of domestic violence situations only goes so far. They see it as their mission to transform the region in its perception of mental health and gender equality, as well as violence against women. This means that they are explicitly and consciously involved with subject formation in regards to gender within Bosnia. Medica was involved by advocating strongly for a law to provide reparations to women who were sexually assaulted during the war. Such a law was eventually passed, setting an international precedent for rape as a crime against humanity during war time. This also countered the shame and depoliticization of sex crimes during the war and helped victims cope, as well as increased compassion for them within the community. In spite of this most women still will never speak publicly about their assault or even share it with those close to them. That does not mean that their view of themselves is not improved by the structural adjustments done to legally acknowledge their suffering as a serious crime rather than a personal and stigmatizing one, as had been done with sex crimes in the past. During the war so many men were clueless about the severity of sexual assault crimes that those who "only" raped, turned themselves in magnanimously, not expecting to be sentenced, as they did not commit murder. One man even told of his great compassion
by stating that: "He told a young a woman he would not kill her, but only rape her, since she reminded him of his daughter." (Drakulić 2005). The man genuinely believed that this was a display of his humanity. This attitude goes back to erasure of inequalities by the socialist state. The state claimed that nationalist divisions did not exist so they became invisible in the public eye, but persisted as they were never openly addressed. Something similar happened to women's rights. Women were declared to be equal to men in all ways under socialism. This declaration in turn meant that the Women's Antifascist League, a woman's organization within the state was no longer needed (Horvat and Stiks 2015). Presumably, now that as women were equal, feminism of any kind was no longer needed. Men could not be misogynist because that no longer existed as a concept -- theoretically. In practice, however, there were a multitude of obstacles at all levels for women. Becoming pregnant while attending a free state university could mean the revocation of all funding. In divorces the father's rights were favored in gaining custody rights. While women were strongly represented in labor, they were not as much seen in leadership roles. After the fall of socialism and the rise of ethno-nationalism women's "traditional" roles based in religious beliefs resurfaced, stripping women of the protections for maternal leave and care among other rights accorded to them by socialism, as a way to reaffirm ethno-nationalist heteromasculine identities for the upcoming conflicts.

Medica Zenica staff is well aware of this past and tries to repair it by overtly speaking about women's rights and equality in the media locally, through radio broadcasts and events, as well as internationally. The international attention and war
crime tribunals held regarding rape during war time in many ways made their point and sealed in the unacceptability of violence against women. The young men of Zenica in particular are well versed in Medica's dialogue. Medica made appearances at schools, helped their mother's, sisters, grandmothers. There is a strong response to discussions about violence against women from all the youth in Zenica, especially the men, who were taught they would be the ones who can prevent it. This is the major impact of Zenica on non-clients in the region they work in. While their work is criticized for being centric to Muslim female rape survivors, that is what they can draw in the most funding for, and what most of their advertising shows. However, within the community of Zenica their outreach has been to women, men, and youth, with a focus on current domestic violence, especially since the war is long over. De facto this focus has helped people cope in less- or non-violent ways with the hopelessness or melancholy that happens during deindustrialization. While Medica is not setting out to fix the economy-- the real obstacle to improving health in the region, according to everyone I interviewed, they are making it manageable, and helping the population adjust to the chronic condition of being disenfranchised.

While understanding women's issues has improved due to Medica's widely acknowledged influence, mental health is just being "managed", as the influence on mental health issues is the constantly declining economy and sense of uncertainty. Is this even truly an issue of mental health or a healthy human reaction to a sudden lack of purpose for a city that used to communally pride itself on its industriousness and
productivity, and has now been reduced to accepting handouts, with a steady increase in crime, drug use, and departure of young people who find the opportunity to leave?
Chapter 5  Implications: Trauma, Resilience, and the Politics of NGOs in Postwar Bosnia

Bosnia

Bosnia is an example of a country dealing with extreme austerity following socialism. While Bosnia is not colonized officially, but NATO has extensive influence over political decisions made with regard to legislature and public policy. The only flexibility lies outside of the governing body and within NGOs. Not only are the NGOs more flexible in the programs they create, but they also have access to funding the state either does not have, or is not motivated to dispense on small-scale projects. The fact that there are three simultaneous presidencies for each of the ethnic group vying for power, further restricts any government-based decision making. The only impact conventional politics is making currently on the national landscape is focused on elections. Bosnian NGOs, labor movements, and the international migration of unemployed youth reflect different aspects of adjusting to the “new normal”, which most Bosnians find painfully “not normal” in contrast to “normal” countries, which are developed or seen as having strong civil society outlook: “The way we live is not normal. The jobs go to unqualified people, and the country is run by thieves. Here it will never be like it is for you [in the United States]. You go to school and then you can actually find work. We used to have that…” (July 2015 Tuzla, BiH)
MARXIST SOLIDARITY-BASED CAPITALISM IN TUZLA

Much like the patronizing humanitarianism that makes charity out of basic human rights, the Bosnian state’s austerity measures are an extension of the complex economic superstructure into which they are woven. Bosnians deal with the international involvement in politics in two ways. They blame international politics for the failure and disintegration of infrastructure and industry within the country or they internalize the narratives of their own-personal failure to uphold their state, and the continuing economic depression.

Twenty years after the beginning of the recovery process, workers in the former Yugoslav countries are fighting to create a different kind of economic basis for the future of their industry. Their protest is couched in the Yugoslav prewar experience of worker-managed factories opposed to stockholder-managed industry, where the stockholders have no legal or political ties to the success of the Bosnian Economy or the well-being of the Bosnian people. The workers’ battle here is not with the “evil of capitalism” but with concrete concerns about the way manufacturing could provide jobs and stability to a deteriorating region, using worker-led management. Tuzla is proof of the possibility of success with their resurrection of a laundry detergent company entirely organized and owned by workers, and supported locally through social media local solidarity based advertising. In everyday conversation I have noted pride and excitement about the workers in Tuzla and their success: even in Sarajevo and Zenica there was talk of what may be possible after all. In Tuzla I found the only Bosnians who did not think their only
chance at a decent future was in emigrating the country. This is where I found optimism and a kind of solidarity among all ethnicities I had thought completely lost to Bosnia.

As in the past the issues of industry, workers’ rights, and employment, overshadow questions regarding women’s place in society. The overbearing and exclusive focus on women and Srebrenica survivors, during the reconstruction period has convinced most of the Bosnians I have interviewed from all sides, that internally displaced refugee women, and women in general are already getting “all the help” while others are not provided assistance. The focus on the women of Srebrenica, while a successful strategy to get funding from foreign organizations, has created a sense of envy and neglect and undervaluing of suffering outside of the Srebrenica event, which was broad during and after the war, and has deepened divisions beyond the already existing post war divisions based on ethnicity.

SOLIDIFICATION OF ETHNIC DIVISIONS

The segregation of students based on ethnicity after the Dayton Accords is already setting up the country for the long haul in deepening and institutionalizing an ethnic separation that is demonstrably recent in its segregation and brittle animosity. Bosnia is after all the only European country that has centuries-old mosques alongside centuries-old Catholic churches and synagogues at the heart of its larger cities.

Gender and sexuality rights issues are also casualties of the collapse. As the economic climate of privatization and austerity is pushed by the same foreign powers that are asking for women’s and LGBTQ rights, those issues are placed in a collectively suspect category, and as women and LGBTQ people are vulnerable they tend to
experience the brunt of the frustration with “Western”. An attempt to create a gay rights public parade drew the ire of Bosnians in unprecedented waves. Social media groups were set up on Facebook to protest the cost of the event, and were a sore reminder of “outside influences” on the failing economy Bosnians must face every day. deal with.

One of the most popular images circulated was that of a sad looking young girl eating some sadder looking food, and contained the caption: “Feed our children instead of paying police to guard your parade”. This was widely supported. One NGO staff member from a Sarajevo NGO, was privy to the organizing of a gay parade in Sarajevo. He told me he had suggested to the organizers that it was not necessary and that it would only garner negative backlash. He stayed away from the parade, and in fact it had to be shut down before it started due to violence against participants from the onset. He told me that was the last time a public LGBTQ rights event was attempted in Bosnia. He stated that he lives happily with his partner and scoffed at those who “need to be publicly gay”. He added that he had no need to hold hands and was happy to just quietly share his life with the person of his choosing. Much like the “privileges” accorded Muslim women that survived the Srebrenica Massacre, additional attention and focus from foreign powers in charge of austerity measures hurts their cause on the local level. The potential for popular backlash and resentment is yet another reason Bosfam does not want to advertise its foreign aid and approval. Its strategy is to be subtle and to interact as locals with the local landscape as needed to help, but not as a beneficiary of suspect foreigners. In fact, Bosfam sells its goods abroad, but no longer receives donations. These precautions have not allowed Bosfam to steer clear of controversy. As seen in
Chapter 2, they are implicated in trauma-based fearmongering despite their intended unifying message for the community.

Medica Zenica is aware of these obstacles as well, but they take a different approach. They embrace the foreign aid and feminist views knowing that it allows them to provide needed services the state does not supply to their client base, and that there is little interest within Bosnian government to create policy to protect women’s legal rights and place within the community. Bosfam protects itself through anonymity, while Medica Zenica creates its own fortress in the hills above Zenica to protect its clients. Medica unapologetically and publicly utilizes all the foreign resources it can garner from Bill Clinton to Angelina Jolie. Their grant team works tirelessly to gain new grants from the IMF and WB structures in place, including USAID and private large donors whenever possible. Medica has established itself as a major international institution on behalf of the women of the small town of Zenica in need of their support locally. And their program is praised, because it is well known to help women in need, and do so effectively, without having to spare expenses. Their fierce dedication to the rights and well-being of Bosnian women and families is acknowledged widely in their service area. While other organizations I have asked about are suspect such as Women in Black, LGBTQ rights groups, the AIDS focused NGO, virtually anyone who helped with the flooding that happened in 2014 as well as anyone involved in local governance. There is even greater mistrust in other ethnic groups politicians, however, and this mistrust keeps nationalist parties in power.
Foreign NGOs, of course, are not suspect because the Bosnian people are somehow paranoid. These organizations are acknowledged by the United States military as “Force Multipliers” and one way to ensure regional stability that benefits the needs of the nation deploying them. In effect NGOs supplement military intervention. Many foreign policy articles support the inclusion of NGOs in resolving military geographic objectives. Some suggest including more of the private sector in enforcing U.S. national interest, and some articles suggest strategies to get the disparate communities of NGO workers, who try to alleviate suffering, and military personnel, trained to inflict violence, to work together more efficiently in spite of their disregard for each other. The common goal is the creation of an “irreversible democracy” with free and accessible markets and labor power.

The 1990’s saw a 400% increase in NGOs. The foreign policy article noting these numbers is unsure why the increase happened (Belloni 2007)). A good guess may be the fall of the Soviet Union, the attempt to assimilate former Soviet Union satellite states into capitalist spheres of influence and open up their markets to international trade and labor relations. The fall of the Soviet Bloc also changed international aid relations with the Non-Aligned Nations Bloc. This Bloc was courted by the First and Second Worlds for geostrategic influence, by giving aid for infrastructure in return for a measured neutrality, or even support. After the end of the Cold War this was no longer the case. There was no need to support countries to act as a “buffer zone” against Soviet Communism, as it no longer existed. Now all the IMF and World Bank loans could be reevaluated. The “shock therapy”, as the World Bank called it when it plunged the
Former Yugoslav region into inflation by calling in modernization and post-WWII reconstruction loans, was criticized by the CIA, who in a report preceding the 1990’s civil war by a few years, warned about the destabilizing effect in the region the harsh loan terms would have.

Following the war as reconstruction began money flooded mostly into private organizations meant to solve problems for the international community on the ground as “experts”. This meant that there was no formal infrastructure planning. The inclusion of the private sector in post-war and war-time, the use of mercenaries for example, is another indicator of Bauman’s Liquidity in which politics is increasingly divorced from power.

Out of this new world of privatized policy influence and enforcement, new forms of governance and community are born in Bosnia, despite the divisive nationalist trauma fed rhetoric. Grassroots communities, such as Bosfam and Medica, utilize international neoliberal structures to create support structure they feel their community is entitled to, and which are based in socialist ideologies of the rights of citizens to health and work, two themes so deeply interlinked in Bosnian culture that no interviewee did not mention them of their own volition when asked to define illness and health. While there is not state, this cannot be called socialism. The workers movements, for worker owned manufacturing, the driving dream and selling point of Tito’s socialist utopia, lives on within a free market structure, in which a small elite does not need to be in charge of the means of production, and in which health care is communally organized as a way to spite the failing and defunded state mental apparatus. Women’s right here can be on a
spectrum. While Bosnia seems hopeless in that it has lost forcefully all bearings of industrial solid modernity, which peaked in the mid to late 20th century, the liquid state of international politics, has in a way made room, and made necessary experimental structures, embedded in structures of capitalism, and with lots of failed attempts a few lasting structures are stabilizing and becoming permanent supports for the people of Bosnia. In fact Djillas, a founder of Yugoslav socialism predicted: “Eventually Yugoslavia might be like the British Commonwealth, a loose confederation of trading nations. But first, I am afraid, there will be national wars and rebellions. There is such strong hate here.” (Kaplan 1993)

Bauman carries a strong concern for the danger of repeated violence within what was Yugoslavia. While it seems outwardly that nationalism, and at the base of it the idea of the nation and who is part of it, is of what creates what Bauman terms “explosive communities”, he finds that even within the nation in its current form gone the violence will not go away:

The world-wide spread of what Pierre Bourdieu has dubbed ‘the policy of precarization’ is equally, if not more, likely to ensue. If the blow delivered to state sovereignty proves fatal and terminal, if the state loses its monopoly of coercion (which Max Weber and Norbert Elias alike considered to be its most distinctive feature and, simultaneously, the sine qua non-attribute of modern rationality or civilized order), it does not necessarily follow that the sum total of violence, including violence with potentially genocidal consequences, will
diminish; violence may only be ‘deregulated’, descending from the state to the
‘community’ (neo-tribal) level.

(Bauman 2012, 193)

While Bauman’s point stands that the shift of the locus of power from the nation state to international structures whose goal, much like corporations, is to appease their donors, the Bosnian example since the war has become more complex. Bosnian people are dealing in many ways with this new and recent form of decentralized modernity, though the populations recent experience of violent conflict is complicating the already socio-economic limbo, which lends itself well to the three competing presidencies and fearmongering.

It is undeniable that Bosnia has its share of public and conflict related anger outbursts, and what I have come to call “politics of spite” reinforce divisions not only within the election cycle, and on the news, but imprint their disdain for the “Other” in the construction of language, public landscapes, K-12 education, foods, religion, and to the core of subjects, who still somehow find room for Brotherhood and Unity in their day to day disdain and frustration at the sadly humorous but increasing successful divisions of the community on every level. The Dayton accord mandated ethnic segregation has had its strongest impact on the younger generations. Even those who are in principle opposed to ethnic divisions are suspect to constant fear mongering geared at war trauma, creating the “explosive community” Bauman warns us off. While Bauman was right in its assessment that the opening and deregulating of nations for the benefit of international capital and trade does not create stability, he did not predict the subversive community
building well-meaning citizens can engage in within this “Desert of Post-Socialism”. The sense of community inherent in Bosnian complex family and regional networks resurfaces in unexpected forms woven in with layers of Bosnian cultural history, and the principles of socialist solidarity imbued in Bosnians from before 1991 as early as Kindergarten, and through to the required learning of Marxist economic histories for every college major. This education coupled with an idealized vision of a problematic socialism, is allowing for new constructs to emerge, seasoned with experience of what has worked and what has not. Interethnic conflict left no winners, and while there are still fears no one wants a return of the conflict. People told me they accepted unproductive politicians without much complaint shortly after the war ended because “anything is better than war”. Bauman in this case does not take into account the aversion civil war in particular leaves behind for warfare. Once again I am forced to reference one of the region’s most popular post war Musician Balasevic and in this case his song aptly named “Just Don’t Let There Be War”:

Made of golden dust,
a halo made of dreams
on children's heads,
your endless love
defends them like a lioness,
the bad news frighten you:
just don’t let there be war
And I tell you:
Let the oceans wash away,
let the glaciers break down,
let eternal snows melt down
and still….
let the rain fall ceaselessly,
let there be lightning and thunder storms,
just don’t let there be war

And I tell you:
Let time go backwards,
let stars go wild in the sky,
let mountains be displaced
and still
let winds blow the world away,
let volcanoes awaken,
just don’t let there be war.
just don’t let there be war.
no madness among people
the Big offer delusions
frighten us with miracles
and do all fairy tales harm
Just let there be no war!
Balasevic illustrates in the lyrics clearly what many in Bosnia told me of their own accord; that anything at all is preferential to going back to a state of war. So while I agree with Bauman and Djillas that despair and a difficult path to recovery are based in sociological and historical theory they did not predict the grass roots community building and subject formation I found in contemporary Bosnia, despite all odds. Working in the country using participant observation and collecting ethnographic data, revealed that people do not necessarily follow theoretical predictors. While capitalism is in place, it is only kept alive through supplemental economies based in centuries old food networks of Bosnia’s precarious populations, and an approach to neoliberal “pulling up by the bootstraps” that is done collectively using Marxist ideologies of equality and the value of labor opposed to individual hoarding of resources. Bauman discusses the avenues of influence open to large scale international capitalist interests once the restrictions of the state dissolve. However these interests are in no position to replace the void created by the governing body that has been reduced to its minimum.

The one place where the state still can influence reconciliation is education, however that is where it is most divisive and lacking in support. This perpetrates not only nationalist divisions, but a feeling of fear of the Other, and a loss of solidarity within a mixed a community, which puts priorities on nationalist projects and ideals rather than fighting for what little improvement can be made even with limited resources. While most of the adult population shares this intense fear of warfare and sense of Marxist
solidarity, the youth has been segregated so drastically that it is the one place where there is a long term danger of a resurgence of violence, though I feel it is unlikely. The divisions made will still have a severe impact on the reconciliation and trauma recovery in the region due to the way the Dayton agreement constructed the post-war state.

FUTURE RESEARCH PROPOSAL FOR BOSNIA

As some of the views I came into the country with were inaccurate I was not prepared to pursue the political trauma aspect in a way that it should be done. In the wake of wartime trauma, recovery depends on communities and grass roots community rebuilding, rather than top down, especially where the state is weak or fragmented. Subject formation is necessarily a dialectic between organizations addressing trauma and politics, and people embedded in neighborhoods and networks. Subject formation therefore differs with the ideologies and foci of NGOs, the economic and cultural context of the trauma and its subsequent triggers, and the ways people envision their futures. As austerity measures and continuing changes such as unemployment, segregated schools among other concerns increase pressure on the population I plan on a more detailed long term study which will follow a diverse group of Bosnians from Tuzla and Zenica over a ten year period. I plan on collecting narratives, recording local news, and measuring cortisol levels through hair samples, matched to the narratives. This will give me more conclusive data on the true impact of socio-economic and political influence on health within a post-socialist transition state.
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Appendix

Research Questions Approved by University of California Riverside IRB Office

- How long have you resided in Bosnia?
- What parts of Bosnia have you resided in?
- Are you familiar with Bosfam or Medica Zenica?
- If you are; what is your perception of these/this organization(s)?
- How did you find out about either one of them?
- Do you have any links to these organizations? Through: volunteering, participation in one of their programs, employment, or through friends and family that might have one of the above listed, or other connections to either organization?
- Do you have any of the above listed connections with any other NGO in Bosnia? Outside of Bosnia?
- What do you understand Bosfam and Medica do?
- How do they do it?
- Why do you think they exist?
- How do you compare them to each other, or perhaps other NGO’s you may be familiar with?
- Do you feel there is a need for them? Why or why not?
- What do they do for public health?
- What do they do for reconciliation?
- What do they do for community building?
- What do they do for womens’ advocacy?
- Which group do you feel they target the most? Why? Which other groups might they also target?
- Have they changed over the last 20 years in some significant aspects that stand out to you?
- Has a need for them changed over the last 20 years?
- How would you describe a physically healthy person?
- How would you describe a physically unhealthy person?
- How would you describe a mentally healthy person?
- How would you describe a mentally unhealthy person?
- Do you see mental and physical health as connected or disconnected from each other?