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STEREOTYPES IN YOUNG SERBS ABOUT CROATS AND BOSNIAKS PROVOKED BY COLLECTIVE MEMORY STIMULI[2]

Not many studies have dealt with how Serbs from Serbia see Croats and Bosniaks in the light of the wars from 1990s. In our study, we used a quasi-experimental approach to assess the type of stereotypes provoked in Serbs, and their relationship to social distance and the national identity. The sample consisted of 66 participants of Serbian ethnicity, born between 1991 and 1995, who are residing in Serbia. The instruments included Social Distance Scale, National Identity Scale, socio-demographic questionnaire and a set of collective memory stimuli followed by a set of questions. As stimuli, we used shortened versions of collective memories as described by Ruiz Jiménez (2013), in order to set a context which referred to the 1990s wars. The results have shown that the described stimuli have impactneither on stereotypes nor on the social distance and the national identity of participants. However, the social distance is lower than in previous studies in the region, and Croats are consistently seen in more negative terms than Bosniaks and Serbs.

Keywords: stereotypes, collective memory, social distance, national identity

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The conflicts that started as secession wars in ex-Yugoslavia and turned out to be inter-ethnic conflicts which fame was widely spread as the bloody one have left to day consequences that pervade almost every aspect of the people's lives in Bosnia-Herzegovina and somewhat less in Croatia, even more than 20 years after the end of the armed conflicts. The wars were lead on the territories of B&H and Croatia, while at the same time people in Serbia were concentrated on surviving the infamous 1990s sanctions. Although most of the people who were directly involved in the battlefields were from Croatia and B&H, there were volunteer fighters from Serbia and soldiers of the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) engaged in a direct battle. Many people fled to Serbia from the territories in question, especially from Croatia after the military operation called 'The Storm', and have never returned to their homes. B&H was left divided by the Dayton Agreement between the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was mainly inhabited by the Muslims and Croats in Herzegovina post-war, and the Republic of Srpska, with the most of its citizens being Serbs. In both Croatia and B&H, there is still a widespread nationalist rhetoric, and although direct armed conflicts are missing, the psychological conflict is still ongoing. Many researchers have been conducting their studies in these post-conflict communities. However, the samples of most research were people from the territories that were open battlefields (e.g., Čorkalo Biruški & Ajduković, 2012, 2008, in Croatia, Majstorović & Turjačanin, 2013; Turjačanin, 2004; Čehajić-Clancy, 2015, 2012 in B&H). Less is known, compared to Croatia and B&H, about how these wars affected people in Serbia, and what consequences they had for their national identities and relationships toward other groups. There are studies about the social distance, prejudice and stereotypes of other nations, including the nations from the former Yugoslav countries (e.g., Biro, Mihić, Milin, & Logar, 2002; Turjačanin, 2007), but not many have dealt with the question of the Serbian national identity faced with the wars in 1990s. In our study, we would like to explore the stereotypes of young people from Serbia, born during the conflicts in 1990s, in the light of the stimuli created out of collective memories of Serbs, Croats, and Bosniaks. Also, we aim to see whether these stimuli provoke differences in social distance and national identity expressions.

We have used a quasi-experimental approach developed by Lobato, Moya, and Trujillo (2015), but instead of presenting a fictional news article as a stimulus, we have used collective memory stimuli. Collective memory has been widely studied since the work of Halbwachs (1950), and is considered to be the social reality of a group. It is a highly subjective concept, with only one perspective, and with no space for ambiguity about motives and events (Novick, 1999; Wagoner, 2014; Wertsch, 2007, 2008). However, it is considered to be true and valid (Bar-Tal, 2014). It is usually a result of markedly positive and more often negative unexpected or extraordinary events that become a basis for the collective memory creation (Wagner, Kronberger, & Seifert, 2002). Also, it helps to strengthen the confidence in the accuracy of our memories, given that our memories can be additionally foundedon the memories of others (Halbwachs, 2005).

Collective memory is considered to have several functions. First, collective memory provides continuity of a group and largely affects their present, a characteristic Wertsch (2007) marked as a historical or antihistorical. Today's group identity is linked to a tradition, and common values represented in their shared memory (Bellelli, Curci, & Leone, 2007). Different groups see shared historical events differently, according to their interests and the present, that is, it as a control system which dictates what *should* instead of what *can* be remembered (Schwartz, Fukuoka, & Takita-Ishii, 2005). Second, collective memories have the power to evoke emotions and bring people to action (Bar-Tal, 2014; Collins, 2004; Olick & Robbins, 1998), but they also serve as a base for justifying and legitimizing political actions (Liu & Hilton, 2005; Malinowski, 1926). Third, collective memory can serve as a basepoint for building and reinforcing a group identity (Liu & Hilton, 2005; Rosa, Bellelli, & Bakhurst, 2000, being the construct material or a feature of collective identity (Anderson, 1991; Gavriely-Nuri, 2013).

Collective memories could be *ethnicized* in the way of becoming ethnically exclusive, and providing different meanings of shared events of two national groups (Čorkalo, Ajduković, Weinstein, Stover, Djipa, & Biro, 2004), each of them having their psychological reality which, in our case, clash one against the other. Collective memories of groups, such as Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs in B&H and Croatia, who share the same history of events, look as completely different stories, because they are in function of fulfilling goals and needs of the rival societies (Winter, 2010). The collective memories that would be used as 'short stories stimuli' were collected and analyzed by Ruiz Jiménez (2013) during the late 1990s and early 2000s. The stories were collected by interviews with Serbs, Bosniaks, Bosnian Serbs, Croats, Bosnian Croats, university professors and students, employed and retired people of all three ethnicities in all three countries. The data also included testimonies and the analysis of bibliography from that period. A total of 177 people were interviewed, and the conflicted memories were summarized. In our research, we used the shortened versions as stimuli (Appendix A), that includedall the elements of what Bar-Tal (2014) named as *collective master narrative,* which describe the causes of the conflicts, its nature, major events, the images of the enemies, and the ingroup (the ingroup is moralized, and the outgroup is delegitimized), providing the attribution of responsibility for the eruption and continuation of the conflicts, and the misdeeds committed during the conflicts (every side blamed the other side, and stressed negative characteristics). Every memory was full of *major events* which provided the repertoire of emotions, beliefs, and attitudes, as well as the prism for understanding today's reality and behavioural framework (Bar-Tal, 2014).

Most of the research in the region have shown that stereotypes of Serbs, Croats, and Bosniaks depend largely on the proximity of conflicts among these three national groups. Studies conducted in the 1990s and at the beginning of 2000s showed that all three nations were described (by the other two) usually in negative terms (for example see Petrović, 2003; Popadić & Biro, 1999; Turjačanin, 2004). Beside negative stereotypes in the 1990s, more recent studies have distin-

guished some positive characteristics attributed to Croats (see Mihić, Varga, Surla, & Karan, 2016; Puhalo, 2012; Turjačanin, 2007). The reason for somewhat more positive stereotyping lies in the smaller extent of the conflicts and constitution of peace, opening boundaries and normalizing economic relations between Serbia and Croatia (Milošević, 2004).

The aim of our research was to examine the evaluations of stereotypical characteristics and their number provoked by the collective memory stimuli. The target group was young Serbs residing in Serbia, who were asked to describe members of other national groups included in the wars in ex-Yugoslavia in 1990s (Bosniaks, Croats, as well as autostereotypes). The national identity and social distance towards the mentioned groups were measured taking into account the experimental manipulation. It was expected from the social distance to grow when the participants were faced with the stimuli. Presenting the 'stories' of Croats or Bosniaks. When it comes to the national identity, we expected that those with more highly expressed national identity would evaluate the other two groups in more negative terms, especially taken into account the manipulation, when the most negative stereotypes were present when participants read 'the other two' stories.

Method

Sample

The sample included 66 young people of Serbian ethnicity, born between 1991 and 1995, who were currently residing in Serbia. Although the questionnaire was disseminated online by using Qualtrics software, and 274 participants stated the survey, there were only as much as 66 valid and complete responses. The discussion could be made about the possible reasons, including the length of the survey or its complexity. It could also be due to the lack of controlled data gathering conditions (the survey was disseminated via Internet by using a snowball method). Out of 66 participants, 21 (31.8%) of them were male, and the rest ($n= 45$, 68.2%) were female. Table 1 illustrates group configuration concerning the year they were born.

Table 1
Frequency and percentage of participants regarding the year of birth

Year of birth	Frequency	Percent
1991	18	27.3
1992	18	27.3
1993	13	19.7
1994	12	18.2
1995	5	7.6

Regarding education level, 4.5% of the sample has only completed high-school, 62.1% has not completed a faculty yet, and 33.3% has a faculty degree. Most of the participants were born in Serbia (83.3%), while some little percentage (*n* = 4, 6.1%) was born in Croatia and B&H, while 3 participants (4.5%) were born in some other country. All of them are currently residing in Serbia. Most of them live in a city (75.8%, *n*=50), while the rest is divided between a village and a town (*n* = 8, 12.1% in each).

Out of the whole sample, approximately one fifth of them (21.2%) lived in a war engaged territory during the wars or has fled from there (19.7%). More than a half of them (62.1%) had a parent or a close cousin fighting in the war, 12 participants (18.2%) lost someone in the war, and 15.2% of them have a parent or a close cousin who has suffered physical or psychological consequences due to the war engagement.

Instruments and procedure

We used a quasi-experimental approach developed by Lobato, Moya, and Trujillo (2015). The flow is shown in Figure 1.
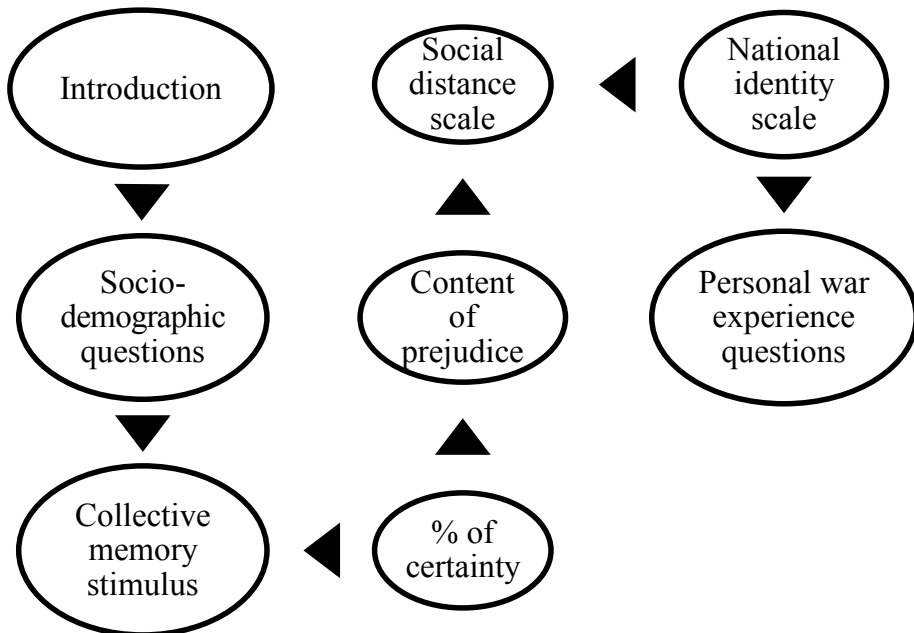

Figure 1. Experimental flow.

First, the introduction was made containing information about the research. The research was described as the assessment of the level of information posses-

sion of young Serbs born between 1991 and 1995 about the wars in the 1990s, and their attitudes towards the nations included. The anonymity and a scientific purpose of the research was guaranteed. Then, socio-demographic data was gathered including the year of birth, nationality, the country of birth, the level of education and residency information. Also, the participants were to respond how familiar they were with the pre-war, war and post-war events on a scale from 1 (*not familiar at all*) to 7 (*completely familiar*). The next step of the survey included the quasi-experimental stimuli in the form of either a Serbian, Croatian or Bosniak collective memory or the control condition. The three experimental stimuli included collective memories adapted from Ruiz Jimenez "The Shadows of Barbarity. Confronting collective memories in republics of former Yugoslavia" (2013). The adaptation was madein order to shorten originally long descriptions of collective memories in order to provide for stimuli that would not demotivate the participants to continue with the survey. The three authors agreed on short versions of the stimuli (Appendix A), which included the most important parts of the original memories, in the same words. The control condition included a displayed sentence on the screen: "Please read the instructions carefully before filling the rest of the survey". After the stimuli were presented, participants were to state a percentage in which they believed that the presented information were true (the percentage of memory certainty). The number and percentage of participants in each experimental condition and the control condition are presented in Table 2. As it could be seen, regardless of the small number of participants, they are more or less evenly distributed across conditions.

Table 2
Number and percentage of participants in each experimental and control condition

Condition	Frequency	Percent
Serbian collective memory stimulus	17	22.7
Croatian collective memory stimulus	16	25.8
Bosniak collective memory stimulus	18	24.2
Control condition	15	22.7

The following assessed was the content of prejudice towards different national groups. Participants were asked to state up to five characteristics of Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks, write a percentage in which they thought members of each group shared that characteristic, and evaluate each characteristic on a 7-point scale ranging from -3 = *extremely negative*to +3 = *extremely positive*. They were to do the same thing for each of the three national groups, and the groups were offered in a randomized manner.

Social Distance Scale (Bogardus, 1926). The Social Distance Scale included the following set of social relations: marriage, friendship, a co-worker in the same office, a neighbor, a co-habitant in your city, and the engagement in the political scene of your country. Participants are to mark whether they would oppose having each of these relationships with the members of each national group. The social distance score is calculated as a count of all "Yes, I do mind." responses for each national group, in a way that higher scores present a higher social distance.

National Identity Scale (Cinnirella, 1997). A 7-item scale based on the Social Identity Theory, which measures identification with the national group was presentedto the participants. Every item has a 5-point Likert type response scale (e.g., "How close do you feel to the members of your nation?", "How similar do you think you are to the members of your nation?"). Responses are coded so that a higher score indicates higher national identity (α = .88).

The last part of the design included more socio-demographic questions regarding a direct war experience, such as whether a person lived in a war engaged territory during the wars, whether his/her family fled from those territories, did any of the parents or close relatives participate in the wars, died or have lasting consequences due to direct involvement in the war. These questions were presented at the end purposefully, so the eventual priming would be avoided and presented in a more detailed manner in the sample section.

Results

Descriptive statistics

Percentage of certainty that the memories are true. First, the average percentage of certainty for each experimental condition memory stimulus was calculated, and ANOVA was applied (Table 3). There was a significant difference in the percentage of certainty of the memories regarding experimental conditions (F(2, 48) = 4.70, p < .05). Scheffe post-hoc analysis showed that the only significant difference was between Serbian and Croatian memory conditions.

Table 3
Percent of certainty of credibility of presented memories

Condition	Percent
Serbian collective memory	67.82
Croatian collective memory	38.94
Bosniak collective memory	53.83

Frequency of characteristics. All the characteristics were examined, while answers that did not present any characteristic or were unclear were removed

(e.g., unemployed, aware of the Western impact). There were 270 characteristics extracted in total, and after merging the synonyms (e.g. welcoming and hospitable, in Serbian *gostoljubiv* and *gostoprimljiv*), a total of 233 different characteristics were extracted, which were used to describe all three groups. Then these characteristics were coded into higher order categories taken from Lobato, Moya, and Trujillo (2015): personality, education, politics, ideology, religion ,and conflict (Table 4).

Table 4
Number of characteristics in each category in all conditions

	Sum CC*	Sum SM	Sum CM	Sum BM	Sum
Personality	167	137	123	135	562
Education	6	11	5	6	28
Politics	0	6	1	0	7
Ideology	20	15	16	23	74
Religion	1	5	1	7	14
Conflict	1	6	1	1	9
Sum	195	180	147	172	694

Note. *CC = control condition; SM = Serbian memory condition; CM = Croatian memory condition; BM = Bosniak memory condition.

Table 5 demonstrates the number of characteristics stated in all conditions for each national group.

Table 5
Number of characteristics for each national group in all conditions

	Serbs	Croats	Bosniaks
Control condition	73	64	58
Serbian memory condition	67	55	58
Croatian memory condition	53	53	41
Bosniak memory condition	72	50	50
Sum	265	222	207

When it comes to changes across conditions, Figure 2 shows how the number of characteristics in each category changes with experimental conditions. As it could be noted, in the control condition most of the characteristics fall into the

category of personality, and somewhat ideology and education. As conditions change, the number of categories other than these fluctuates, indicating that the stimuli do provoke changes in the characteristics produced at some low level. Chi-square tests could not be applied due to the disproportionate or rather small number of characteristics in some categories (see Table 5).
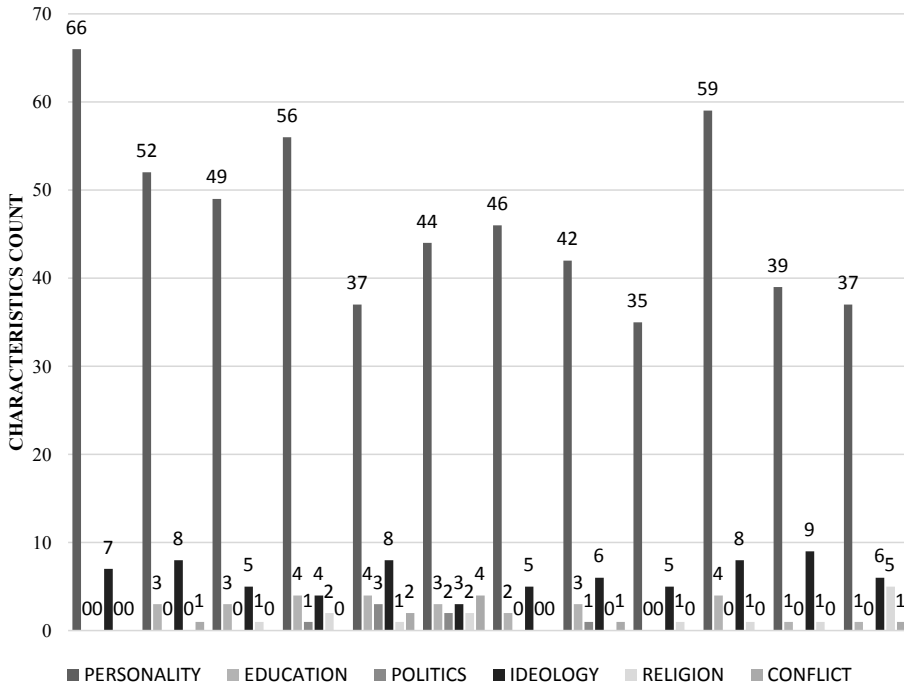

Figure 2. A number of characteristics in each category in all conditions.

Evaluation of national groups

The favourability index was calculated (Rodríguez-Bailón & Moya, 1998), having in mind negative (evaluated with -3, -2, and -1) and positive characteristics (evaluated with 1, 2 and 3) in the following manner: Favourability index = N of positive characteristics / (N of positive + N of negative characteristics). The favourability index for evaluating Serbs was 0.53, for evaluating Croats was 0.38, and for evaluating Bosniaks was 0.56, indicating that more characteristics were evaluated positive than negative when it came to Serbs and Bosniaks, but more characteristics were negative when it came to Croats. There were no significant differences in the favourability index across conditions ($F_{Croats}(3,51) = 1.03$, $p > .05$, $F_{Bosniaks}(3,47) = 0.58$, $p > .05$, $F_{Serbs}(3,38) = 1.62$, $p > .05$).

There was no statistically significant difference in the number of characteristics in each evaluation category across conditions except in the case of positive characteristics count in Bosniaks ($F(3, 62) = 2.93$, $p < .05$), when presented with the Croatian memory stimulus ($M = 1.06$, $SD = 1.69$), compared to the control condition ($M = 2.67$, $SD = 1.68$). However, as Figure 3 shows, there were tendencies to evaluate Croats in more negative terms (as well indicated by the favourability index).
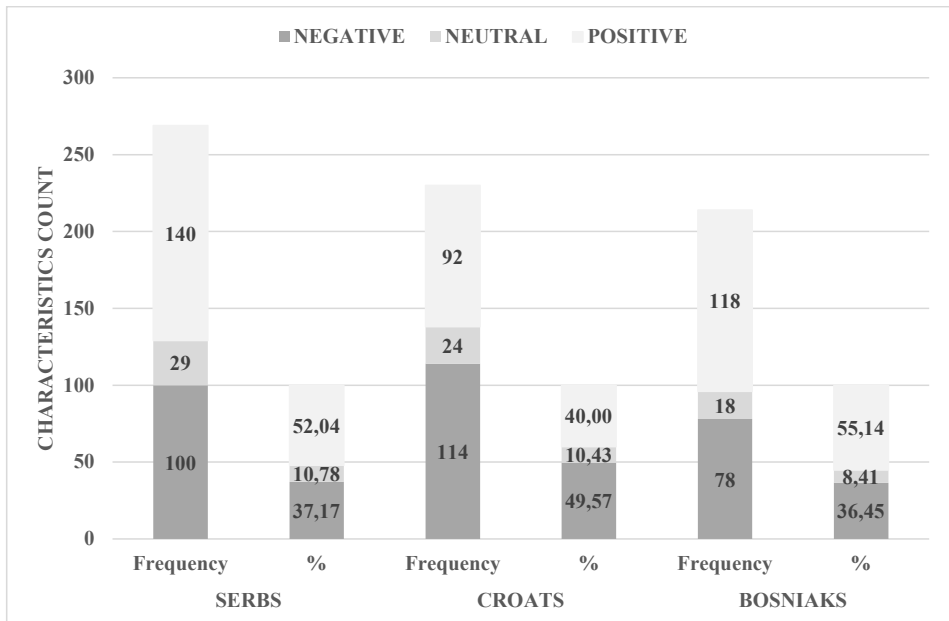

Figure 3. Total frequency and percentage of characteristics by evaluation categories across the national groups.

Figure 4 demonstrates the number of positive, neutral, and negative characteristics for each national group across conditions, while Table 6 shows comparisons in a number of characteristics regarding evaluation in each experimental condition. In Serbian memory condition, Croats were described in more negative terms than Serbs or Bosniaks. Also when the stimulus was Croatian memory, they were described with fewer negative characteristics than Bosniaks. When it came to positive characteristics, significantly more were related to Serbs than to Croats and Bosniaks in Serbian memory condition, with Croats being almost constantly described in the fewest number of positive terms.
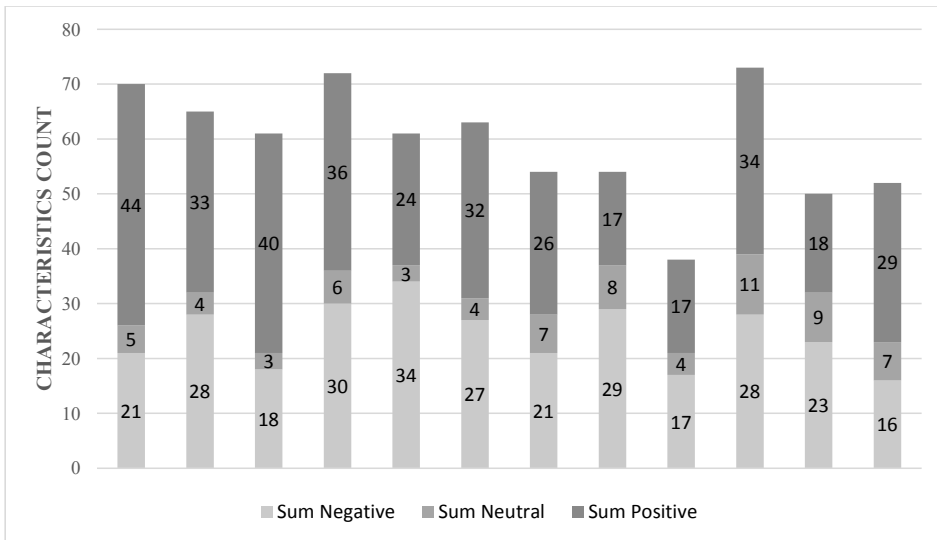
Figure 4. Number of positive, neutral, and negative characteristics across conditions and national groups.

Table 6

Results of χ^2 tests for comparing the number of negative and positive characteristics across conditions

	Negative characteristics					
	Control condition			Serbian memory stimulus		
	S vs. C	S vs. B	B vs. C	S vs. C	S vs. B	B vs. C
$\chi2$	14.65	12.75	16.71	37.44**	29.92	48.34**
df	16	12	12	20	20	25
	Croatian memory stimulus			Bosniak memory stimulus		
	S vs. C	S vs. B	B vs. C	S vs. C	S vs. B	B vs. C
$\chi2$	29,97	23,49	35,00*	19,98	17,86	12,49
df	20	16	20	15	15	9
	Positive characteristics					
	Control condition			Serbian memory stimulus		
	S vs. C	S vs. B	B vs. C	S vs. C	S vs. B	B vs. C
$\chi2$	24.04	32.73	22.79	34.40*	37.68*	37.52*
df	20	25	20	20	25	20

Table 6 (continued)

	Croatian memory stimulus			Bosniak memory stimulus		
	S vs. C	S vs. B	B vs. C	S vs. C	S vs. B	B vs. C
$\chi 2$	17.95	28.67*	21.56*	28.25*	23.63	19.88
df	12	16	12	16	16	16

*p< .05. **p< .01.

Social distance

As systematically reported throughout previous research, the social distance towards the ingroup was the least expressed, with the average social distance on our sample towards Croats being 6.67, towards Bosniaks 5.57 and Serbs 2.83. There were significant differences between every two groups (Table 7).

Table 7
Differences in social distance towards different national groups as shown by t-test for paired samples

National group pairs	t (df = 65)	p
Croats vs. Bosniaks	2.18	.033
Croats vs. Serbs	5.24	.000
Bosniaks vs. Serbs	3.91	.000

The percentage of not accepted relationships is shown in Table 8. It could be seen that the participants in our sample would not mind being a friend or a colleague with the members of the other two ethnic groups, but more than a third would not have marriage relationships with them. Also, a certain percentage would mind having them as influencing politicians in Serbia, with less acceptance of a Croat than a Bosniak for this function.

Table 8
Percentage of relationship refusals for each national group

National group	Marriage	Friend	Colleague	Neighbour	Citizen	Politician
Croats	36.36	1.52	1.52	1.52	0	19.70
Bosniaks	33.33	3.03	1.52	1.52	0	12.12
Serbs	15.15	1.52	0	3.03	0	6.06

There were no significant differences in social distance across the three experimental conditions and in the control condition ($F_{Croats}(3,62)$ = 0.64, p > .05,

$F_{\text{Bosniaks}}(3,62) = 0.83$, $p > .05$, $F_{\text{Serbs}}(3,62) = 0.53$, $p > .05$). Correlations between the social distances towards each group were significant and positive (Serbs and Croats $r = .33$, $p < .01$, Serbs and Bosniaks $r = .36$, $p < .01$, Croats and Bosniaks $r = .77$, $p < .001$), indicating the tendency to create higher social distance regardless of the object group.

National identity measure

The average score on National Identity Scale was 20.81 ($SD = 6.12$), which in general indicates a moderate national identification. No significant differences exist across conditions ($F(3,58) = 0.19$, $p > .05$). There are no significant correlations of the national identity with social distance, nor with the number of characteristics across evaluation categories, except in one case where the national identity and the number of negatively evaluated characteristics of Serbs correlate in a positive manner ($r = .27$, $p < .05$), with interpretation provided in the discussion.

Discussion

Studies about the relations among Serbs, Croats, and Bosniaks during and after the wars in the 1990s have been widely conducted, and these post-conflict societies have provided for an inexhaustible source of data, as it seems. Most of the studies have been conducted including samples from the war engaged territories (Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina), but some studies were discussing the attitudes of people from Serbia towards the three national groups in question (e.g., Mihić et al., 2016). The aim of our study was to examine the evaluations of stereotypical characteristics and their number, provoked by the collective memory stimuli in young Serbs towards Bosniaks and Croats, and their relations to social distance and the national identity.

First of all, the young Serbs showed to agree more with the views of the wars in the 1990s linked to their nation's memory, which is an outcome that is statistically significant when it comes to differences in the percentage of certainty, that is, their belief that Croatian and Serbian memory stimuli are true. This result is in accordance with the collective memory studies that show that the members of a group find their collective memory to be more accurate than the one of the other side (e.g., Bar-Tal, 2014; Halbwachs, 1950). When it comes to characteristics listed by the participants, in general, and across conditions, the number of them describing Serbs is the largest, except in the case of Croatian memory, which is in accordance with the social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which argues that we see the members of our ingroup as more complex and more diverse than the outgroup members. Most of the characteristics fall into the category of personality, thus participants being able to produce much more different attributes than when it comes to other categories. This result could also indicate that per-

sonality characteristics are seen as more important than any other category. As it could be seen on Figure 1, the count of characteristics in each condition somewhat changes, with the control condition having the highest count in total. Ideology and religion categories are mostly used when describing Croats and Bosniaks, with tendencies of growth when Croatian or Bosniak memories are presented as stimuli. Conflict characteristics are almost not listed at all, except in the case of Serbian memory stimulus, where a certain, but rather small number of these characteristics is attributed to the two outgroups. All these observations are made on a very small sample, and should therefore be very carefully taken into consideration.

The content of characteristics is important (and due to the extent of data will be addressed in another article), however, what is at least equally important is the evaluation given to each of them, considering that the same characteristic could be evaluated as positive, negative or neutral, depending on its holder. The favourability index indicates that the characteristics used to describe Serbs and Bosniaks are evaluated more positively than negatively, while with Croats it is not the case. At this point, it could be assumed that our sample participants' stereotypes about Croats are rather negative, regardless of the context (the stimuli presented), since this proportion of positive and negative evaluations does not change across conditions. This could also be noted on Figure 2, where proportions of all positive, neutral and negative characteristics are presented, indicating that indeed the percentage of negative evaluations for Croats differs by almost 13 percent in comparison to both other groups (49.57 compared to 37.17 and 36.45, respectively). Bosniaks are the group that is evaluated in most positive terms, which is a certain novelty for the research of stereotypes towards them (see Petrović, 2003; Turjačanin, 2004, 2007). Significantly higher number of positive evaluations of Bosniaks is found when Croatian memory stimulus is presented, thus opening the question of how our participants see the relationship between these two nations.

Comparisons of the numbers of positive and negative evaluations across conditions show that, there is a significant difference in Serbian memory condition in the number of negative evaluations between Serbs and Croats, and Bosniaks and Croats, such that the Croats are evaluated in more negative terms than both Serbs and Bosniaks. In Croatian memory condition, the difference in numbers is even bigger between Croats and Bosniaks. Also, Croats are described with significantly less positive characteristics than both Serbs and Bosniaks in the Serbian memory condition, and Serbs in Bosniak memory condition. Taken altogether with previous descriptions, these results point once again that Croats are evaluated in the most negative terms of all three groups, even more negative than Bosniaks, when the latter are not even in the story. Also, although the stereotype towards Bosniaks is more positive than the one towards Croats, our participants describe their ingroup in significantly more positive characteristics, when presented with the Serbian of Croatian memory, that way favouring the ingroup, as the social identity theory would easily explain.

Results on the Social Distance Scale indicate that the lack of differences in social distance regarding experimental conditions could point to the social distance being determined by a person rather than a situation, indicating that there are people who tend to have higher social distance in general, regardless of the group in question. This could also be the case due to the lack of the effect of the experimental manipulation, bringing up once again the question, as indicated earlier, whether the manipulation was salient enough, or whether the right stimuli were chosen. However, the correlation between social distance towards Croats and Bosniaks, compared to the correlations towards Serbs and each of the two groups, is much higher, indicating that if our participants are prone to distance themselves from one outgroup, they are more prone to do the same with the other outgroup. The structure of social distancing is somewhat similar between distancing from Croats and Bosniaks, with the percentage of the refused partnership and political involvement of the Croats being somewhat higher. Although the social distance towards the three national groups does not differ significantly across conditions, in general there are significant differences between all three national groups, where the ingroup social distance is the least expressed, with the social distance towards Bosniaks and Croats following. Marriage/partner relationships are most likely to be refused by the participants in our sample, in such a way that they would least likely marry a Croat, then a Bosniak, and then a Serb. Also, when it comes to the political engagement in their country, they would mind a Croat being an influencing politician more than a Bosniak or a Serb. These results are somewhat different than those found in some other social distance studies (e.g., Kandido-Jakšić, 2008; Čorkalo & Kamenov, 2003), where the percentage of acceptance of marriage with Croats and Bosniaks is much lower than in our sample (for example, in our sample 64% of participants would accept marriage with a Croat, and 67% of them would accept a marriage with a Bosniak, compared to 49% and 36% respectively in Biro et al., 2002).

The average score on the National Identity Scale was 20.81, which is similar to those obtained in other studies, for example in Vojvodina 21.10 (Mihić, 2006), Novi Sad 25.01 (Kamenov, Jelić, Huić, Franceško, & Mihić, 2006), and Serbia 20.34 (Jelić, Kamenov, Mihić, Bodroža, & Jelić, 2017). The previous research elsewhere, including other nationalities, has shown that, when measured by this scale, the national identity statistic is a little higher than the average (Cinnirella, 1997; Kamenov et al., 2006). When it comes to the national identity, there are no significant differences across conditions, which could point that the presented stimuli are not such an important variable as expected. The one significant finding, that there is a positive correlation between the national identity and the number of negatively evaluated characteristics of the ingroup, is rather interesting, and could be explained taking into account the measure. The National Identity Scale used in this research does not measure nationalism, but rather a critical attachment to one's nation, hence indicating that those who have higher national identity would be less fond of their ingroup, or at least more objective, when the ingroup is pre-

sented in a negative or a questionable manner, which engagement in a war certainly is.

As our results indicate, collective memory as narrated by the interviewees of Ruiz Jiménez is not such an important factor when talking about relations with Croats and Bosniaks in our sample. It could be that the narrative as it would be described by the young in Serbia now is different than the one of the previous generation, and hence it does not have much impact on their distancing from the other two nations. The image of Croats remains the most negative, and the social distance is the largest towards this national group. However, improvements have been recorded in comparison to other studies in the last 15 years, although we remind to bear in mind the size and other characteristics of the sample (gender and educational misbalance, as well as its convenience). Future research should try to solve the methodological issues of the sampling, while the data about personality characteristics, which are listed at large, should be further analyzed.

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STEREOTIPI MLADIH U SRBIJI O HRVATIMA I BOŠNJACIMA PROVOCIRANI STIMULUSIMA KOLEKTIVNOG SEĆANJA

Ratovi na prostoru bivše SFRJ tokom devedesetih godina ostali su zapamćeni među najkrvavijim sukobima u novijoj istoriji. Kao jednu od posledica ostavili su tri etničke grupe, Bošnjake, Hrvate i Srbe, u trajnom psihološkom konfliktu, naročito na području dveju država na kojima su se ratna dejstva odvijala direktno. U godinama posle ratova mnogobrojne studije bavile su se pitanjem odnosa između tri etničke grupe, ali ne veliki broj njih je ispitivao stereotipe pripadnika srpske etničke grupe koji žive u Srbiji, koja je bila jedan od aktera rata, ali se na njenoj teritoriji nisu odvijala ratna dejstva. Cilj našeg istraživanja bio je ispitati kakvi se stereotipi Bošnjaka i Hrvata javljaju kod mladih Srba iz Srbije u odnosu na konflikte devedesetih. Kao stimuluse u kvazieksperimentalnom pristupu koristili smo skraćene verzije kolektivnih sećanja Srba, Hrvata i Bošnjaka kako su ona opisana kod Ruiz Himenesa (Ruiz Jiménez, 2013), sa ciljem pozivanja na referentni kontekst. Uzorak u istraživanju činilo je 66 mladih rođenih između 1991. i 1995. godine koji žive u Srbiji. Baterija instrumenata uključila je Skalu nacionalnog identiteta, Skalu socijalne distance, socio-demografski upitnik i set stimulusa praćen pitanjima koja su se odnosila na osobine koje bi učesnici pripisali svakoj od etničkih grupa. Rezultati su pokazali da eksperimentalni uslovi nisu imali bitnog uticaja na opisane stereotipe, kao ni na nacionalni identitet ili izraženost socijalne distance. Ipak, učesnici u našem istraživanju dosledno su evaluirali osobine pripisane Hrvatima kao negativnije u odnosu na one pripisane Bošnjacima ili pripadnicima svoje grupe i dodeljivan im je manji broj pozitivnih osobina nego drugim dvema grupama. Najveći broj navedenih osobina pripada kategoriji ličnosti, što ukazuje na atribuiranje stereotipne slike unutrašnjim i stabilnim činiocima naspram spoljnih i dinamičkih. Kada je u pitanju socijalna distanca, u našem istraživanju je ona manje izražena nego u istraživanjima sprovedenim u regionu u poslednjih petnaestak godina, sa najmanjim stepenom prihvatanja partnerskog odnosa sa pripadnicima najpre hrvatske, a zatim i bošnjačke etničke grupe. Ispitanici su takođe u određenom stepenu izrazili socijalnu distancu prema tome da pripadnik hrvatske, odnosno bošnjačke etničke grupe bude uticajan političar u Srbiji. Nacionalni identitet nije značajno korelirao sa evaluativnim aspektom stereotipa niti socijalnom distancom, ali je jedan značajan odnos pokazao da su Srbi sa izraženijim nacionalnim identitetom skloniji pridavanju negativnih osobina pripadnicima sopstvene grupe, što može biti odraz kritičkog sagledavanja svoje grupe.

Ključne reči: stereotipi, kolektivno sećanje, socijalna distanca, nacionalni identitet

Appendix A
Collective memory stimuli presented in the study

Long versions

Serbs. After the defeat in the battle on Kosovo and five centuries of submission to Islam, in 1878 Serbia gained its independence, which was interrupted only once during the German occupation from 1941 to 1945. After WW2, Tito proclaimed brotherhood and unity among Yugoslavian people, and Serbia is forced to forgive pro-Nazi politics of the NDH (e.g. Jasenovac). In the Communist Yugoslavia, only in Serbia there were no national songs sang in order to avoid offending other peoples' feelings, although the other nations accused it of being privileged. Anyhow, Serbia was endangered, because part of its population lived in B&H and Croatia, and the Autonomous Provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo had their own governments that had a veto right on Serbia's decisions, while Serbia did not have veto on their decisions. Considering the fact that Serbia was the only one to shed blood during the defence from the Nazis, and that it generously accepted Croatian and Albanian dissidents, there was an imbalance between the number of its habitants and the portion in the federal government. Serbia was growing weaker under Yugoslavism, and when Slobodan Milošević emerged declaring at the celebration of 600 years of the Battle of Kosovo that the Serbs would fight Muslims again if necessary, the national pride and mood raised. Milošević abolished the autonomous status to Kosovo and Vojvodina, and by that, he started getting back under the wing of Serbia the regions that were going down the way of separatism.

The independency conflicts in Slovenia and Croatia at the beginning of the 1990s posed a direct threat to Serbia, considering that it was the only one having its people scattered in Croatia, B&H and Kosovo. Slovenia had always had pretty much homogenized population and a different language, so it was not a threat for the breakdown of the SFRY, while the turmoil in Croatia destabilized SFRY. Croatian population had higher living standard than Serbian, and they wrongfully felt discriminated due to the illusory favouring of Serbs compared to Croats, when it came to jobs in Croatia. However, it was about favouring the citizens of lower socio-economic status, which were more represented among Serbs than among Croats. The new constitution abolished the status of the constitutive nation to Serbs in Croatia, and they are converted into ordinary foreigners. The expected consequences were Serbs leaving Croatia, and hiring Croats in their work places. Serbs had to give up their nationalities, or they would wrongfully be declared incompetent for working in the Croatian public sector. In Serbian enclaves, these events were a clear sign of the comeback of Ustashas, which created a discriminatory and nationalist country once more, although Serbs forgave them crimes from WW2 for the sake of brotherhood and unity. In order to prevent the WW2 episodes, the Serbs started the Territorial Defence Plan (TDF) in their communities, and the Yugoslav National Army (YNA) came to help endangered Serbian people.

The most of Croatian soldiers had already left YNA, and following the model of TDF, established their own national guard. Krajina Serbs declared the Republic of Srpska Krajina in Croatia. However, the international community acknowledged the independence of Croatia, but not the independence of Krajina. In 1993, due to the pressure of the international community which considered the YNA operations aggression against the country that had declared its independence, and due to the agreement between Milošević and Tuđman, YNA got the order to withdraw. Withdrawing caused the confusion among the Serbs from that region, as well as among the very members of YNA, who felt as they betrayed Serbian people and left they unprotected. In the summer of 1995, Croatian military offensive called 'The Storm', which was logistically supported by the USA, broke down the defence of Croatian Serbs, and caused a mass exodus that enabled ethnic cleansing and definitely put a stop to Serbian minority in Croatia.

B&H was an area historically inhabited by Serbs, and it got the status of a republic only in 1945, while until then it was just a geographical determinant. After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, most of the natives that converted to Islam remained to live in that area, and there were no conflicts until 1992. Before the danger of declaring independence of B&H in 1992, in which Muslims were a majority, the Serbian community rebelled considering inacceptable to become a minority again in a Muslim country, under Turks who humiliated them in the past, and under the governance of a radical Islamist Alija Izetbegović. After Izetbegović declared the independence of B&H in 1992, the international community did not acknowledge the new state, hence the Serbs from B&H, led by the politics of Radovan Karadžić, decided to create a Serbian state free of the Muslim control. The war began with the first victim, a Serb Nikola Gardović, who was shot dead on his son's wedding day by a radical Islamist Ramiz Delačić, who later became the commander of the Bosnian Brigade Army. Afterwards, 50 young YNA soldiers of all nationalities were killed in a convoy that was peacefully leaving Tuzla in May 1992. The international press took the Muslim community's side and presented Muslims as victims. The siege of Sarajevo and the bomb thrown at the local market were attempts to extort the NATO intervention against Serbs, which was proven true by the independent investigation which said that the Muslim government sacrificed a few of their members. Also, the construed image that was in the media at the time was the image of Serbian savages that cold bloodedly massacred thousands of innocents in Srebrenica, and little was said about the troops of Naser Orić, who was relentlessly and continuously attacking Serbian villages around Srebrenica.

Naser Orić was set free after the symbolic detention in The Hague, and returned to B&H, where he was celebrated as a hero. The decennial of the Srebrenica massacre gave the opportunity to Serbs to see a documentary called 'The Truth', in which it was shown that the Serbs were actually the victims of the conflict. A few days earlier, a Belgrade daily published a 16-pages annex called 'The Book of dead', with the list of more than 3,000 Serbs from the region of Srebrenica that lost lives in the war. The recognition of the crimes committed against Serbs has still

not happened. The Committee for Serbian ex-Yu wars victims has never agreed with the official number of Bosnian victims in Srebrenica, which were recognized by the international community. In July 2005, the day after the memorial to the fallen in Srebrenica, , which was visited by numerous representatives of the international community, and which was extremely covered by the media from all over the world, a similar memorial was held in nearby Kravice, dedicated to Serbian victims from that area. Inexplicable, but the international community did not pay attention to the Serbs killed by the Croatian soldiers in Krajina and East Slavonia, where there were hundreds of dead, while the number of the displaced reached a quarter of a million. Due to all aforementioned, the Serbs were the greatest victims of those wars: violently displaced from Croatia, forced to leave the Western B&H, and to fight to stay in the east, and not fall under the governance of Muslim nationalists, marked as the aggressor state in Slovenia and Croatia, and as a genocide committer in Bosnia, castigated by the Haag tribunal.

Croats. There is a history of the national liberation from various peoples who were historically conquering the Croats. After many decades under the governance of Austro-Hungary, the peace agreements after the WW1 forced Croatia to enter the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians. This country was designed abroad, according to the criteria of the USA president Woodrow Wilson. However, many Croats saw the new state as the possibility to create a country that would be in brotherly relations with all Slavic peoples in the Balkans, which was a long-lasting aspiration of the intellectuals from that region. In the first Yugoslavia (1918-1941), Croatia quickly became discriminated and disappointed because of the centralism of Serbian kings. As an example of an unequal division of duties among the three constitutive nations of this young state, it was enough to state that out of 116 generals in the army there were only 5 Croats and 1 Slovenian. The Croatia people's party (HSS) consistently reported the abuse of governance. In 1928, its complaints lead to a dispute in which Serbian-Montenegrin MP Punisa Racic shot towards Croatian benches during the parliament seating. Two MPs died instantly, three were shot, and among whom there was Stjepan Radic, the leader of the HSS, who did not survive. Racic was sentenced only to house arrest, and set free later on. Soon the dictatorship was established that revealed the true despot nature of Yugoslavia and which sharpened the conjoint lives of the ethnic groups.

During WW2, under the governance of Ante Pavelic, Croatia allied s with the Axis powers. The paramilitary forces called the Ustashas, which became uncontrollable by the new regular army, took vengeance actions against Serbs who had been acting as the lords of the country. The defeat of Germany brought the governance to the Communist partisan gorillas who used the situation to rob the houses of Croatian civilians, into which they would often move in, while the original owners served them. Also, they revenged unpunishable and mercilessly for the actions of the Ustashas, and to such extremes as there was the massacre in Bleiberg in 1945. Many Croatian civilians and soldiers fled to Austria in order to surrender to the British army from which they expected a milder treatment. However, the

British army turned the immigrants in the hands of partisans. Those who were not killed at sight took a road known as the Croatia via crucis, the road home on foot or, in some cases, the road to concentration camps. This immigrant escape attempt ended in genocide. Some historians talk about the number of 65,000 dead among the immigrants from Bleiberg.

Within SFRY, the parliament seats were monopolized in the favour of Serbia. Also, it was forbidden to put up the Croatian flag and sing their patriotic songs. At the same time, the existence of their language was brought in question, since it was merged into Serbo-Croatian, in which Serbian was taken for the accurate form, and Croatian was considered a dialect. The politics of industrialization of the underdeveloped republics (Kosovo, B&H and Montenegro) was a way to deprive Croatia and Slovenia of their economic bases.

After the turmoil caused by the fuel crisis in 1973, and after the failure of the real communism between 1989 and 1991, and by realising, as it could be foreseen, that it would have a more difficult access to the EU if it continued being a communist country, Croatia finally stopped identifying with the Yugoslavian idea. When Serbia abolished the autonomous status to Kosovo and Vojvodina, which was followed by repressive measures in the case of Kosovo, Croatian fears raised that SFRY would be just a curtain for Serbian hegemonistic politics to her neighbours. Due to all that, both Croatia and Slovenia decided to throw off the economic ballast, and gain total political independence on the road, which would set them free from the Serbian tutorship.

The 1974 Constitution envisaged that every republic of the federation, if it wanted, had the right to secede, hence the independence referendum was conducted completely legally. When Croatia declared independence, Serbian army besieged and shelled enclaves (such as Dubrovnik and Vukovar), which confirmed that Serbia was an enemy as it had always been, since the time of the Chetniks. However, Croatian president Franjo Tudjman promised to Serbs in Croatia a normal life if they reside from their separatism in Krajina and give back the territories to the Croatian government (which they were given centuries earlier to work and live on them until the Ottomans leave, but after the Ottomans left, they decided to stay and take over the territory). As a consequence of Krajina Serbs' refusal to accept Tudjman's terms, supported by the entire international community, a liberating military action 'The Storm' was conducted with the least possible loss, placing the guarantees that peaceful Serbs who wanted could have stayed on the territory.

Bosniaks. After disappearance of the Ottoman governance in the Balkans, the residents of B&H, mostly Muslims, remained in the territory that only a few years later became the Austro-Hungarian province, and then a part of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenians. During WW2, it was a stage for the biggest military operations, and it became one of the republics of the SFRY after the war. At the 1990 elections, the party of Alija Izetbegovic won. At that moment, facing the possibility of declaring independence of B&H, in which the Muslims

were the majority, Serbian community from the north rebelled, considering inacceptable to become a minority again in their own country. The government was convinced that the international community would acknowledge the independence of the young state, fought over the elections, as it was the case months earlier with Slovenia and Croatia. Surprisingly, not a single foreign force moved a finger. That was why both Croats and Serbs started thinking not only about spreading their territories at the cost of ripping off parts of B&H, by dividing it between themselves, but the chance to practically unite all Serbs and Croats in their two enlarged states in which Muslims would be a minority, instead of a less favourable option of a space in which thousands of people would live in a Muslim country.

After the independence referendum, Serbs fulfilled their threats that they would boycott the parliament, and that they would unilaterally declare the independence of their region, led by the politics of Radovan Karadzic, while Croats did the same under the leadership of Mato Boban. These two arranged a division on a meeting held in Graz, Austria. The tension reached its peak on March 2nd 1992 when, an orthodox priest Nikola Gardovic waved Serbian flag in the streets in the centre of Sarajevo yelling 'This is Serbia!' on his son's wedding day. This hasty reaction cost him his life. Serbian soldiers opened fire on the 5th of April to a peace march in Sarajevo. Considering the fact that it could not hold Croatia in Yugoslavia, Serbia was ready to activate military forces in order to rule Bosnia. Something similar was desired by the Croats in Herzegovina. This meant that certain parts of B&H would be annexed to Serbia, or Croatia respectively, completely ignoring the will of the most numerous ethnic group: Bosnian Muslims. As in B&H there were no ethnically clean territories, the strategy was to start a merciless action of ethnic cleansing of local Muslim residents. The dirty job of killing civilians was given to paramilitary formations, among which the most famous were Arkan's Tigers, Hawks or White Eagles. These groups were well equipped with weapons that YNA left to them during their withdrawal. In the first phases of war, Croats and Muslims cooperated against the Serbian enemy. However, the cooperation was interrupted when the UN plan, known as Vance-Owen plan, hut the light of the day, since it suggested that the country should be divided into three ethnic enclaves, one for each nation. Since that moment, encouraged by this proposal, Izetbegovic's Bosniaks and Boban's Bosnian Croats started fighting between themselves for the territories under their control, which caused even bigger bloodshed and intensified the ethnic cleansing. That way, Bosnian Muslims were between two fires, repressed, the victims of weapon embargo that hit only them, considering the obvious help Serbia and Croatia provided to their allies in B&H. Muslims were left with no guns or allies. That was how their tragedy began, as they were helpless before the wave of mass rapes, ethnic cleansing and siege, with late and insufficient cooperation of the Western forces. Mostar, which was under siege, shelled by the YNA had to enter the war again after retreat of YNA, this time with Croats who tried to take it over in blood and flames. Serbian grenade that killed dozens of civilians who were trying to get some food in the city centre, was just the top of the

iceberg of suffering. However, with no doubt, the worst atrocities were in Srebren-ica, in which Serbian parasoldiers, committed a genocide under the command of Ratko Mladic, by killing cold-bloodedly more than 8,000 unarmed civilians.

These traumas lead to the empowerment of the Muslim characteristics, ad-ditionally fuelled by Saudi Arabia and Iran, who were always on their side and gladly financed mosques, language courses of Arabic, and building of Islamic cultural centres, as well as public places related to the Muslim-Ottoman past, as it was the case of the renovation of the bridge in Mostar by the Government of Turkey. Namely, when mujahedeen volunteers arrived from the Near East to fight with their Bosnian brothers in 1993, they were stunned to see religious slouch of some of the Muslims who barely went to mosques and joyfully frank alcohol, while their wives were dressed in a Western way. In the end, Yugoslavia was an advanced socialist country for the half of a century. However, now, the need to affirm again against their political opponents and ex-war enemies with whom they had to share the country, as well as the islamization conditioned by the help of Muslim countries, enlarged the number of mosques, and encouraged to wear the hijab. Political rivalry during the election processes should be added to the cultural distancing, because there were only nationalist options, without a single party that would propose governing with the same right for all three nationalities living in B&H.