THE PROBLEM OF COLLECTIVE MEMORY IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:

HOW FRACTURED AND COMPETING NARRATIVES CONTRIBUTE TO

ETHNIC TENSIONS

By

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I would like to extend my thanks above all else to my family. To my parents, without whose help I wouldn`t have made it this far, and to my younger sister, for being supportive and an excellent sibling. I would further like to thank my supervisor, Professor Thomas Fetzer, for the valuable support and feedback given for this thesis.

ABSTRACT

The problem of collective memory in Bosnia and Herzegovina is that the memory narratives of the constituent ethnic groups, based primarily on the remembrance of the Bosnian War of 1992-1995, appear as opposing and mutually exclusive of one another. In a country that depends on good relations between the three main ethnicities, tensions caused by contested memory further exacerbate already fraught interethnic relations. This thesis approaches the problem form a bottom-up, societal level perspective, by reviewing public and interethnic discourse on the topic of the Srebrenica Genocide, perhaps the most infamous event of the war. Specifically, a social media analysis of a select number of posts and the comments they generate is conducted as a way to analyze individual opinions of a large number of people of different ethnic backgrounds. The main aim of the thesis is to gain a better understanding of the impact of collective memory on continued ethnic tensions in Bosnia. The results of the analysis indicate that narratives propagated by elite level memory politics seem to be pervasive in wider public opinion and that interethnic discourse when it comes to contested memory appears to be largely antagonistic. However, the parameters of the research remain somewhat constricting, in that they deal primarily with the case study of Srebrenica and through it the interaction of two of the three different collective memory narratives in Bosnia. This means that avenues for further research through alternate parameters remain, especially in using a social media analysis, but it is debatable how differing the results might be in regard to the overarching issue of collective memory in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

AUTHOR`S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, <u>Adi-Ibrahim Bagrameli</u>, candidate for the MA degree in International Relations declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person`s or institutions copyright.

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Vienna, Austria, May 21, 2025

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1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Overview and research aim

Bosnia and Herzegovina[1] is a state divided on several fronts. Ethnically, there are three main constituent peoples: Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats. Officially and territorially, Bosnia is divided into two ethnically defined entities, the Bosniak-Croat Federation and the Serb Republika Srpska, as well as the area of District Brcko. The Dayton Peace Agreement is what solidified this division, though it was signed to end horrific violence which plagued Bosnia for almost four years, and some of its provisions, including the establishment of the Office of High Representative (OHR), ensured significant international involvement in the peacebuilding effort (Jenne 2010, 378-79). However, when it comes to peacebuilding, reconciliation and overall transitional justice efforts in Bosnia, the situation is generally seen as something akin to a "cold" peace, with little outright violence, but marked by stagnation and little interaction between the main ethnic groups (Cole et al. 2022, 361). Despite it being 30 years since the end of the Bosnian War, ethnic tensions remain high and positive relations low in a country whose existence could very well depend on those relations. With that in mind, asking what leads to the tension and cold relations is rather important to the future of Bosnia.

This thesis approaches the problem of continuing ethnic tensions in Bosnia from the viewpoint of memory. Specifically, of interest is the collective memory and its narratives as they appear among the main ethnic groups, as well as the memory politics that the Bosnian political actors engage in. The underlying assumption is that memory, specifically of the Bosnian War, plays an ongoing and divisive role when it comes to Bosnian interethnic relations. The Bosnian War of 1992-1995 presents a crucible through which modern Bosnia was forged and its legacy and remembrance remain a large part of modern-day Bosnian identity. As Bernhard and Kubik

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[1] BiH or simply Bosnia, abbreviations of the full name, will be primarily used throughout the paper

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(2014) point out, a seminal event of such importance for a country invites not just political and economic shifts, but a reformulation of collective identities of the people of the country, primarily done through the re-examination of their past (8). The war, a three-way struggle between the main ethnic groups, helped solidify three mostly opposing and mutually exclusive memory narratives about its causes and the course of events, which were even further strengthened by a peace that was essentially a compromise, meaning that there were no victorious or defeated sides (Kostić 2012, 653). These Dynamics of the Dayton Agreement, according to Kostic, more or less acknowledged and, therefore, legitimized these opposing memory narratives, which has provided a way for the ethnic political elites to continue to use them for their own gains (653-54). These narratives have, by mainstream promotion, essentially become part of the collective memory of Bosnians, and have, due to their exclusionary nature, ensured that Bosnia is also divided along opposing lines of remembrance and memory, essentially creating a conflict over said memory. It should be noted, however, that it is not the argument of this thesis that contested memory is the primary source of division and tensions in Bosnia, but it should be considered one of the leading factors.

Conflicts over contested memory can play a significant part in international relations, between states as well as between different ethnicities such as the case of Bosnia. Memories of wars and atrocities are abundant in the international community, and the approach to those memories affect how different countries or groups view each other (Lind 2008, 9; Bachleitner 2024, 1). Conflicts can be over what is to be a part of collective remembrance, and how to remember events (Zerubavel 1996, 296). Antagonistically shaped collective memory narratives usually mean unwillingness to acknowledge the crimes of a group, vilifying instead others, which invites backlash and tensions between said groups (Lind 2008, 13; Bull et al. 2021, 17). Actors, mostly political ones, engaging in memory politics do so in order to construct collective narratives that speak, in turn, for a collective identity of various groups, and such narratives are

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very much open to manipulation (Moll 2013, 911-12; Bernhard and Kubick 2014, 8-9). Bosnian political elites, consisting primarily of ethno-nationalist parties such as the Bosniak SDA (Party of Democratic Action), the Serb SNSD (Alliance of Independent Social Democrats) or the Croat HDZ BiH (Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina), to name just a few of the most prominent ones, have built their agenda on supporting the nationalism of their respective ethnic groups, and have been more or less dominant since the breakup of Yugoslavia (Mujkić and Husley 2010, 144). Within the divisive framework of Bosnia, they have been in perpetual competition, due to opposing interests, a part of which have been strong, contested and conflicting memory politics (Moll 2013, 911).

This thesis will, however, not focus so much on the political, top down formation and manipulation of collective memory narratives of the past. Instead, the focus will be more on the bottom-up and individual approaches to collective memory narratives in Bosnia, analyzing the issue from a more broadly societal rather than elite level. Such approaches are relatively rare in IR scholarship, whereas top-down research focusing on political elites is well fleshed out generally (Bachleitner 2024, 3-4), but also in the case of Bosnia. Therefore, the emphasis in the thesis will be on analyzing discussions among the wider population in relation to a contentious topic arising from the memory of the war, in order to see what can be gleaned about collective memory dynamics in Bosnia from such public discussions. To that end, the thesis employs a case study of the Srebrenica Genocide, unarguably the most infamous event that happened during the war. Putting the focus on a case study makes the thesis more manageable, as focusing on the war as a whole would be too broad a standpoint. Moreover, Srebrenica remains one of the most contested issues of memory in present Bosnian society, one around

whom a lot of different narratives have been woven (Duijzings 2016, 145), and therefore constitutes a solid base from which to research memory issues in Bosnia[2].

To be able to analyze public discussions, a social media analysis will be conducted. Though it has its drawbacks, which will be discussed in detail later, a social media analysis of several gathered posts on the topic of Srebrenica and their adjacent comments present a unique way to review how various individuals discuss said topic. Such an analysis allows for reviewing the aforementioned bottom-up formation of collective memory and approaching the issue of memory in Bosnia from what Olick (1999) calls the collected standpoint. Collected memory treats the phenomenon of collective memory as an aggregation of individual memories, as individuals are those ultimately giving meaning to symbols, monuments, narratives and other tools of collective memory and memory politics (Olick 1999, 338) and it is from the collected standpoint that this thesis approaches its topic. Therefore, the analysis of various individual opinions in the posts and comments will be used to ascertain the main narratives that seem to be relevant around Srebrenica, which will then be put into the wider context of collective memory issues within Bosnia. Moreover, the posts chosen for the analysis come primarily from public and political figures engaging in memory politics, which will further allow, through the collected memory framework, to see how receptive the wider audience present in the comments is to accepting the propagated views. Furthermore, a social media analysis presents something not done before in connection with this topic, as prior research primarily focused on conducting surveys and rarely observed interactions of people from different ethnic backgrounds, something social media allows for in abundance.

Therefore, the aim of the thesis is not to argue that Bosnian politicians manipulate collective memory through opposing narratives in Bosnia, but rather to answer the question of whether

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[2] Srebrenica is also primarily connected to Serb and Bosniak narratives specifically, meaning that the Croat narrative is not central to this thesis, and will, therefore, not be included in the research

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these narratives are pervasive in the wider public. Moreover, it is not a new conclusion that issues of memory and remembrance will have an impact on interethnic tensions, but a review of a public discussion on a divisive topic stemming from the remembrance of the war can help ascertain how the impact manifests and potentially give a better understanding on the nature of continued ethnic conflict in Bosnia. The main research question of the thesis then is if, by researching how the memory of Srebrenica is represented, especially in the wider public discussion, a better understanding of the impact of collective memory on ethnic tensions in Bosnia can be gained. As said, this impact is important, as relations of the ethnic groups are of key importance to a country that is defined by ethnic differentiation. If exclusionary memory narratives are pervasive it can lead primarily to continued strife, which then does not bode well for the future. On the other hand, these narratives, while different, do not necessarily need to be mutually exclusive, and openness to a multi-perspective narrative and tolerance to different approaches may be just what Bosnia needs when it comes to memory. It remains to be seen, however, whether such openness exists, and this is where a social media analysis may help, as a way to see how a large group of people interact on the social platforms, and check whether a potential for interethnic tolerance and positive deliberation is present.

1.2   1.2 Structure

The thesis will proceed as follows. The next chapter will detail the conceptual framework, dealing primarily with the concept of collective memory, as the primary basis of this research, as well as the concepts of memory politics and memory conflicts. This will be done through a review of significant literature that deals with the phenomena of collective memory. The third chapter will give a brief historical background of the Bosnian War and the Srebrenica Genocide, followed by an overview of some of the main memory narratives, both Bosniak and Serb, that are prevalent when it comes to Srebrenica. In the fourth chapter, the social media analysis will be performed. First, an in-depth reasoning for conducting such an analysis will be

given, followed by explaining the methodology for the analysis. The main part of the chapter will focus on the findings of the analysis, including delineating the main themes that can be found in public discussion of the Srebrenica Genocide. The fifth chapter will present as a discussion that will situate the findings of the analysis within the broader aim of the thesis, namely assessing the impact of contested memory and its possible repercussions, including discussing some possible pathways that can be used to establish a more tolerant approach to memory in Bosnia. This chapter will include the conclusion, which will reiterate the main points of this research.

2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 *Defining collective memory and its related concepts*

2.1.1 *Collective memory*

The primary concept underlying this research is collective memory and its importance for a society. Collective memory implies a collective dimension of remembrance within a society, a sort of memory that is collectively shared by any given society or group. However, there are several things that should be kept in mind when considering collective memory. First off, it has to be kept in mind that only individuals can remember and store memories, but that remembrance is shaped by the social environment, and similar understandings of the past can be shared by a number of people, giving memory a collective dimension that is hard to deny (Zerubavel 1996, 283). Moreover, collective memory is not static, but can be seen as in flux, a process rather than being a constant, as actors within a society engage in contesting various memory narratives, often in a struggle for control (Wertsch and Roediger 2008, 319). That is why some authors prefer the term collective remembering/remembrance rather than memory, though the thesis will continue to use the latter term as it is more widely accepted. The similar understanding of the past is the basis of what Zerubavel calls mnemonic communities, which is any grouping that a person may belong to, such as family, organization or a nation, to whose past that person feels connected to, even if said past was not experienced personally (Zerubavel 1996, 289). In that sense, a person "remembers" an event or a happening that could have been generations ago, but holds a significance for the person`s mnemonic community (Zerubavel 1996, 289-90) Therefore, individuals are influenced on how and what to remember of the past by the group they belong to, their social framework, creating a shared and collective understanding of said past, a collective memory or remembrance (Bell 2003, 65). As Bernhard and Kubik said, there is little sense in talking about a collective consciousness of a particular group, instead individuals are the carriers of both their personal memories and what they call

individual historical memory which is an individual`s vision of the collective past of a group that they identify with (Bernhard and Kubik 2014, 10). Essentially memory belongs to individuals, but it is socially framed (Bell 2003, 72).

As can be gleaned from the above, this thesis puts an emphasis on individuals as carriers of collective memory, basing itself, as already said, on Olick`s notion of collected memory. He talks about two cultures and approaches to collective memory, which are collected and collective. The collected memory is made of aggregated individual memories of members of a group, whereas the collective memory implies the aforementioned possibility of a collective consciousness of a group, of symbols, ideas and narratives having a sort of autonomy from the perceptions of individuals (Olick 1999, 338,341). However, the argument here is that the thesis actually somewhat straddles the road between the two cultures. The emphasis is on the individualistic perspective, as the social media analysis, the main component here designed to study collective memory, essentially means studying the opinions of many individuals and the discourse they produce among themselves. Moreover, the contention is that individuals are the ones that give meaning to symbols and narratives, as well as form the aforementioned vision of the collective past, which is mainly in line with collected memory as Olick described it (338). That doesn`t mean that individuals aren`t constrained by group framework, and narratives and symbols are both powerful and important when it comes to memory, but as said, all such mechanisms are created by individuals. A vision or narrative of the collective past is formed by individuals, but once it becomes entrenched within a group, it becomes hard to escape. Furthermore, such pervasive group narratives, for instance, regarding important events like the Holocaust or the Srebrenica Genocide can often persist even after all individuals that played a part in them have long since died, becoming something like myths (Bell 2003, 73). In this sense, the relative autonomy of narratives is not hard to imagine, though a collective consciousness may be a step too far. Ultimately, collective memory is a complex phenomenon.

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It is also one that operates on a group level, forming memory narratives that are shared across a wide number of people. Often those narratives are formed by the leading members of a group, such as the political elite, whose intentions are to use them for their own benefit, engaging therefore in memory politics.

2.1.2   *Memory politics*

The importance of memory, especially in the political arena, is its connection to identity forming. It is the capacity to remember that defines a person, for memory is the backbone of individual experiences and interpersonal relations, of an individual`s very identity (Assman 2006, 212). If memory is the basis of an individual`s identity, then it is also the basis of the identity of mnemonic communities. And that is the essence of the politics of memory, which Moll (2013) defines as a field of action where memory entrepreneurs, mostly political and social actors, use public discourses and practices to create collective narratives of the past, which then serve to legitimate political action and develop collective identity (911).

The identity memory politics shape is usually the national one, as nationalism remains a political focus, and national identity a significant influence in the modern international community that is defined by nation states (Bell 2003, 63-64). National identities base themselves on the representation of the past, on stories of origins, history and community, making memory a prerequisite for national consolidation (Bell 2003, 69; Yefremenko 2022, 142). Assman identifies national memory as an aspect of political memory, a type of collective memory that is, in line with the above, formed by political action and aimed at creating a collective identity of a group (Assman 2006, 215-16). Bell agrees that nationalist representation of the past is very much a narrative subject to political actors and their engagement in shifting power relations (Bell 2003, 76). Assman further describes political and national memory as a form of collective memory that aims to transcend temporal limitations of individuals, the actual

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holders of memory, via various symbols and narratives, monuments, museums, archives and other tools that can be used to store information and memories of the past (Assman 2006, 215).

It is clear, therefore, that political and social actors use memory as a tool to help create a collective identity, furthermore, one that is based on aspects of the past very carefully chosen. The focus is usually on symbolical and important events and ideas, on parts of the past that support a positive self-image of the nation, regardless if the images are of triumph or victimization (Assman 2006, 217; Gusevskaya and Plotnikova 2020, 1028). National memories are, therefore, narratives that overall simplify, dramatize and selectively narrate the story of a nation`s past and its place in the world, and are very much subject to manipulation and tailored to the needs of those in power, used as a way to justify or secure their rule (Bell 2003, 75; Bernhard and Kubik 2014, 8-9). Examples could be the Russian narrative of the great patriotic war and Russia`s role in the defeat of Nazism as a way to promote it`s great power status, or Eastern European post-communist narratives of victimization and suffering during both the Nazi and Soviet eras used to build new national identities and justify the rise of new elites (Belavusau et al. 2021, 11; Torbakov 2011; 215,217). These examples invite further consideration of how different narratives of memory interact with one another, especially if they are oppositional as is famously the case in Bosnia. Returning to Russia and Eastern Europe, different narratives of the past did indeed cause tensions in mutual relations (Torbakov 2011, 211), which means that conflict over memory can and does affect international or intergroup relations.

2.1.3   *Memory conflicts and competition*

For the most part, conflicts and competitions over memory can be fought on how to remember the past as well as what to remember in the first place, and can be fought both between and within mnemonic communities, creating contested and fluctuating memory landscapes (Zerubavel 1996, 295-96; De Gloma 2015, 158). In the context of international relations, the

memory of conflicts, interstate or civil wars, and crimes abound and leave behind both visible traces and memories, which influence the relations of those involved in such happenings (Bachleitner 2024, 1). Moreover, such memories can play a role in the peacebuilding and reconciliation process, as well as influence the form of continued relations of the sides that participated in conflicts. For instance, if a country has been engaged in war and committed atrocities against another country, whether it is contrite or unapologetic, or somewhere in between, will shape how the other country views them, causing continued strife, fear and distrust or more open and normal relations (Lind 2008, 9). The same is the case within countries, Bosnia being the prime example, as the mostly unapologetic remembrance of each group towards atrocities committed on the others has caused serious tensions.

Different interpretations of the past too can be a stumbling point in international relations. The fall of communism has led to the development of new national identities, exemplified by new dominant collective memory narratives within countries not necessarily congruent with one another (Torbakov 2011, 211; Moll 2013, 911-12). As mentioned already, the antagonistically inclined narratives of Soviet tyranny in Eastern European countries went directly against the Russian narrative of the great patriotic war and its legacy, causing tensions (Torbakov 2011, 211). Within Bosnia, the three ethnic groups have each formed largely antagonistic narratives in line with their ethnonational identities creating a highly competitive memory landscape (Moll 2013, 912).

Additionally, there can exist conflict between different forms of memory. The above examples are primarily about conflict between politically formed collective narratives. However, these collective narratives ultimately consist of individual remembrance. The idea of collected memory places all the importance on individuals, and while their remembrance is undoubtably socially shaped, the more artificial structures like collective narratives are real and strong only insofar as individuals consider them such (Olick 1999, 338). Therefore, while collective

narratives can exert a strong pull, individuals can and do have memories that contradict and even challenge overarching ideas of collective memory (Bell 2003, 76-77). Denisa Kostovicova, for instance, by studying the interaction of individuals and their deliberation and discussion on conflict induced trauma, finds evidence of solidarity existing between different ethnicities in former Yugoslavia despite the prevailing narratives of ethnic divide (Kostovicova 2023, 108,133). This does not, however, mean that individuals do not usually conform to the ideas of collective narratives. For instance, Bachleitner, in her study of traumatic memory dynamics of individuals in the case of Syria, Palestine and Israel, showed that individual remembrance for the most part follows the broader pattern established by the political elites (Bachleitner 2024, 3-4,12).

What this means, is that individuals can challenge the prevailing narratives, but not necessarily, as they are shaped by their social context. On the other hand, this does indicate that individualistic, or rather bottom-up approaches to collective memory, something that, as said, is relatively undertheorized in international relations (Bachleitner 2024, 4), could be an avenue to challenge and compete with collective memory narratives, though how successful such attempts would be is questionable.

2.2 *The three modes of remembrance*

In the last several decades, memory studies and politics have, in the face of what scholars call a memory boom, gained significant traction. The memory boom signifies a growing interest in past, as well as the role it plays in shaping the present, and is exemplified by a new culture of proliferation in memoirs, testimonies, museums and monuments (Assman 2006, 210; Bell 2009, 346). Additionally, the memory boom has brought new advancements in understanding the relation between memory and politics. In particular, the recent focus on memory has led to the development of concepts surrounding the modes of remembering, especially their political

dimensions (Bull and Hansen 2016, 390). Importantly for this area, Anna Bull and Hans Hansen distinguished three generic political modes of remembrance, called antagonistic, cosmopolitan and agonistic (Bull et al. 2021, 16).

All three modes are significantly tied to the influence of trauma upon memory, as according to Bull et al. (2021), the critical role of memory in political dynamics is particularly poignant in societies with a recognizable traumatic past, such as war, genocide or colonial exploitation (14). This kind of thinking is generally in line with the broader theorizing on memory that emerged during the memory boom, as some of the main driving forces of the recent focus on the past have been the emerging interest of post-colonial and post-communist societies into their silenced and violent past, as well as growing guilt surrounding the remembrance of the Holocaust (Assman 2006, 210-11; Bell 2003, 347). It is due to this influence of traumatic past that the three modes of remembering could be a useful tool to use in analyzing collective memory in Bosnia in general, and this thesis in particular, as the case study of Srebrenica is very much rooted in the memory of a trauma. Moreover, these modes represent also a useful framework by which to tie the three above explained concepts and utilize them for the case of Bosnia. The concepts are all ultimately highly interlocked, but using the three modes can help explain both how and in which way the collective memory in societies is formed and how memory entrepreneurs engage in memory politics. Also, depending on which mode, if any, is found prevalent, it can contribute to understanding and exploring the nature of memory conflicts in Bosnia.

The antagonistic mode of remembering is based on competitiveness, on creating a conflict-free society by eradicating any existing enemies (Bull et al. 2021, 16). Antagonistic memory narratives emphasize notions of good vs evil, us vs them, and are very much nationalist in their tendencies (17). The "us" is the nation, good and heroic, victims of oppression by a foreign and evil "other", and all emphasis is put on "our" suffering, while remembrance is usually focused

on mythologized historical events and is heavily manipulated (16-17). Moreover, antagonistic memory politics and narratives are primarily employed by populist, nationalist and radical right parties and movements (Bull and Hansen 2016, 393). Additionally, memory entrepreneurs favoring antagonism can be likened to what Bernhard and Kubik (2014) call mnemonic warriors in their typology of actors engaging in memory politics (11). Mnemonic warriors tend to promote a single true vision of the past they espouse, and emphasize the difference between themselves as champions of said vision versus the hostile "other" and their untruthful vision (13), thereby fitting neatly into the dynamics of the antagonistic mode of remembrance. Mnemonic warriors, when present in memory politics, create a memory landscape that Bernhard and Kubick describe as fractured, exacerbating contests over memory (17). Taken overall, it can be said that antagonism represents the mode of remembrance that lends itself most to creating and fueling memory conflicts.

The cosmopolitan mode is universalist in character and is tied to the idea of globalization, promoting the view that the world can potentially be a united harmonious entity, based on a common culture of humanitarian values and respect for human rights (Bull et al. 2021, 17). It emerged through viewing the Holocaust as a truly transnational memory discourse and through coming to terms with the violence of authoritarian regimes of the 20th century (Bull and Hansen 2016, 391). Its emphasis is on remembering the suffering of victims on all sides, and usually sidelines historical context in favor of the universalism of human rights (Bull et al. 2021, 18). Cosmopolitanist narratives are a more contemporary mode of remembering, and are the product of political views that place the emphasis on transnational and translocal forms of belonging over nationalist ones (Bull and Hansen 2016, 391-2). An example of a global overarching cosmopolitan narrative, pushed by the mostly Western liberal international order, is the one that places the Holocaust as the global example of evil, suffering and victimhood, and whose role is to use the memory of the Holocaust as a warning against such acts of violence and for

promoting the value of human rights (Bachleitner 2024, 2). However, this backfired to an extent, as by effectively appointing what should be remembered as the prime example of trauma, it sidelined others and created a hierarchy (2). Within this hierarchy, a competitive logic arose, as various groups that suffered or are suffering from conflict and victimization tried to present their traumatic memories and victimhood as comparatively close to the Holocaust as possible, creating a bizarre dynamic of victimhood competition (2-3), which points out that cosmopolitan narratives can also contribute to memory conflict.

The agonistic mode, however, represents Bull and Hansens`s answer to the perceived shortcomings of the other two. Agonism recognizes that society is inherently conflictual and puts an emphasis on multi-perspectivism (Bull et al. 2021, 14-15). This means that agonistic memory leaves space for different perspectives, and puts opponents as adversaries respectful of each other, rather than enemies to be destroyed (16,19). There is no absolute truth in agonism, such as the cosmopolitan idea of a global identity based on humanitarian values, and furthermore, agonistic memory aims to incorporate all the perspectives, of victims and of perpetrators, of bystanders and third parties, of all sides of a conflict, as well as all parts of a society (19-20). Which is why agonistic memory places importance on historical context, on political and cultural conditions that frame a conflict, and the society that emerges from it (20-21). Essentially, it allows for different, opposing narratives understanding of one another. Traces of agonistic thinking can also be found in Bernhard and Kubick, in another type of memory entrepreneur they describe called mnemonic pluralist. Pluralists, according to them, engage in memory politics understanding that there can be multiple perspectives, and that everyone should be entitled to said perspectives (Bernhard and Kubik 2014, 13). Pluralists stand for open and respectful dialogue over competing narratives, creating through their efforts a pillarized memory landscape which is characterized by tolerance and peaceful coexistence of different narratives in a society (13,17). Overall, agonism seems to be the ideal approach to

memory, and especially to resolving memory conflicts. However, it may well be too idealistic, as such an approach is rather easier to imagine than to implement. Particularly, if conflicts are rather acrimonious, the memory involved highly traumatic, openness for an agonistic approach could be hard to find.

As said, applying these modes to the situation in Bosnia could be useful to gain a better overall understanding of collective memory issues there. The main questions then are which modes are present in Bosnian memory landscape, and could any be described as dominant. The next chapter will give the historical context of memory issues and lay out the trajectory of memory politics as a way to answer the above questions in regard to Bosnian elites, while the social media analysis will do the same but will look more to the bottom-up perspective of the wider public opinions.

3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CASE STUDY

3.1 *The Bosnian War and the Srebrenica Genocide*

The Bosnian War of 1992-1995 was one of a series of interconnected conflicts that marked the destruction and dismemberment of Yugoslavia. The war caused more than 100 000 deaths, both military and civil, though the number remains disputed, and displaced more than two million (Jenne 2010, 378; Subotić 2013, 275-76). The conflict fanned out along mostly ethnic lines, and turned nationalist in character (Hadzic 2022, 41), coalescing into three primary fighting sides: Bosnian Muslims/Bosniaks, Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats. Even prior to the break-up of Yugoslavia, emerging nationalist political leaders used memory as a way to enhance ethnic differences, using the remembrance of World War II and the unresolved tensions thereof to mobilize support among their groups (McConell 2018, 335-36; Duijzings 2016, 150; Halilovich and Adams 2024, 4-5). The violence that erupted only further solidified ethnic lines of differentiation, especially in Bosnia, where the three ethnic groups share relatively equal power (Kostovicova 2023, 19).

Among many cases of violence and crime that happened in the war, Srebrenica in particular stands out. A relatively small town in Northeastern Bosnia, Srebrenica was the site of significant infighting between the Serbs and Bosniaks, and was declared a UN safe zone in March 1995 (Duijzings 2016, 155). In July of 1995, the Army of Republika Srpska (RS), the Serb entity in Bosnia, attacked and overran the Srebrenica zone, and, in a planned military action, in the period from the 11th till the 19th of July that year perpetrated perhaps the most violent crime of that conflict, killing about 8000 Bosniak men and boys (Mulaj 2017, 131; Subotić 2022, 72; Halilovic and Adams 2024, 12). This event was one of the turning points in the war, as it led the great powers, particularly the US, to interfere more forcefully to stop the

violence (Mulaj 2017, 132). In December of 1995, the Dayton Peace Agreement was signed ending the war.

The Dayton Agreement divided the country into more or less ethnically homogenous entities, the Bosniak-Croat Federation and the Serb Republika Srpska, while at the same time securing significant international involvement in the peace building process, especially in the early years (Jenne 2010, 378-79; Kostić 2012, 654). In terms of Srebrenica, it became an important matter in several trials processed by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), which was created for the purpose of dealing with crimes against humanity committed during the Yugoslav wars. It was the ICTY that in several trial processes, most notably perhaps those of Radovan Karadzic, the former president of Republika Srpska, and Radislav Krstic, a Serb general, determined that what happened in Srebrenica was a genocide, though the contention remains highly contested on the Serb side (Obradovic-Wochnik 2009, 61; Mulaj 2017, 131).

Before moving to the next section, for purposes of clarity it is important to note, tying into what was said in the introduction, that while the Bosnian War involved three primary fighting sides, each with their own narratives and ways of remembering, since the thesis focuses on Srebrenica, the collective memory of Bosniaks and Serbs will be the primary focus, as these groups are important when it comes the case study, with little to no attention being given to the Croat side.

3.2 Collective memory dynamics in Bosnia

When it comes to the matter of memory in Bosnia, Ethno-nationalist politics prior to the war as well as the ethnically charged violence during it led to the creation of opposing, antagonistic and mutually exclusive narratives of remembrance about the war and the role each side played (Kostić 2012, 653). The Dayton Agreement, being essentially a compromise with no winner or

loser, effected a division of Bosnia primarily along ethnonational lines based on the notion of the three constituent peoples, which served to legitimize these narratives and led to their perpetuation over the following decades (Kostić 2012, 653-54; Moll 2013, 911). These narratives then served as a tool in the shaping of new national identities that emerged as an important political aim in the countries of former Yugoslavia, with national ideologies replacing communist ones as the backbone of the state (Moll 2013, 912).

One of the problems of memory in Bosnia is that there is no dominant collective memory narrative, as there usually is in other countries including the neighboring Croatia and Serbia, but several different ones, whose ethnonational character places emphasis on their respective group, denying wrongdoings during the war and reserving empathy mostly for the suffering of co-ethnics, while vilifying the ethnic other, all of which creates a dynamic of competition, and even a sort of continued war over the dominant narrative (Moll 2013, 912; Hodzic 2015; Kostovicova 2023, 2). The competition is openly endorsed by the political elite of each ethnic group (Kostić 2012 654), with the dominant ethnonational parties like the SDA, SNSD or HDZ being major players. To compound matters, while the ethnonational narratives are dominant, they aren`t the only ones competing, with the international community in the form of the OHR often interfering, as well as the narratives propagated by actors like the Social Democratic Party (SDP), which is the strongest political party representing itself as moderate and less nationalist in its leanings (Moll 2013, 912). Moreover, the narratives appear to have entrenched themselves significantly in public opinion. For instance, Kostic showcases through surveys conducted in 2005 and 2010 how most of the respondents conformed to the ethnonationalist views of the war, with each group believing that only their side fought a purely defensive war, or Serbs calling it mainly a civil war while the Bosniaks and Croats considered it an aggression (Kostić 2012, 655-57). Another example of societal polarization, clearly enforced by the political elite and used for entrenching narratives, is the fact that different history textbooks

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have been used by each group, with Serbs and Croats importing theirs from Serbia and Croatia respectively (Subotić 2013, 274).

In the competitive dynamics of the Bosnian memory politics, the main parties mostly use tools such as commemoration, memorials, museums and investigative commissions as a way of propagating their views, with Srebrenica as a prime example. Srebrenica has been the subject of much division, and one of the main examples of antagonistically inclined memory politics in Bosnia. Bosniaks took a stance of severe victimhood, starting an annual commemoration of Srebrenica as early as 1996, emphasizing above all else the word genocide and using practices like the burial of victims and monuments in the Srebrenica area to gain recognition for the event, and even to paint Republika Srpska as a blood and genocide fueled creation (Pollack 2010, 132-33; Duijzings 2016, 157; Miller 2006, 313-14). The Bosniak SDA party became the main organizer of the commemoration events, joined in 1999 by the Mothers of Srebrenica civil organization, and continuously used nationalist and victim-oriented discourse to promote the remembrance of Srebrenica as a cornerstone of modern Bosniak identity (Rawski 2021, 2-3). The Serbs focused on denying and downplaying the event, promoting instead their own victims (Miller 2006, 315). On the other hand, the OHR and international community attempted to impose a more universalist and cosmopolitan approach, emphasizing national cooperation and respect for all (Rawski 2021, 7-8). Ironically, it was the OHR that secured the building of the main Srebrenica monument at Potocari, a village near Srebrenica, intending for it to be a space devoid of nationalist undertones (11). Moreover, it was international pressure that forced Bosnian Serb leaders to officially recognize the severity and scale of Srebrenica via a commission, even resulting in an apology from RS leaders in 2004 (Subotić 2022, 75). Bosniak elite, also under pressure, developed a less antagonistical discourse in its commemorative practices around this time (Rawski 2021, 8), making this period a relative high point in efforts toward reconciliation.

Unfortunately, it did not last long. Rawski details how Bosniak leadership essentially hijacked international efforts, by building a more subtle nationalist rhetoric over time, using religious practices to emphasize the martyrdom of the Srebrenica victims (Rawski 2021, 9-15). The Serb leadership also quickly continued in its practice of denial, financing different commissions, and creating counter memorials for Serb victims in ethnically Serb villages around Srebrenica that were attacked by Bosniaks during the war, such as Kravica and Bratunac, to discredit the claims of genocide, downplay the number of victims and placing the emphasis on Serb victimhood (Subotić 2022, 75-76). In 2021 the OHR went as far as to officially criminalize genocide denial, but instead of backing down, this time the Serb political establishment pushed back and continued with its practices, even enacting their own laws criminalizing the description of Republika Srpska as a genocidal creation (Moore 2022; Halilovich and Adams 2024, 14). While Bosniak political rhetoric around Srebrenica focuses on delegitimizing Republika Srpska and, in extreme cases, painting Serbs as murderers, the Serb rhetoric focuses on painting Bosniaks as liars and themselves as victims, while genocide denial serves as one of the ways in the broader policies of delegitimizing BiH and painting it as a failed state (Rawski 2021, 17; Subotić 2022, 76).

It is clear from the above that collective memory and memory politics in Bosnia remain antagonistical on all sides, pretty much in the way that Bull and Hansen described antagonistic mode of remembering, shaped by the country`s political elite, most of whose members seem to take on the role of mnemonic warriors when engaged in memory politics, especially when it comes to Srebrenica. Moreover, the attempts by the international community to impose a cosmopolitan mode have also mostly floundered. In some cases, civil organizations, NGOs and local social actors have tried to follow a more inclusive path to collective remembrance, such as the RECOM initiative, which aimed at providing information about and justice to all victims of Yugoslav wars, though that was on a regional level encompassing organizations from all

former Yugoslavia, or more local ones like the *Because it Concerns Me* initiative that started in Bosnian city of Prijedor which attempted to commemorate all victims of the war regardless of ethnicity (Vučkovac 2021, 245-48). However, for the most part, existing research indicates that the ethnonational narratives, which dismiss the ethnic other and lean heavily on the antagonistic mode, remain dominant among the wider public. To check this, the social media analysis will serve as a possible way to review the public discourse and what narratives seem to be prevalent.

4 SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYSIS

4.1 Justification

The initial question to answer before continuing with the analysis is why do a social media analysis in the first place. As said in the introduction, the role of the analysis is to research the opinion of the public on the topic of Srebrenica. Therefore, in a sense, the analysis of social media content serves as the replacement of the role that a survey would usually fulfill in similar research. This in itself isn`t a new practice, as Schober et al. point out (Schober et al 2016, 181), and researchers have increasingly been using data from social media in their studies.

Doing such an analysis has, of course, both its strengths and drawbacks. One of the major drawbacks is that, unlike surveys, social media analysis is not tailored to cover the breadth of the population, as we cannot be certain representatives of the major demographic groups will be included in the content the researcher mined from social media (Schober et al 2016, 184). Other problems include things such as social media bots, trolls or fake profiles and how to account for them, stemming from the fact that it is generally hard to ascertain how truthful social media users are in the information, or indeed the lack thereof, that they provide in their profiles. Nevertheless, such pitfalls are not necessarily critical, and there are certainly advantages to preforming a social media analysis. For one, there is a wealth of data that can be accessed, both easily and quickly. This played a part in this thesis, as it is questionable whether it would be doable to construct and then conduct an official survey in various different geographic locations in Bosnia, not to mention much more time-consuming. Furthermore, a large enough sample could ensure that a wealth of opinion as well as users from different demographics would presumably be involved. For instance, this analysis primarily focuses on comments generated by the gathered posts, which number several thousand, which also reduces the likelihood and danger of fake profiles, bots or trolls making up the majority of said

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comments. Furthermore, a number of profiles connected to the comments was analyzed, and most appear to be real users. On Facebook, the majority of commenters use what appear to be their real names, and their repeated activity and postings such as photographs or personal information and captions lend credence to the assumption[3]. Twitter/X was somewhat harder to discern as most commenters used nicknames, but a review of continued postings as well as range of personal opinions expressed showcased that here too most profiles appeared to be genuine. There were several that appeared fake, with no discernable information or posting activity, but they were in minority. That said, discerning fake profiles/bots/trolls is relatively hard as well as truly ascertaining the information the users display, so they remain a danger in these kinds of analysis that should always be looked out for. Also, the discussion on social media may well be franker in terms of opinions expressed, as survey respondents are generally more time-pressed to give an answer or can feel the need to present themselves in a positive light, and tailor their response accordingly (191). The same could apply to social media users, but the pressure is generally not as great, and is even more lessened by the relative anonymity and distance created by an online environment.

Another dimension to a social media analysis concerns more the aspect of memory. Social media can be used in memory production on a both individual and collective level (Bartoletti 2011, 82). Users of social media post content of their daily lives, but also engage in online remembrance and commemoration of significant past events, such as the Srebrenica Genocide, and can therefore actively participate in the creation of collective memory around such events. Indeed, social media has made it much easier for people to engage in discussion with one another on a very large scale, sharing opinions and beliefs on various topics, especially important ones. It is such discussion that the analysis focuses on, looking to gauge the public

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[3] The profiles that were checked this way were all public and all personal information gleaned was that which was made visible by the social media users themselves

opinion on the topic of Srebrenica, but also the main memory narratives that surround the discussion of the event as well as which modes of remembrance can be found.

Moreover, a social media analysis in conjunction with this particular topic has not been conducted, so it presents an interesting angle to take. A tendency of the research around the topic of memory in Bosnia seems to be using surveys, focus groups or examining the official policies and the discourse of politicians and mass media (e.g. Kostić 2012; Moll 2013; Mijić 2018; Rawski 2021; Subotić 2022.) While useful, such methods rarely allow for the examination of how individuals of different ethnic backgrounds interact in a discursive manner regarding topics connected to memory. Social media shines here as it allows people to engage in discourse and deliberation in various topics, including contentious ones, with the contents of such discussions easily available. Moreover, as said above, the analysis will in this sense be a replacement of a survey as a way of gleaning aggregated individual opinions, on gaining a bottom-up perspective on memory in Bosnia, and will serve as a way to specifically approach collective memory from Olick`s collected or individualistic point of view. Rather than official symbols and political rhetoric, it will be the analysis of individual opinions and discussion among many different individuals that will be the basis of discerning which collective memory narratives are dominant and how collective memory affects interethnic relations. Furthermore, if it is relatively clear that official political discourse on memory in Bosnia is in general antagonistic, then a viable path for researching the possibilities of a more diverse and agonistic approach could be analyzing the aforementioned discussions of individuals of different backgrounds, similarly to Kostovicova`s (2023) analysis of the RECOM deliberations.

4.2 *Methodology*

The analysis follows the example of Birkner and Donk`s research (2020), which also included a social media component. They dealt with a specific event, the renaming of a square in a

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German city, and the online debate it sparked on Facebook. They gathered 20 posts from a particular Facebook group and analyzed their content, as well as the comments they garnered, via a qualitative content analysis. This analysis uses slightly different parameters as well as method than Birkner and Donk`s, but generally looks to their paper as an inspiration.

The analysis was conducted on 26 different posts, which together amount to a total of 5070 comments[4]. The posts themselves come from a range of actors active in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Serbia. The original intention was to use only posts generated by sources from Bosnia, but the topic and discussion of Srebrenica usually transcends boundaries between the two states, especially as the Serbian nation as a whole has been inextricably linked to Srebrenica since the very beginning. Also, the posts, independent of origin, clearly attracted commenters from both countries. These actors include prominent politicians, news media agencies, organizations, journalists and academics, namely people and actors whose opinions are widely propagated and hold weight, and who actively engage in memory politics and therefore help construct the narratives around the event. A smaller number of posts also come from less official sources, such as Facebook groups or random people who posted on the subject, and whose posts garnered attention. The main parameter for choosing the posts was that they need to be representative of both main sides in the debate: Bosniak and Serb. They also needed to represent a range of opinions on the topic. Therefore, the posts that were looked for were those that had each side express their view on the subject; one side attacking or disparaging the other and vice versa; posts showing solidarity, or respect and condolences for either side; posts with a nationalist/ethnic character or posts that can generally be seen as provocative.

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[4] A list of all the posts, including relevant links will be provided in the appendix

The entire thesis is based on qualitative research, and the method employed here is a qualitative discourse analysis (QDA). Discourse can be seen as a way of constructing knowledge about a particular topic, and can contribute to the production/reproduction of social and political orders, so it is the point of the QDA to understand the role of discourse and the effects it can have (Alejandro and Zhao 2024, 462; Birkner and Donk 2020, 377). The content of the posts is looked at, but more importantly, the comments they generated is analyzed in depth. The goal is to try to ascertain main present memory narratives and opinions about Srebrenica among the wider public, so the posts that are analyzed are recent ones, taken from Facebook, X and Instagram, mostly concerning the 2024 anniversary of the event or the UN Resolution about Srebrenica from May of 2024, though there are some that date back several years. The analysis tries to distinguish some main and common themes attached to the topic, what beliefs about Srebrenica permeate the public opinion, but also the quality of discourse surrounding the topic. This is why analyzing comments is highly important, as there are thousands of them, representing a number of commenters that ranges from hundreds to even thousands. There are certainly people that commented more than once on the same posts, or commented on several of the posts analyzed, though it is hard to ascertain the exact statistics due to the large amount of numbers involved. Ultimately, the discourse analysis is employed on the discussion in the comments with the goal of identifying main themes associated with Srebrenica within the wider public discussions, and to assess the quality of the discourse about the topic, what elements it contains, for instance if it is deliberative, argumentative, open to differing opinions, polite and respectful or insulting and aggressive.

4.3 Findings

4.3.1 Abundance of discussion

The first question for this analysis is how prevalent is the discourse surrounding the topic, and the one thing that is undeniable about the Srebrenica Genocide is that it remains very widely

discussed across various forums. This analysis focuses on only 26 posts, but that is primarily due to time constrains, as a larger sample would have been much more unfeasible. In the process of finding the posts to analyze, an initial list of around 150 posts was created, before it was downscaled to create the sample. What has to be kept in mind is that what was targeted were more recent posts, and still ample discussion was found, not to mention that these were just the ones that fit the specific parameters, and that much more could also be found. Even so, the number of comments in these posts exceeds 5000, and therefore presents a significant amount of discourse. Moreover, the discussion in the comments was far from one-sided, with members of both ethnicities engaging both among themselves and with each other in more or less equal numbers.

The primary conclusion that can be formed is that discussion around the topic of Srebrenica on social media is very prevalent and a lot of attention is paid to it, engaging a truly large number of actors, both those societally prominent and members of the wider public. This largely confirms one of the initial postulations from the introduction, namely that the memory/remembrance of the war is an important aspect in Bosnian interethnic relations. Furthermore, this is in line with the results of other research, for instance a survey and special report conducted by the United Nations Development Programme in BiH (UNDP BiH) in 2013, which found that most of Bosnian citizens consider what happened during the war to be highly important in their present everyday lives (UNDP BiH 2013, 15-16).

4.3.2   Polarization

After going over the posts and the comments, it is clear that the discourse around Srebrenica is highly polarized. This is not a surprising conclusion, but the analysis proves rather strongly that there is a clear divide between Bosniak and Serb version of the events around Srebrenica. This in turn confirms and supports the views from previously mentioned authors such as Kostić (2012) and Moll (2013), that there is no dominant collective memory narrative, but, in this

case, two opposing and conflicting ones. While not all of the commenters actually engage in discussion, with a significant portion, especially in neutral posts or ones expressing solidarity or sorrow for the victims of Srebrenica, mostly leaving one line comments or emojis expressing their agreement with the sentiment, when discussion does revolve around individuals of different ethnicities, most of the time it consists of each side accusing the other of propaganda and lies, and considering their own beliefs the true ones.

There is, though, nuance and levels to the polarization around Srebrenica, with difference in the opinions ranging from some rather serious extremes to what could be described as civil disagreements about the nature of the event. More than once a phrase along the lines of "coexistence is impossible" appeared in the comments on both sides, though not with great regularity. A large number of Serb commenters proclaimed support for the notion of Republika Srpska`s secession from BiH, while a significant amount of Bosniak ones expressed opinion that Republika Srpska should be abolished or that Serbs in Bosnia should leave for Serbia. These are more extreme opinions, but alarmingly, they do not appear to be too small a minority. What has to be kept in mind, though, is that Srebrenica is perhaps the most extreme case resulting from the war, so tensions aren`t surprising. However, Srebrenica has been the cornerstone of memory politics and debates for the last thirty years, especially pertaining to the application and denial of the word genocide (Duijzings 2016, 163-165; Subotić 2022, 76). On the other hand, more than once commenters brought in other grievances from that period in the discussion, as well as more historical ones, dating back to the Second World War or even the 19th century, marking Srebrenica as only one aspect of a broader framework of unresolved memory issues.

4.3.3 Bosniaks – decrying the denial

When it comes to the main common themes that could be discerned in the discussions in the comments, there are several that dominate. To begin with, for Bosniaks the acknowledgement

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of genocide seems to be paramount, as what happened in Srebrenica is seen as perhaps the most grievous wound from the war. Most Bosniak commenters on social media tended to attack, sometimes quite viciously, any denial or downplaying of the genocide, much like Miller (2006) observes is a tendency in more formal forums, like academia and politics (313). A number of posts analyzed dealt with the UN Resolution 78/282, which officially declared the 11th July to be the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica, and which the Bosniak commenters expressed an almost universal support for. A number expressed the desire to go even further, by raising an international suit against Serbia for the aggression on BiH perpetrated in the 90s. Also prevalent is anger at Serb counterclaims about Srebrenica, at accusations that Bosniaks blow Srebrenica out of proportion, with many commenters insisting in discussions that it was Serbs who exaggerated the number of their dead, and use propaganda to paint themselves as the victims and slander other sides. This trend of anger at Serb denialism can be likened to Lind`s (2008) points about apologetic and unapologetic remembrance. Essentially, Serb denials and even glorification of the crime, which can be seen in some comments, invokes not just feelings of anger in Bosniaks but of hostility as well, and creates a backlash against denialism (Lind 2008, 13). Though she talks about states and the role of their official remembrance politics in relation with other states, parallels can be clearly inferred in Bosniak-Serb interethnic relations.

Associated with this theme is the notion that Bosniak views and beliefs generally tend to be supported by the international scene, and especially by the findings of the ICTY, whose judgments have often been cited as conclusive proof by Bosniak commenters. As one post by a prominent politician remarked, the view of Srebrenica as a genocide and the total number of its victims (over 8000), the main points around which the Bosniak side of the discourse revolves around, is supported by a recognized international legal framework, which more or less grants legitimacy to such views according to the sentiments expressed by Bosniak

commenters. Such line of thinking, particularly of the ICTY findings, has been long present, with Bosniaks considering ICTY rulings to be both relevant and factual (Kostić 2012, 658-58; UNDP BiH, 23).

4.3.4 Serbs – denial and unacknowledged victimhood

When it comes to the Serb side of the debates in comments, one of the prevalent common themes is indeed denial of the genocide, though not necessarily of a crime. This is where the nuance to polarization comes in, as a significant portion of Serb commenters do believe Srebrenica to be an atrocity, even a war crime. Most rarely touched upon the topic of genocide, but when the issue was pressed, majority of Serb commenters did not believe that a genocide occurred. The reasons for this varied, but the most common include arguments over the definition of a genocide, belief that Serbian nation does not deserve to be labeled as genocidal, or belief that the number of victims in Srebrenica was grossly exaggerated by Bosniaks. Indeed, a good number of Serbian commenters expressed exasperation at the continued "over usage" of Srebrenica, believing it to be blown out of proportion, and showed a prevalent view that there is some sort of scam when it comes to the number of victims. Some thought the number exaggerated, others leveled accusations that dead Bosniaks were brought from all over the country to be buried there or that it was Bosniak forces that killed the victims, all with the intent of blaming Serbs. For the most part, such beliefs, especially about the number of victims being inflated or some of the named casualties even being alive follows official Bosnian Serb rhetoric, propagated in official forums like the academia or mass media (Subotić 2022, 76).

Denial and downplaying of crimes against Bosniaks are tied in to another most recurring theme presented by Serb commenters, one that in the comments seemed even more prevalent, which is that the majority of them expressed belief that little attention is paid to Serb victims of the war, something most expressed some degree of bitterness over. The most common example are the supposed 3300 Serbs killed by Bosniak forces in the villages near Srebrenica in 1993,

that they claim nobody answered for. Some even proclaimed that a genocide did happen, but against Serbs. Most commenters, even when expressing solidarity for Bosniak or other victims, drew attention to purportedly unacknowledged Serb victims, suggesting this to be a strongly felt view among Serbs. Connected to this is a general air of distrust and disdain that seems to exist on the Serb side toward the international community. The UN resolution about Srebrenica was widely condemned, and though ICTY was rarely mentioned, it was almost never in a positive light. Here, a reverse of the situation among Bosniaks can be observed, as the general feeling towards ICTY and its judgements among Serbs in Bosnia and outside has long been low with significant disapproval (Milanović 2016, 240-41, 253). By and large, Serbs and their political establishment consider ICTY proceedings to have been unfair and biased against them, as the largest number of indictments were against Serbs (Milanović 2016, 242; Moore 2022).

It is also important to add that Bosniak responses to this feeling of unacknowledged victimhood was generally negative, expressing disbelief or, paralleling Serb responses to Srebrenica, downplaying the number and suffering of Serbs during the war. Unsurprisingly, and again in parallel to Bosniaks, the cavalier approach to Serb victims caused backlash of anger and hostility among Serbs.

4.3.5 Tone of the discourse

In terms of the quality and the tone of the discourse, there is much that can be said. Many of the comments, of course, did not qualify as a discussion, consisting of one or two sentences that did not garner responses or of emojis. For some of the posts, the discussion was mostly one-sided in favor of commenters from only one ethnic group. In terms of openness, many people felt no qualms about expressing their opinion, even if the responses were belligerent, exemplifying social media`s role as a place where all can generally be heard.

The discussion could be called argumentative as well, as many commenters listed arguments in favor of their expressed opinions, but what was generally lacking was openness to actually discuss opposing opinions, especially if they fundamentally clashed, which seems to be the case often when it comes to Srebrenica. There wasn`t much deliberation either, as the tone of the discussions was mainly negative, and, more often than not, turned openly hostile and aggressive. It was common for discussions between Bosniak and Serb commenters to devolve into fights, with insults, some quite reprehensible, and threats as well, of violence, sexual assault and even another war. Moreover, though the discussion mostly revolved around the single event of Srebrenica, a significant amount of generalization and stereotyping based on ethnicity could be observed, with members of any group making derogatory comments about the opposing group as a whole, such as some Bosniak commenters calling all Serbs criminals, or Serb ones calling all Bosniaks liars.

However, what has to be noted is that there were certainly respectful discussions, even when commenters disagreed on opinions, though not all discussions were disagreements or fights. People of both ethnic groups found common ground in expressing sorrow and solidarity for the victims of an atrocity, or in regretting and decrying the war as a whole. Such instances happened even when differences of opinion were present, exemplifying a willingness, at least by some, to engage in civil and tolerant discourse. This civility and tolerance mostly centered around acknowledging that both sides suffered during the war and in finding solidarity for all victims. Nevertheless, these kinds of discussion were in minority. Moreover, a trend even in more civil discussions can be noticed, in that when issues such as applying the word genocide or which side suffered more came up, the differences in opinion diminished any kind of continued mutual understanding and agreement.

Ultimaltely, the tone of the discourse, even when only between members of the same ethnicity, remained for the most part antagonistic, with one side attacking the other, even on posts that

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might generally be seen as neutral or conciliatory. Overall, relatively little understanding by both sides has been shown for opposing opinions, pointing out that the differences may well be fundamental, and that tension is more than likely to spring from them. Therefore, the public discussion on memory, at least of Srebrenica, much like the elite level memory politics, can be said to align mostly with the antagonistic mode of remembrance.

4.3.6   Memory politics

As a final addendum to the findings, a consideration should be given to the continued engagement of political and influential actors in memory politics in the sphere of social media. It is ultimately unsurprising that actors engaging in memory politics will use social media, as its various platforms allow them to spread their views to a large number of people quickly and efficiently, something that is already becoming a practice among politicians, parties and movements (Birkner and Donk 2020, 368). This is why most of the posts analyzed came from prominent politicians, news agencies or organizations, as their opinions hold weight and are propagated widely, as it serves as a way to investigate how they help create opposing narratives.

For instance, in two posts by Milorad Dodik and Nenad Nesić, powerful Bosnian Serb politicians, there are direct examples of memory politics. Dodik spoke out against the UN Resolution, calling it illegitimate and undemocratic, and also against the notion of calling the Serbian nation genocidal, purposely linking calling Srebrenica a genocide with insulting all Serbs. Nesić went even further, openly calling the happenings at Srebrenica a manipulation, mentioning that allegedly 500 people on the list of victims were actually alive. When it comes to the Bosniak side, two posts, by Elmedin Konaković and Zeljko Komsić, who is a Croat but openly against genocide denial, which spoke out in favor of the UN Resolution, make digs at Serbian views, calling the adoption of the resolution a victory of the "civilized" world. Komsić openly called the "opposition's" opinion as irrelevant and meaningless and entreated them to turn a new leaf, more in line with the civilized part of the world. Here, it can be relatively well

observed how political actors take on the role of mnemonic warriors, defending their "true" views over the "false" ones of the other side, perpetuating the antagonistic mode. Posts by news agencies generally tended to be neutral, but few that are linked directly to one ethnicity or the other made derisive or sarcastic content negatively painting the opposing side. By and large, the divide in proponents of different narratives can be clearly seen.

5   DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1   *Implications of the analysis*

When considering the findings of the social media analysis, it can be observed that they remain largely unsurprising, or rather, mostly in line with prior understandings of memory issues in Bosnia. Political and social actors propagate different narratives, engaging in memory conflict and outright manipulation of collective memory, meanwhile the opposing narratives cause significant polarization in Bosnian society. In its role of gouging public opinion, the analysis showcased that the wider population is largely receptive to the collective memory narratives propagated at the top. Such finding also mostly conform to previous research, like the previously mentioned surveys conducted by Kostić (2012), which showed that respondents of each side viewed it as the one in the right and putting most of the blame on the ethnic others, or the interviews of a diverse group of individuals done by Mijić (2018), where she ascertains that silence regarding the crimes committed by the "in-group" is the norm, with the most accepted being the heroic narratives glorifying the group (145-46). As an indicator of individual beliefs, the social media analysis clearly showed that the opposing ethnonational narratives hold major sway in the opinions of thousands of commenters and that said narratives seem to be highly pervasive in public opinion. As said earlier, in such an analysis it cannot be certain that the breadth of the population and its demographic groups was covered, but the number of commenters can reasonably lead to assuming that the conclusion above can be applied to wider Bosnian population.

In its other role of observing how individuals of different ethnicities interacted with each other on social media, the analysis also indicates some conclusions. Most glaringly, the interaction and discussion were more often than not negative and hostile in tone. Taking into account the guiding research question of this thesis, which was if researching how the memory of

Srebrenica is represented, especially in the wider public discussion, a better understanding of the impact of collective memory on ethnic tensions in Bosnia can be gained, then the analysis clearly indicates that the impact is by and large negative and contributes to furthering said tensions. Again, this is not necessarily a surprising conclusion, but the analysis of the discourse on social media paints a bleak picture. Thirty years from the end of the war, and different narratives of remembrance cause people to write on social media, where everyone could potentially see, some very heinous insults and threats toward members of the opposing ethnic group, openly talking of even more war and death, justifying the atrocities that happened or wishing for new ones. A clear connection between issues of contested memory and ethnic tension in Bosnia can be seen, with the ongoing conflict over different remembrance of the past translating into a cause of continued interethnic hatred.

Returning to the framework of the three modes of remembering, the Bosnian memory landscape can therefore be generally described as antagonistic with the opposing narratives locked in a conflict, leaving little space for mutual understanding. This conclusion seems to be the accepted consensus when it comes to the memory politics and those engaging in them in Bosnia (Moll 2013, 930). What this thesis aimed to contribute to is understanding how much the top-down narratives seep through in wider public opinion and what it means in terms of interethnic discourse. Taking the approach of collected memory, where collective remembrance is seen as an aggregation of individual opinions within a group, it seems that the narratives of collective memory do hold significant sway in those opinions, when accounting the thousands of comments that were part of the analysis. Individuals ultimately give meaning to the overarching narratives, and can even oppose them, but if they are entrenched, it remains hard to do so. In Bosnia the narratives have been spread through propagandist rhetoric, monuments and commemorations for thirty years, and seem to be more prevalent than not in public discussion. In terms of interethnic discourse, and its ability to shape collective memory

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from the bottom-up, it appears that here too the antagonistic mode prevails as much as it does in the political arena. The implications are not favorable, as they assert collective memory competition between the different groups to be a significant contributor to continued tensions, with the added problem that a viable solution for the issue can be hard to come by.

5.2 Optics for the future

Antagonism apparently prevails, but the question could be asked about the possibilities that potentially exist to overcome the issues of memory, possibly through the medium of the other two modes, cosmopolitanism and agonism. As already said, not all the discussion and discourse in the analysis was so bleak or antagonistic. A number of people engaged in civil and deliberative discourse, even found common ground, mostly when expressing sentiments of honoring and showing solidarity with the suffering of victims. A portion of commenters did not actually engage in any kind of discussion, simply showing support or sorrow in the posts that dealt with the victims and their suffering. This showcases that there could be some common ground to be found in the interaction of different ethnic groups, possibly by emphasizing a more cosmopolitan narrative that acknowledges the suffering of all victims and the rights of those victims. On the other hand, cosmopolitanism as a mode of remembrance in Bosnia has been actively promoted by the international community through the OHR and various international NGOs for decades as a counter-narrative, but found little official support, and ended up mostly incorporated by the local memory entrepreneurs in their antagonistic approaches (Bull et al. 2021, 26; Ferrándiz and Hristova 2021, 60).

Moreover, as mentioned in the conceptual framework, the overarching cosmopolitan narrative and its idea of the Holocaust as pinnacle of evil usually creates dynamics of victimhood competition, and it is precisely this that the local Serb and Bosniak memory entrepreneurs did, likening their group`s suffering to the Holocaust, using the cosmopolitan framework as a way

to gain recognition for themselves and delegitimize the other side (Miller 2006, 313; Subotić 2022, 78-79). Largely in line with this, a trend could be observed in the analysis where the discussions that started with acknowledging the suffering of all victims ended up as disagreements over which side suffered more. The discussions remained civil as long as the polarizing issues of unacknowledged or denied victimhood and crimes were avoided, but this was a less common occurrence, with most of the discussions turning to these issues eventually. Overall, while a more cosmopolitan mode of remembering may be possible, little traces of it were found in the analysis.

Agonism, on the other hand, is envisioned as multi-perspective, encouraging, at least theoretically, different, even opposing, narratives to interact less antagonistically. But that poses the question of how to ensure such an approach. For Bull and Hansen, and others leaning on their theory, agonism should achieve its goals through exposing the constructed nature of memory and the tensions it creates (Bull et al. 2021, 17; Ferrándiz and Hristova 2021, 60). That, however, is easier said than done, and in Bosnia there doesn`t seem to be much in the way of agonistic initiatives, at least according to Ferrándiz and Hristova (60). Some attempts do come to mind, with the potential to be agonistic, such as the already mentioned RECOM deliberations that Kostovicova analyzed. Thousands of people of different background from across the former Yugoslavia engaged in discussion, and she finds evidence of high-quality deliberative discourse, that, despite acknowledged differences in ethnic identity, shows respect and acceptance of the ethnic other (Kostovicova 2023, 108-9). Another example might be the Museum of War Childhood in Sarajevo, which, through the lenses of children irrespective of their background and their experience of the war, aims to challenge the divisive nature of the competing narratives (Takševa 2018, 5,8-9). According to Vučkovac (2021), *Because it concerns me* initiative from Prijedor was also instrumental in opening up space in that town for a more inclusive discussion when it comes to memory (248)

However, if the findings of the analysis are taken as indicative of wider public opinion, these initiatives, while certainly helpful, haven`t had that great of an impact. For one, all the mentioned examples have been present for over a decade, and yet there doesn`t seem to be much change in this analysis from the aforementioned findings of Kostic or Mijić. For instance, the deliberations that Kostovicova analyzed happened in 2011, and haven`t been repeated since. What has to be taken into account is that all these examples have faced serious opposition from the entrenched political memory entrepreneurs. The museum`s funding, at least at the time of Takševa`s article, came primarily from international donors (Takševa 2018, 9). RECOM`s deliberations resulted in an attempt to form a regional fact-finding commission, which was frustrated and blocked by a lack of support from the leading political circles, not just in Bosnia, but in other countries of the region (Kostovicova 2023, 31-32).

Ultimately, however, bottom-up initiatives of dealing with contested collective memory present the main feasible way of challenging the antagonistic and divisive narratives, short of overhauling the Bosnian political landscape, which does not seem likely to happen any time soon. Bell (2003) maintains that memory, especially individual, can challenge mainstream narratives (76-77), so perhaps then the aforementioned examples can be seen as a way to move towards a more inclusive and agonistic approach to memory in Bosnia, albeit rather slowly. Collective memory is an ever-changing process, so it might be possible, but the question in Bosnia is one of probability. Overall, the antagonistic narratives seem to have already entrenched themselves in individual opinions, with little evidence for openness to a more pluralistic and multi-perspective approach, which can present a lasting problem in Bosnian interethnic relations. The analysis of the social media interaction does not instill much hope for the optics of dealing with divisive collective memory in Bosnia and its negative effects on ethnic tension.

5.3   Conclusion

This thesis aimed at contributing to a better understanding of the connection between memory and ethnic tension in Bosnia, through public and interethnic discussion on the topic of Srebrenica. The primary conclusion is that the collective memory of Bosniak and Serb mnemonic communities interacts mainly antagonistically, both on the elite level but also on the broader societal one, which contributes to tensions between the groups. However, some limitations of this research should also be acknowledged. First off, the social media analysis focused solely on discussions related to the issue of Srebrenica, the most infamous event of the Bosnian War. This also means that the thesis largely dealt with memory dynamics between Bosniaks and Serbs, which leaves out the Croats and their relations with the other two and vice versa. Additionally, the posts that were chosen for research, while allowing for the analysis of abundant and important interethnic discussions and individual opinions of a large number of people do not, as already mentioned, necessarily cover the beliefs of the population as a whole. The posts, especially those coming from politicians, but also other public figures whose opinions on the issue at hand are widely known, might have drawn mainly those people likely to agree with the propagated views to comment, or contrastingly, those that are belligerently hostile to said opinions. Essentially, the question here would be if changing the parameters chosen for this research would have led to different or similar conclusions.

Answering such a question might be the focus of future research on the topic. Using different parameters, such as a different set of posts, or analyzing social media content from earlier periods, not just the last few years, or focusing on different events and aspects of collective memory in Bosnia that would incorporate all three ethnic narratives could reveal the situation to be more nuanced than this research indicates. On the other hand, if one considers that elite level memory politics are mostly antagonistic even outside of issues related to Srebrenica, as the review in the third chapter showcases, then using alternate parameters may not lead to all

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that different results. As said, the conclusions drawn from this thesis paint contested memory as a rather serious issue and politically propagated memory narratives as pervasive in public opinion, and while there is doubt, the results of the social media analysis could be taken as indicative of views held by the majority of the population. Nevertheless, an avenue of further research does exist, especially through social media analysis, which has proven effective in gleaning broader societal opinion and allows for important observations in intergroup discourse, and might lead to better understanding of problems of collective memory in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and how to combat them.

6 APPENDIX

The following content lists the 26 posts used for the social media analysis, provides links for each post and a brief description. All posts came from public accounts, and they will be grouped according to the social media platform they originated on.

<u>Facebook posts:</u>

Post 1

Link: https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1BTKC24Kdv/

Origin: SENSE Centar, a transitional justice center that documents all things related to the work of the ICTY; posted July 10 2020

Description: a post with a video of excerpts from ICTY trials related to Srebrenica, highlighting the role of the so-called "unwilling" witnesses, former Serb soldiers, policemen and civil servants obligated to appear during the trials. Comments: 19

Post 2

Link: https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=977649295608849&set=a.143247312382389

Origin: Bakir Izetbegović, a very prominent Bosniak politician; posted July 11 2015

Description: a picture of Mr. Izetbegović during the 20th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide. Comments: 31

Post 3

Link: https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=1678242035665921&set=a.409543145869156

Origin: Abdulah Sidran, a prominent, though now deceased, Bosniak writer. The post was made on his Facebook page during his life on July 11 2020, and both the page and the post remain publicly accessible

Description: Mr. Sidran acknowledges the 25th anniversary of the Srebrenica Genocide. Comments: 35

Post 4

Link: https://www.facebook.com/AJBalkans/posts/pfbid08sjckFUGiwkGoPUTEGPRvQ86oaVGyt HSNbP9UpZDKTKnc6T19X2wWSaCxaxFtkN2l

Origin: Al Jazeera Balkans, a branch of the Al Jazeera Media Network, based in Sarajevo, covering happenings in the countries of former Yugoslavia; posted July 11 2024

Description: the post is the headline of an article that deals with the 2024 anniversary of Srebrenica and its commemoration in the UN, following the adoption of the Srebrenica Resolution. Comments: 30

Post 5

Link: https://www.facebook.com/dinokonakovic.narodipravda.ba/posts/pfbid0Q54VynBWfgT4xS4 RwoSaG8VUPe3JS9rKqU78iF2E6ic2f1jMFquPMTPPeA1toyrBl

Origin: Elmedin Konaković, a prominent Bosniak politician; posted May 23 2024

Description: Mr. Konaković talks about the UN resolution on Srebrenica. Comments: 77

Post 6

Link:
https://www.facebook.com/www.bhrt.ba/posts/pfbid029BePVVzFPCxZ8G6qRfF45keUaoH
pFWn6ZbiuXuJAdEJS7WRHCmL6DzFMHUR6J1njl

Origin: BHRT, a Bosnian news agency; posted on May 23 2024

Description: the post is the headline of an article that talks about the Bosnian Serb president Milorad Dodik`s reaction to the UN Srebrenica Resolution. Comments: 83

Post 7

Link:
https://www.facebook.com/GlasSrpske/posts/pfbid02SXgutUc7XSw84byyGE26iBKGYrdM
JtM9Thcnc2FCP3PjzxbFZANrVrVExdun8ZjJl

Origin: Glas Srpske, a Bosnian Serb news agency; posted on July 11 2021

Description: the post is the headline of an article that covered the 2021 commemoration of the Srebrenica genocide. Comments: 114

Post 8

Link:
https://www.facebook.com/rtrs.vijesti/posts/pfbid02oELxScAN27VkQxpgzjvpYDNgzE8eA6
pKzLG1YKzPQwnKANuQ75oxmFhPKqiepEXZl

Origin: RTRS Vijesti, a Bosnian Serb news agency, posted on July 11 2024.

Description: the post is the headline of an article that talks about tensions caused by statements of Bosniak politicians during the 2024 anniversary of Srebrenica. Comments: 125

Post 9

Link:
https://www.facebook.com/NezavisneNovine/posts/pfbid02PXAtAcYFzKsWawm1KhV1oV
Z6hMas77g1S4rM4NCgw2KXX8atfmohLJjGvJtZDNU2l

Origin: Nezavisne Novine, a Bosnian news agency, posted on May 23 2024

Description: the post is the headline for the article that details the adoption of the UN Resolution 78/282 about Srebrenica. Comments: 136

Post 10

Link:
https://www.facebook.com/oslobodjenjeba/posts/pfbid02AEoWRkzwRzz657syporV3pBuVR
GMHhCgAx1XBMxErNXu2vvhuHVq8NTBGFLtUZPLl

Origin: Oslobodjenje, a Bosniak news agency, posted on July 11 2024

Description: the post is the headline for an article that deals with the statements made by Milorad Dodik as a reaction to the 2024 Srebrenica commemoration. Comments: 151

Post 11

Link:
https://www.facebook.com/dnevniavaz/posts/pfbid0ct8L1y3B8kAiN12NuY3ZfL3nvCNJ5Qs
C8hYzp6jusoHXNA17F1RLDiYRSmDhBQWal

Origin: Dnevni Avaz, a Bosniak news agency, posted on July 11 2024

Description: the post is the headline of the article that deals with how the Serbian media covered the 2024 Srebrenica commemoration. Comments: 159

Post 12

Link:
https://www.facebook.com/zeljkokomsic.df/posts/pfbid02ztuEv8kBGcimgJGn3RjzoqPZaQu
WVxukZMYnaEEzghXUfLvRhACuioUVBc12vA5al

Origin: Zeljko Komsić, a prominent Bosnian Croat politician, posted on May 23 2024

Description: Mr. Komsić made the post in the wake of the UN Srebrenica Resolution, essentially hailing it as laudatory and needed. Comments: 192

Post 13

Link:
https://www.facebook.com/zeljkokomsic.df/posts/pfbid02ztuEv8kBGcimgJGn3RjzoqPZaQu
WVxukZMYnaEEzghXUfLvRhACuioUVBc12vA5al

Origin: a Facebook page called "Made in Bosnia", with around 150 000 followers, posted on July 10 2024.

Description: the post expresses sorrow for the Bosniak deaths caused by the Bosnian War, especially in Srebrenica. Comments: 243

Post 14

Link: https://www.facebook.com/share/v/16EhaF3F37/

Origin: Dragan Bursać, a prominent Bosnian Serb journalist, posted July 11 2020

Description: Mr. Bursać expresses his sorrow for all the deaths in the Srebrenica Genocide, calling for a minute of silence during the 2020 anniversary. Comments: 258

Post 15

Link: https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1GGa7sqeBR/

Origin: UN IRMCT (International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals), posted July 10 2022

Description: the post expresses solidarity and respect for the women of Srebrenica and their suffering. Comments: 1048

Post 16

Link: https://www.facebook.com/share/v/165qbg7dfK/

Origin: RTRS Vijesti, a Bosnian Serb news agency, posted on July 11 2024

Description: the post captions a short video which showcases the pictures of Serb war victims being put on the road towards Srebrenica during the 2024 commemoration. Comments: 1241

X/Twitter posts:

Post 17

Link: https://x.com/RajnovicVesna/status/1811268531620634859

Origin: Vesna Rajnović, a relatively prominent journalist writing for several portals, including Al Jazeera Balkans, posted on July 11 2024

Description: the post showcases the user`s appreciation for the work of "Zene u Crnom"(Women in Black), an organization of Serbian women that have for years condemned the Srebrenica Genocide. Comments: 36

Post 18:

Link: https://x.com/SrebrenicaMC/status/1794045919924539729

Origin: Srebrenica Memorial Center, posted on May 23 2024

Description: the post celebrates the adoption of the UN Srebrenica Resolution. Comments: 37

Post 19

Link: https://x.com/AhmooL/status/1811325240766521638

Origin: Ahmo Mehmedović, a Bosniak genocide researcher, posted on July 11 2024

Description: the post commemorates a young Bosniak boy murdered during the fall of Srebrenica in 1995. Comments: 63

Post 20

Link: https://x.com/franjoninic/status/1811429457783058865

Origin: Fanjo Ninić, a Bosnian Croat Catholic priest, posted on July 11 2024

Description: the post showcases a photo of Mr. Ninić with Montenegrin Orthodox priests, during the 2024 commemoration of Srebrenica. Comments: 85

Post 21

Link: https://x.com/OlgicaRajkovic/status/1794351136079523901

Origin: Olgica Rajković, a twitter user from Serbia, with over 10 000 Twitter followers and posting mainly on political topics, posted on May 25 2024

Description: Ms. Rajković denies the Srebrenica Genocide, pointing out the unacknowledgement of Serb victims. Comments: 89

Post 22

Link: https://x.com/Nesic_Nenad_/status/1793279694919385289

Origin: Nenad Nesić, a prominent Bosnian Serb politician, posted on May 22 2024

Description: Mr. Nesić implicitly denies the genocide in his post, by pointing to supposed manipulations around the number of victims. Comments: 124

Post 23

Link: https://x.com/ArduanaPribinja/status/1811359485232902636

Origin: Arduana Pribinja, a journalist, posted on July 11 2024

Description: Ms. Pribinja expresses her respect for a Serbian activist that came to the 2024 Srebrenica commemoration. Comments: 161

Post 24

Link: https://x.com/MSrebrenice/status/1793664913283621147

Origin: "Majke Srebrenice" (Mothers of Srebrenica), a very prominent Bosnian civil organization, posted on May 23 2024

Description: the post celebrates the adoption of the UN Srebrenica Resolution. Comments: 223

Post 25

Link: https://x.com/biljanicaaa/status/1811060832073077203

Origin: a twitter user from Serbia going simply by the name Biljana. She has over 13 000 followers, and appears to comment and post mostly around political topics. The post was made on July 10 2024

Description: the caption simply states that what happened in Srebrenica was a genocide. Comments: 251

Instagram posts:

Post 26

Link: https://www.instagram.com/p/C7UTyfUNSvM/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRl ODBiNWFlZA==

Origin: Milorad Dodik, a very prominent Bosnian Serb politician, posted on May 23 2024

Description: Mr. Dodik denounces the UN Srebrenica Resolution. Comments: 59

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