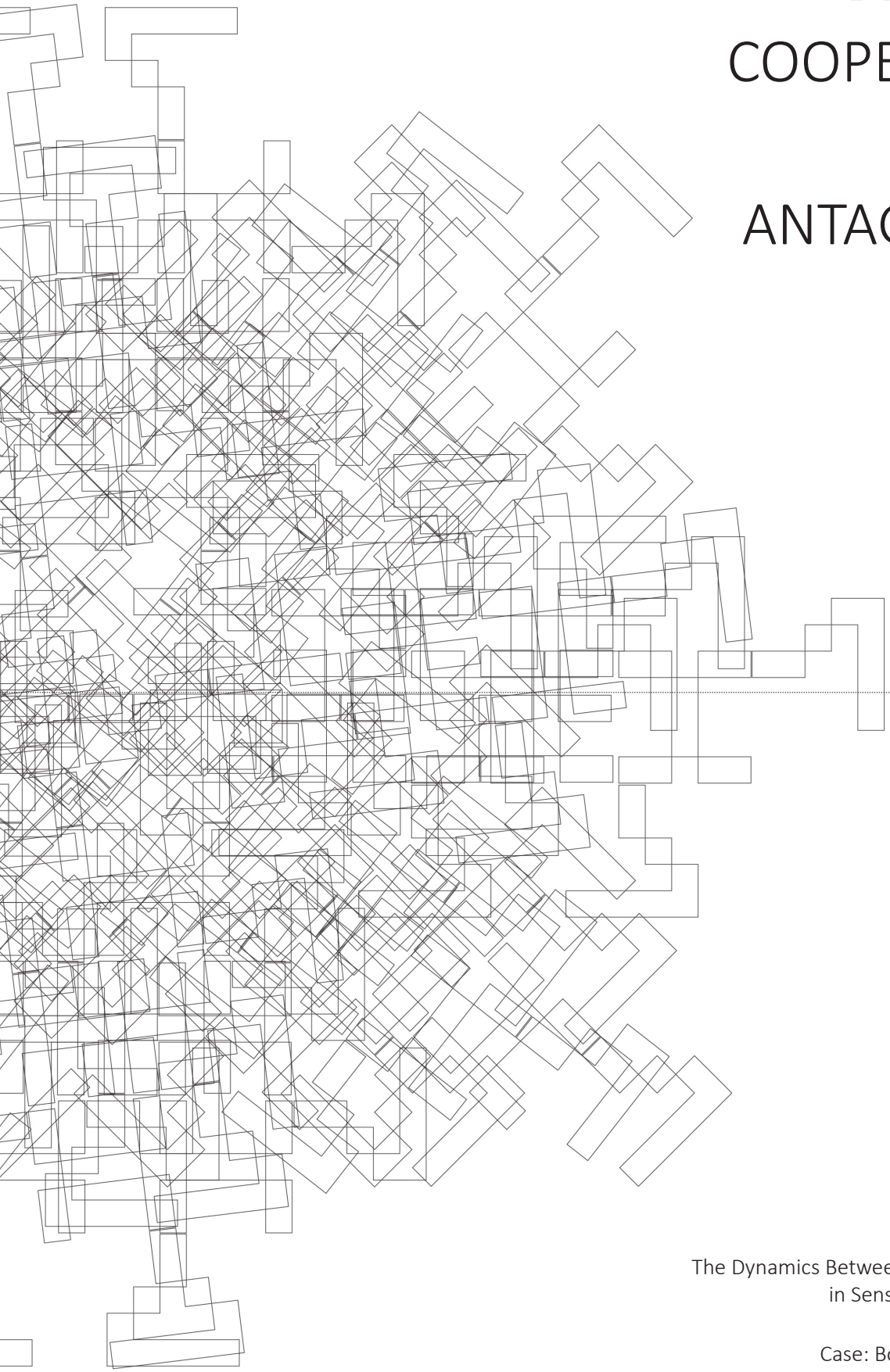
BETWEEN COOPERATION AND ANTAGONISM



The Dynamics Between Religion and Politics
in Sensitive Political Contexts

Case: Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Final Report

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ACRONYMS

BiH Bosnia and Herzegovina

CC Catholic Church

CSO Civil Society Organization

FBiH Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

HDZ Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina

ICBH Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina

IRC Interreligious Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina

RS *Republika Srpska*

SDA Party of Democratic Action

SDS Serb Democratic Party

SOC Serbian Orthodox Church

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following report outlines the findings of desk and field research carried out in 2013-2014 to assess the dynamics between religion and politics in contemporary Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). Situated in a sensitive post-conflict political and social context, this study aimed to investigate the role of religious leaders in the processes of peace building, reconciliation, interreligious dialogue and their contribution to the development of civil society and restoration of social capital in BiH. To mirror the observed differences in the past activities between lower and higher levels of religious leadership, the research was conducted in two phases - Phase I targeted local communities and their grassroots leaders, while Phase II paid attention to higher leadership of religious and political authority. The field research was carried out in six locations across the country, where twenty-three persons in total were interviewed.

The purpose of this report is to provide a community-based perspective on the current capacities of local religious leaders for civil society integration, as well as a better understanding of a general context in which a complex dynamics between religion and politics takes place in BiH. Therefore, the report and policy advice are mainly addressed to international decision makers and officers working in international and foreign governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations engaged in BiH, as well as to international and local consultants, researches and other activists in the field of interreligious cooperation.

Interreligious relations at the grass roots are good, while the balance between cooperation and antagonism mitigates persistent ethno-religious divisions

Interreligious relations in local communities are better than often perceived. Yet, these social interactions produce just enough balance between cooperation and antagonism that is necessary for everyday life. Local religious leaders (sometimes assisted by municipal authorities) maintain this balance by controlling the image of religious communities, while structural ethno-religious divisions are not challenged. Occasional incidents, like attacking holy sites, are thought of as isolated cases, not as something of a systematic nature. The conflict is therefore suppressed rather than resolved. By emphasizing the quality of cooperation at the local level and by minimizing antagonisms coming supposedly from higher authorities, local religious leaders bridge a gap between grassroots needs and higher decision-making instances.

Although satisfactory, countrywide interreligious relations are highly influenced by ethno-antagonistic political sphere, while higher religious leadership act in concert with exclusivist identity politics

Although interreligious relations across BiH in general terms are also estimated as good, these relations are influenced by general political setting, which is basically ethno-antagonistic. Interreligious relations at higher levels are more of a symbolic than of a substantial nature. Unlike the local religious leaders who are active in grassroots interreligious projects, religious leaders at higher levels tend to address their own congregations only, and to play a

protective role exclusively for their adherents. Since these coincide in most cases with ethnic denominations, religious leaders are forced into the camp of identity politics. Politicians and representatives of civil society organizations (CSO) are critical of such an attitude. They deem that symbolic resources of higher religious leaders have been insufficiently used to promote religious tolerance. Many of religious leaders are aware of this problem, though, and are looking for a way out, but these "identity protective" practices are apparently too well established to break.

Confessional religious education to remain in public schools in spite of its role in the segregationist educational system

Insistence on the need to keep up confessional religious education in public schools curricula is an issue where common understanding between politicians and religious leaders seems to be the firmest. Out of twenty-three respondents, only two think that this course should not be part of public schools curricula. Yet, it is about a power to be gained through the manipulation of the public education system, rather than a genuine need to teach the students about religious issues. Although a number of respondents were critical against the segregation of students during religious education classes, there is poor awareness that the introduction of this kind of syllabus into public schools curricula, which have already been ethnically segregated, created a problem in the first place.

Religious education classes cannot mitigate youth violence based on ethno-religious hostility

In practical terms, current religious education program cannot contribute to the improvement of interreligious relations. Apparently, these classes transfer only general knowledge on a particular religion, but they do not offer enough space neither for moral upbringing (in the spirit proclaimed by a particular religion) nor for learning facts about other religions. For this reason religious education cannot prevent youth violence, which is often singled out as the agency behind the attacks on holy sites. Religious leaders tend to deny their own responsibility for poor effects of these classes by blaming "dysfunctional family" and "corrupted society" in which young people grow up, thus making a link between religious education and its outcome incoherent and basically an ideological one.

Widespread misconception about the civil society and misunderstanding of democratic values and principles

Majority of respondents share a great level of misconception about the role of the civil society. This is, however, a general phenomenon in BiH, even among the members of civil society themselves. This misconception can be attributed to a lack of understanding of democracy and its principles in general. Mutual misunderstanding is evident between religious communities, CSOs and politics, indicating that the three sectors operate in the mode of antagonism. There is also an ideological aspect to this problem. Major religious communities and political parties are considered to promote "traditional values," and from this position they both are suspicious of CSOs that are considered to stand for "liberal values."

Relations between religion and politics are very complex due to religious heterogeneity and fragmentation within the political sphere

Relations between religion and politics in BiH are very complex due to a high degree of heterogeneity in each of these sectors. Not only are there three major "traditional" religions, which all share a sense of historical memory of the past times when one or another was an established religion, but each of them is hierarchically structured in a complex manner. These religious communities sometimes act as "parallel societies" disconnected from the general public sphere, as pointed out by one respondent. As far as the politics is concerned, besides a huge number of formally registered political parties,[1] there are many temporary coalitions and fractions, while a political spectrum of different values between them is rather limited. In terms of the state constitution, there are thirteen more or less autonomous governmental entities at the sub-state levels in BiH.

Disconnection between lower and higher religious leadership results from strict top-down approach by higher authorities and from greater reliance on personalities than on the system

Although a level of disconnection between lower and higher religious hierarchies was indicated in Phase I, respondents in Phase II affirm the existence of well-established channels of communication within religious communities, both top-down and bottom-up. However, higher instances seem to favor a top-down approach rather than paying attention to the complaints of lower instances. There is a complex network of hierarchs and institutions based on special canonical regulations of each religion. What is important to note is that vertical communication within religious structures often depends on specific local situation, minority-majority relations and on the personalities at stake, indicating a lack of systematic efforts and a neglect of institutional formalities.

Concept of ethnicity at the core of both religion and politics in BiH

The key concept around which ideological affinity between religion and politics has been built is the concept of ethnicity, which in its simplest understanding means a relationship "between groups whose members consider themselves distinctive,"[2] and where this distinction is often believed to be unbridgeable. Due to geopolitical and historical reasons ethnic identity in BiH evolved from religion, so one should be aware of such ethno-religious collective identities. For similar reasons, modern politics operates as ethnopolitics or politics of (ethnic) identity. Having such an ideology at their core, main narratives and practices of both religious and political actors exhaust themselves in the idea of biological security or even survival ("protecting our people"), which also involves identity rebuilding and reshaping. Although almost none of the respondents question these "ethnic" links between politics and religion, most of them are critical towards the other pole within their own "ethnicity" (religious leaders towards politicians and vice versa).

[1] In early 2014 there were almost 200 political parties registered legally in BiH; cf. SEEbiz, "BiH sa 183 političke stranke rekorder u regiji", January 20, 2014, accessed September 19, 2014, http://www.seebiz.eu/bih-sa-183-politicke-stranke-rekorder-u-regiji/ar-80337.

[2] Thomas H. Eriksen, "Ethnicity, Race, Class and Nation," in John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith ed. *Ethnicity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 28-30.

Post-socialist transition context

Following the collapse of Yugoslav "self-management socialism" and the liberalization of the public sphere, "ethnic" political parties and "ethnic" religious communities jointly ventured with the aim to conquer this public space and to take the power. This can be seen as a mutually instrumental and pragmatic move, while at the same time the living memory of the recent war (1992-1995) continues to be abused in order to determine these religio-political relations. Additionally, religious communities still struggle to discover and articulate their own identities in the period of post-socialist transition and in the context of a pluralistic society as well as of the global challenges.

Status quo expected in short-terms, but organized interreligious gatherings, especially at the grass roots, may bring about improvements in long-terms

In essence, interreligious relations in BiH can generally be characterized as a matter of power relations. Having in mind the prevailing opinion of the respondents that new political forces are needed for the country to move on, and that these should not continue with "nationalist-chauvinist" agenda, one may think that this strong "ethnic" link has been to some extent exhausted. However, the respondents seem to expect an evolution within and re-composition of power among the existing establishment sometimes in the future, rather than an appearance of genuinely new political forces bringing about a social change and systematic engagement to improve interethnic and interreligious relations. In short-term, therefore, a continuity of maintaining a balance between cooperation and antagonism in interreligious relations will probably remain a dominant practice. For a long-term development of these relations not much can be said, because almost none of respondents thinks in terms of future perspectives. This lack of conceptualization of the future may be attributed to a certain level of fatalism expressed in many of the respondents' answers. On the other side, positive role of organized interreligious encounters between (especially young) people in the public sphere has to be marked as crucial for the improvement of interreligious relations, which represents perhaps the only starting point for building a long-term trust between different groups and makes integrative processes possible.

From above conclusions, the actors wishing to engage religious leaders in the future projects should be advised as follows.

Policy Advice

Based on the results of this research, we can offer a general advice and some general recommendations that are mainly addressed to international decision makers and officers working in international and foreign governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations engaged in BiH, as well as to international and local consultants, researches and other activists in the field of interreligious cooperation.

General advice:

- One should be advised that religious leaders at the grass roots are mostly constructive, pragmatic and willing to participate in interreligious activities, but their superior

hierarchies make ultimate decisions and may even obstruct such projects. In contrast, higher religious leaders are more passive and preoccupied with religious and administrative matters of their own community; their engagement in interreligious projects tends to be symbolic and formalistic, but ultimately their approval is necessary.

- Social and political processes are running within a complex dynamics between religion, ethnicity and politics. Therefore, any intervention to act towards the interreligious sphere should be undertaken after a detailed contextual analysis at the grassroots level. It means to get acquainted with local social, economic and political situations as well as local stakeholders and hierarchies, formal as well as informal.

- Be also aware of the persistent ethnic link between religion and politics in BiH, which may have negative effect on any future projects aimed at interreligious peace building and reconciliation. The reason for this lies in the fact that the political sector in BiH is mostly governed by politics of ethnic identity, which is basically exclusivist and even antagonistic. Hence the more religious communities are aligned with such kind of politics the less they have capacities for interreligious cooperation.

Recommendations for actors involved in the educational reform processes and civil society developments:

- Confessional religious education in public schools enjoys almost a unanimous support by local respondents. For this reason, any attempt to intervene in order to change the state of matters in this sector, at least in the foreseeable future, is doomed to fail, because one would have to face the entire religious and political establishment as opponents.[3]

- What can be done however is to improve the content of this syllabus. To be more specific, it means to avoid stereotyping of one's own religion as well as religion of others, and to stress the importance of ethical content when engaging social intercourse with persons of other ethnic or religious background. An example for such an action would be to recognize universalistic or humanistic potentials of religion, such as elaborated in the "Declaration Toward a Global Ethic"[4] so to include them into the religious education programs.

- The antagonism between the civil society, political parties and religious communities, which has been detected during this research, poses a great challenge for future development of interreligious relations as well as for BiH as a state aspiring to access the European Union. The very notion and role of the civil society is still unclear among the members of all three sectors. Furthermore, some CSOs are closely linked with the ethno-political establishment, so they can hardly act as moderators of democratization processes.

[3] In 2011, Minister of Education of Sarajevo Canton issued a decision to exclude the mark gained in the religious education course from the general mark given to students at primary and secondary schools at the end of a school year, with a motiff to equalize the students not attending these classes with those attending it. Although this measure was not aimed to question the concept of confessional religious education in public schools as such, it was fiercly opposed by the religious and political establishement, including the Minister's own political party. Shortly thereafter, the Minister resigned his post.

[4] "Declaration Toward a Global Ethic" is an interreligious declaration drafted initially by Hans Küng, in cooperation with the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions. Drawing on many of the world's religious and spiritual traditions, the declaration identifies the Golden Rule: "What you wish done to yourself, do to others!" as "unconditional norm for all areas of life" and a number of essential affirmations as shared principles essential to a global ethic.

- Therefore, programs aiming to popularize the term "civil society", to explain its function, or to develop a strategy to strengthen civil society will be highly useful for all social and political actors in BiH.

Recommendations for donors and program developers in support of interreligious cooperation:

- A tacit embargo on financial support to religious communities by many donors is evident and it needs to be reconsidered. It is a risky area, but in order to organize visible interreligious activities in the local communities funds have to be available.

- Within that context the role of the Interreligious Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina (IRC) should be instrumental; it might act as a communication hub between donors and specific needs at the grass roots. The idea to open local branch offices of IRC across BiH seems to present a good opportunity to expand interreligious activities at the grassroots level and should be supported. Still, financial support should be given on condition that IRC activities include local CSOs as partners and that such projects are truly committed to bringing about social change.

- Should IRC undertake such a role in the future, it would still rely on professional support to strengthen its strategic and operational capacities.

Recommendation for further research:

- Results of this study do not clearly show the level of real influence of religious leaders on social and political change. In order to determine this level, it is required to conduct further studies.

What is of utmost importance is that all the above advices and recommendations presuppose a kind of engagement that is sensible to local situations and contexts and that involves long-term commitment. To expect visible results to occur within a typical short-term project-cycle, given a highly complex social setting where such changes are looked for, will be unrealistic.

INTRODUCTION

Framing The Research Plan - Why A Study On Religion And Politics?

Since the devastating wars in the Western Balkans during the last decade of the twentieth century, the role of religion in war and peace has been a recurring topic in political and academic discourse. From the mid '90s several initiatives, such as the establishment of IRC in 1997, were launched to engage religious institutions and leaders in the processes of dealing with the past and of restoring social capital. Yet over the past twenty years only a handful of studies were conducted to shed a light on religion's actual influence on peace and reconciliation processes.[5] In the literature and reports on the subject, arguments were often made on positive suppositions rather than on systematic research based on empirical studies and lessons learned.

This study on the nexus of religion and politics in BiH was planned to be conducted in two phases in order to mirror one of key research questions, namely a possible difference between higher and lower religious leaders (clergy) and of their functions, interests and engagement in inter-ethnic/religious[6] activities. The question closely relates to the observations conducted over time of rather passive IRC on one hand and quite active interreligious engagement of local religious leaders in several multi-religious communities on the other, which became apparent during the project "A Universal Code on Holy Sites."[7]

It is a well-known fact that religious institutions and their leaders influence public opinion in BiH. Yet there is less clarity on what that influence really encompasses. As a European country with secular political history (especially since 1945), BiH and its public are by no means predominantly religious. Secular lifestyle is the dominating feature in most urban centers and towns in the country.[8] For many people religion serves as a community or ethnic identifier for which religious practice is confined to sporadic visits to the place of worship or participation in traditional rituals in connection with birth, marriage and death.[9]

[5] See for example George R. Wilkes et al., *Factors in Reconciliation: Religion, Local Conditions, People and Trust. Results From a Survey Conducted in 13 Cities Across Bosnia and Herzegovina in May 2013* (Sarajevo: Center for Empirical Research on Religion and the University of Edinburgh, 2013); cf. Zilka Spahić-Šiljak et al., *Baseline Study: Women and Peacebuilding in BH* (Sarajevo: TPO Foundation, 2012); cf. Renata Stuebner, *USIP Peace Briefing: The Current Status of Religious Coexistence and Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Washington D.C.: The United States Institute of Peace, 2009).

[6] As this study shows in the following chapters, the distinction between ethnic and religious identity in BiH is often blurred, sometimes even to the extent of their mutual indistinguishability. According to the World Values Survey in 2001 there was "almost perfect correlation between national and religious identities" in BiH; cf. Ana Hacic-Vlahovic, "(De)Secularization in Bosnia-Herzegovina: An Examination of Religiosity Trends in a Multi-Ethnic Society," *Amsterdam Social Science* 1, No. 1 (2008): 82. Hence, we use in this text the compound expressions like "inter-ethnic/religious", "multi-religious/ethnic" or similar.

[7] The Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights, "A Universal Code on Holy Sites", accessed November 22, 2013, http://www.oslocenter.no/en/projects/a-universal-code-on-holy-sites.

[8] At the time of this research the most comprehensive data on religious demography in BiH could still be found in the results of the population census conducted in 1991, in the context of SFR Yugoslavia. At that time majority of BiH population claimed some sort of religious affiliation with less than 6% declared "atheists". Yet, it is unclear what that self-identification actually entailed beyond ethnic or traditional identity. Details on religious statistics can be found in *Etnička obilježja stanovništva, rezultati za Republiku i po opštinama 1991, Statistički bilten 233* (Sarajevo: Zavod za statistiku Republike BiH, 1993), 14.

[9] A recent empirical study of (de)secularizing trends among the Bosnian Muslim population (a sample of 500 persons self-

Yet religious institutions claim that all forms of observance are increasing especially among younger generations.[10] Younger believers who grew up after the war have experienced more religious freedom. By and large many communities in the country have faced a level of religious mobilization.[11] As a result of such development, political actors have continuously exploited ethnic and religious identities in their search for voters. On the other hand, some religious leaders have been active in pursuing outright political goals. A case of former Grand Mufti Mustafa Cerić, who used to give public statements concerning the constitutional reform process in BiH in the past, while more recently he ran as a candidate for the Presidency of BiH during the general elections in 2014, is a telling example of a complex dynamics between religion and politics.[12] Highly conflicting nature of some religious institutions in BiH can be also seen in the case of a century-long dispute between the Catholic Episcopate and the Franciscans over the administration of parishes, which culminated in 1996 when local Franciscans in Čapljina physically prevented the Bishop of Mostar Ratko Perić to enter the local church with his diocesan priests.[13]

A new population census was conducted in the first half of October 2013, in the period of time when this research was taking place. As this was the first census in BiH after the dissolution of Yugoslavia, it was highly politicized through the public discourse and the media (see Annex 1).[14]

Purpose Of The Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the dynamics between religion and politics and to investigate whether or to what extent this dynamics fuels or shapes inter-ethnic/religious tension and ultimately segregation/integration of the civil sphere in BiH. Moreover, interviews with selected participants allowed the research team to identify and map religious actors who can contribute constructively in the ongoing integration processes, such as inter-ethnic

identified as having "background in BiH and in Islam") showed that in contrast to 92,6% who believed in God (*Allah*) and 82,6% who declared as "religious", less than 32% prayed every day, 38,7% fasted throughout the month of Ramadan, 36,2% expressed no intention to conduct pilgrimage to Mecca (*hajj*), almost 50% rarely or never read Kur'an, and around 30% had little or no confidence in the institution of the Islamic Community in BiH; cf. Dino Abazović, *Bosanskohercegovački muslimani između sekularizacije i desekularizacije* (Zagreb and Sarajevo: Synopsis, 2012), 117-38.

[10] U.S. Department of State, Diplomacy in Action, "Bosnia and Herzegovina: International Religious Freedom Report 2007", accessed February 6, 2014, http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/2007/90167.htm.

[11] Higher religious mobilization especially among younger generations is often explained within the theoretical framework of desecularization of former socialist societies after 1989, reflecting the global "counter-secularizing" trends as proposed by Peter L. Berger in his paper "The Desecularization of the World: A Global Overview," in Peter L. Berger ed. *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (Washington D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1999). Relying on the World Values Survey data Hacic-Vlahovic presents the rise of religiosity in the post-war BiH from 69,8% in 1998 to 74,3% in 2001; cf. Hacic-Vlahovic, "(De)Secularization in Bosnia-Herzegovina," 80. In contrast, however, the recent WIN-Gallup International "Global Index of Religiosity and Atheism 2012" shows that the percentage of the people in BiH who self-identified as religious actually decreased from 74% in 2005 to 67% in 2012, again following the global trends of decreasing religious self-identification as detected in this survey.

[12] Mustafa Cerić won 33 882 votes (4,5 percent) for the Bosniak member of the Presidency of BiH at the 2014 general elections; cf. Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina, accessed November 7, 2014, http://izbori.ba/Utvrdjeni2014/Finalni/PredsjednistvoBiH/Default.aspx

[13] "Župa Sv. Franje Asiškoga - Čapljina," Item 17., accessed November 7, 2014, http://www.cbismo.com/index.php?menuID=103

[14] A research conducted by the Association Alumni of the Center for Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Studies of the University of Sarajevo revealed that non-mandatory census questions on "ethno-cultural characteristics" (including religion) were politicized to the detriment of statistically more important socio-economical aspects of the census; cf. Sead S. Fetahagić et al., *Popis 2013 u BiH: Ekonomska, socijalna i politička analiza* (Sarajevo: ACIPS, 2013).

dialogue programs of the Nansen Dialogue Centers conducted in politically sensitive local contexts in BiH.

For the purpose of this study we identified two roles that religion might play in Bosnian political sphere: a) religion can be used by politicians to achieve political goals or influence within a specific ethnic/religious group, or b) religion can be employed by religious leaders to achieve what they perceive as religious end on the political arena, e.g. traditional family laws; special rights for religious groups, etc.

Moreover, the study seeks to compare the role of lower vs. higher religious leadership emphasizing their influences on inter-ethnic/religious relations.[15] The reason is the following. While higher religious leaders have participated in IRC, which was established by the World Conference of Religions for Peace in 1997, their contributions in dealing with the past and eventually promoting a genuine interreligious cooperation have been limited. For many years IRC struggled to keep all its members in the fold with both Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC) and Catholic Church (CC) temporarily freezing their participation.[16] Positive declarations notwithstanding, higher religious leaders have over the years continued to conform to the ethnic-religious divide that dominate the general political and social climate in BiH.[17] Religious leaders on top level of J. P. Lederach's "pyramid of actors and approaches to peace-building"[18] seem generally locked into their positions[19] taken by virtue of their high public profile when dealing with the perspectives and questions of the conflict.[20]

Yet, since 2010 IRC has been involved in a pilot project, supported by the Norwegian Government, seeking to prevent attacks on holy sites in BiH.[21] The Nansen Dialogue Centre in Sarajevo, key partner in this study, has been responsible for reviewing the pilot. In the final project review they noted what was viewed as a surprisingly constructive mode of pragmatism displayed by local religious leaders involved in the process. A point of departure for this study is thus the question of local religious leaders' role in accommodating inter-ethnic/religious relations on the ground. These leaders, experiencing daily the social reality of their community, feel perhaps a stronger need to develop and maintain good relations across religious divide compared to their senior leaders. The latter, on the other hand, live in major urban centers with concentrated political power and can perhaps "afford" pursuing the language of interreligious/ethnic hostility. Essential points of departure for this study are thus observations and field data collected throughout the process of this pilot project from 2010-2012.

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[15] The "Baseline Study" on women and peace-building published in 2012, which had been conducted in 15 cities of BiH with the set of 14 questions about peace-building and peace actors, shows that most informants think that religion, religious communities and local religious officials in BiH have not contributed to peace; cf. Spahić-Šiljak et al., *Baseline Study*..., 84.

[16] Ingrid Vik, "Dialogue in the Name of God. Religious Actors in the Making of War and Peace", in Anne Stensvold ed. *Western Balkans: The Religious Dimension* (Oslo: Sypress, 2009).

[17] Christian Moe, "Religion in the Yugoslav Conflicts: Post-War Perspectives", in Tore Ahlbäck ed. *Exercising Power: The Role of Religions in Concord and Conflict* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2006).

[18] This concept lays out three major categories of leadership in the context of peace-building processes: top level, middle range and the grassroots, along with approaches and activities conducted by leaders as well as a number of affected populations in relation to each of the three levels of leadership; cf. J. P. Lederach, *Building Peace – Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 38-39.

[19] By "position" in this context Lederach refers to "almost static viewpoints about solutions that are demanded by each side in order to resolve the conflict"; cf. Ibid., 40.

[20] Zilka Spahić Šiljak, *Sjaj ljudskosti: Životne priče mirotvorki u Bosni i Hercegovini* (Sarajevo: TPO Fondacija, 2013), 16.; cf. Lederach, *Building Peace...*, 40.; cf. Neven Andjelic, *Bosnia-Herzegovina, The End of a Legacy* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), 140, 157.

[21] The Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights was the applicant, while IRC was the implementing partner of the process. Nansen Dialogue Centre in Sarajevo was responsible for reviewing the process.

In brief, the purpose of this study is twofold:

1. To investigate and analyze the role of grassroots religious leaders in bridging/hampering social capital and inter-ethnic/religious relations in multi- ethnic/religious communities in BiH, and

2. To identify a network of grassroots leaders with interest and motivation to support and engage in local processes of integration of the civil society.

Research Methodology And Structure Of The Report

Overarching question in this study relates to how or to what extent religion influences the politics in BiH and how politicians and religious leaders use or portray religion. To follow the hypothesis on different positions in relation to the interreligious dialogue and on mutual communication problems between lower and higher religious leaders, the study was conducted in two phases.

In Phase I the emphasis was on the role of religion and politics in three local multi-ethnic/religious communities in BiH– Visoko, Doboj and Čapljina – at the level of municipality or township. These three places were selected combining several criteria: number of reported attacks on religious buildings and other holy sites,[22] representation of different religious majority, political and geographical setting and commuting accessibility (for fieldtrip details see Annex 3). The research specifically focused on the role of local clergy in bridging or hampering social capital in these places. Phase I research was conducted from August to December 2013.

Phase II highlighted the role of higher religious leadership and their role at the national level, as well as the setting of major urban centers of political power such as Sarajevo, Banja Luka and Mostar. The aim was twofold: first, to analyze the dynamics between religious and political actors at the countrywide level, and second, to provide a comparative analysis of social and political role of religious leaders in the local contexts vs. those at the national level. Phase II research was conducted from January to June 2014.

For Phase I semi-structured interview guides with topical questions (see Annex 4) were developed in order to allow the research team to include a wider profile of respondents. Qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted with religious leaders of three major religious communities, as well as with representatives of local political institutions (politicians or civil servants from the municipal administration) and of CSOs working locally. Interviews were recorded by audio-recording equipment or by taking notes or by the combination of both, depending on the written consent and the chosen option of each interviewed person. All interviewees were properly informed about the purpose and goals of the research prior to giving interview. Due to a sensitive nature of these questions, all interviewees were guaranteed anonymity and ethical use of their answers in line with scientific standards (see Annex 5). Their names and positions were coded (see Annex 3), so the main report contains only the

[22] Interreligious Council in Bosnia-Herzegovina, *Monitoring and Responses to Attacks on Religious Buildings and Other Holy Sites in BiH, Report on the Pilot Project, November 1st 2010-October 31st 2011*.; cf. Interreligious Council in Bosnia-Herzegovina, *Monitoring and Responses to Attacks on Religious Buildings and Other Holy Sites in BiH, Annual Report, November 1st 2011-October 31st 2012*. Both reports are available at Interreligious Council in Bosnia-Herzegovina, accessed November 22, 2013, www.mrv.ba

coded references. Discussions were not fully transcribed, but the important parts responding to the key questions were taken into account. Results of the interviews were examined using a method of qualitative data analysis. For Phase II the same methodology was used; only the questions were slightly adjusted with few sub-questions added and interviews were recorded by taking notes only. Religious leaders in Phase II were nominated for interview following official communication with top-level religious authorities in BiH.

This report is structured so to include the main part and the annexes. The main part contains a detailed discussion on the research findings. Each of two phases of the research is presented separately, while each topical question contains an analytical section. There are five annexes following the main part. Annex 1 contains a press analysis discussing the politicization of religion during the population census in BiH, which concurred with this research in October 2013. This annex presents a qualitative analysis of press statements by the clergy and the laity in the given period. Annex 2 presents an overview of internal organization of three major religious communities in BiH, including their modern history, territorial boundaries, demography and legal system. This section aims to help detect points of disconnection between higher and lower religious hierarchies and to facilitate better understanding of the similarities and differences in hierarchy and legal responsibilities, administration and territorial division between these religious communities. Annex 3 contains detailed narrative of the research process and conducted fieldtrips, including the dates, places and persons visited. Annex 4 shows the semi-structured questionnaire used during the interviews, while Annex 5 presents the template interview consent form.

DISCUSSION ON THE FINDINGS WITH ANALYSIS

Phase I Research Findings

General State Of Interreligious Relations In The Local Communities

Majority of the interviewees said that interreligious tolerance and coexistence between ordinary citizens were "satisfactory" or "very good". In relatively small towns like the three visited locations people tend to know each other personally during everyday communication, so the space left for privacy or anonymity is limited. Most of the respondents also thought that people needed more to rely on each other and less to trust the sphere of politics, the latter being perceived as something connected with the recent war. So it seems that tradition of good relations between the neighbors (*komšiluk*) and a culture of mutual respect across religious divide has been preserved together with habitually negative attitude towards power and politics.

Friendly connections between the persons of different religious background have been preserved and many come from multireligious families.[23] Religious leaders even told the research team that some people belonging to other religions had used to come to their religious services just to hear the sermon or to participate in some way.[24]

In places with considerable number of post-war "minority returns," the interviewees coming from the municipal institutions or from the majority religious denominations claimed the returnees were taken care of[25] and that as a minority they faced no big problems.

Yet, some respondents, like for instance two CSO activists, presented a slightly different picture. One explained that children in fact tended to express more negative views towards other ethnic/religious groups compared to adults. In their view, the kids are "worse than adults and are running wild" in terms of using ethnic slurs when fighting their peers (C1). Another CSO worker explained that in times without incidents these relations were good and people were not too passionate about these issues. But once an incident occurs, certain polarization or grouping could be observed in everyday life. Although they thought that the situation was not ideal, it was a positive trend that more people were engaged in trying to prevent those incidents (C2). An Islamic cleric shared his bitter experience from his past visits to Trebinje[26] when hooligans attacked him personally while he was walking down the streets wearing religious robes (R2).

Although this research focuses on religious aspects, the issues of inter-ethnic relations were

[23] Even one cleric described his family in such a way (R9).

[24] During our interview with one religious leader a local man in need seeking his help in some matter interrupted him. Later, the cleric explained the man was a poor local of ethnic minority background who often came asking for different kind of assistance (R1). Another cleric told a similar story about a local person of ethnic minority background coming to see him not to complain against any of his co-religionists but simply to talk generally about his life. The cleric was of the opinion that the man was seeking spiritual guidance since there was no priest of his religious community in that locality (R7).

[25] In terms that their pre-war homes and places of worship have been reconstructed.

[26] In the entity of *Republika Srpska* (RS) where Serbian Orthodoxy is majority religion.

frequently discussed during the interviews. It is worth noting that there was a noticeable ambiguity or confusion when talking about the relation between religion and ethnic identities.[27]

On one hand, "when speaking of religious communities or identities we are also simultaneously talking about ethnic or ethnic-national communities or identities," as explained by one municipal officer (P1). Similarly, according to the words of a cleric, "when we talk about relations among religious communities it also means that we would talk about ethnicity [*narod*], since the latter somehow developed from the former." (R4)

In certain situations interviewees seemed unable to distinguish between the two. Thus, on the question about interreligious relations one municipal officer started talking about inter-ethnic relations [*međunacionalni odnosi*, *odnosi između naroda*] (P4), while another cleric talked about "Croat Catholics" and not simply "Catholics" or "Roman Catholics." (R9)

Yet on the other hand, religion was often understood in terms of its spirituality and ethics, and as a sacred thing belonging to the private sphere that should be protected against the mundane everyday life, politics, ethnic-nationalism and other secular corruption. A Catholic leader, for example, when talking about his community and its losses during the war stressed that not all of them were Croats and he specifically mentioned other ethnic identities such as Hungarians or Albanians. He also implicitly criticized the ethnically based political parties who claimed to represent "Croat people" and made a distinctive remark that "one is born into a nation [*narod*], but religion is a choice." (R6) In a similar manner another cleric said, "there are many Serbs in this town but only one hundred and two households have been registered in my church," (R8) implying that not all "Serbs" were Orthodox Christian believers.

Regarding the definition of religious identity, it was sometimes understood in a rather broad sense as explained by another cleric. When speaking about some of his flock who behaved in a manner contrary to what had been proposed by their religious authority, he said: "but we cannot simply tell such a person – you are not a Muslim!," (R2) implying that religious identification, even if it concerned only an outward religious appearance, was more important than to follow religious code of conduct.

Analysis

A plausible conclusion from this general question could be that interreligious relations in the local communities at the level of grassroots religious leaders and grassroots in general are much better than expected or presented in the media. Interreligious cooperation exists in various strata, at various levels.

However, to claim that these social interactions always end in good social relations, let alone that they challenge religious hence ethnic divisions of the communities, would be an exaggeration. One can rather suggest that there is a fine balance between cooperation and antagonism maintaining a *modus vivendi* between groups where each group, and particularly its leaders, gains a maximum from the given conditions. This kind of gain could be defined as "solving the issues of here and now": it is about an immediate and a short-term gain at best. It seems that the interviewees' way of thinking in terms of contemplating mid- and long-term

[27] This confusion is frequently translated into English literature on the subject, since the local languages customarily use the adjective *nacionalni* instead of *etnički* to refer to the "ethnicity". Hence, what is being understood to talk about the issue of ethnicity may sometimes appear in English language texts marked with the adjective "national". In this text we use the word "ethnic" where local respondents used expressions such as *nacionalni*, *narodni* or *etnički*, unless the context indicated otherwise and except in direct quotations of the respondents.

goals in the foreseeable future is completely missing from the "equation".

Causes And Effects Of The Attacks On Holy Sites

Discussion about the attacks on holy sites proved to be a sensitive issue that often made the respondents more defensive.[28] Although a certain number of reported cases of attacks on holy sites might indicate strained interreligious relations within a local community or even a level of outright hostility, most of the interviewees agreed that this was not the case. Having firmly condemned all such incidents, almost all respondents shared the feelings that these attacks were isolated incidents not representing general state of interreligious relations.

Regarding possible causes or motifs for these attacks, they can be loosely divided into three categories: 1) stealing of property, 2) "foolish behavior" and 3) genuine hatred based on ethnic-religious grounds.

Most respondents stated it was the crime of theft – stealing of valuable property inside or around religious buildings – that mainly motivated these attacks. Indeed, a number of cases solved by police investigation confirm this fact.[29] The objects of theft were often various types of metallic materials mostly made of copper, tin and aluminum. As such, according to this opinion, religious sites are as vulnerable to these incidents as any other building or property.

Another type of motif was characterized as irrational or foolish behavior, done by problematic persons who were either mentally unstable, prone to alcohol or drug abuse, or who due to other reasons behaved irresponsibly and acted out of sheer malice, caprice or even fun. It could be school children targeting holy sites (by throwing stones or breaking windows) or attacking clerics in visible robes (by calling names behind their back) while playing around. Although sometimes unpleasant, most of the respondents agreed that these attacks should also be dismissed as mere isolated incidents that were not motivated by religious hostility.

Finally, a few cases could be seen as motivated by genuine religious hatred or hostility. One municipal officer confirmed that the attack against a synagogue was organized by the known extreme right-wing organization *Obraz* (P4).[30] One cleric suggested there were some people feeling hostile against other religions. These feelings could drive them to write graffiti with inappropriate content or even to set fire or explosive at the place of worship (R2). The cause of religious hostility could be rooted in the traumatized families who had suffered severely during the war, as pointed out by one CSO activist (C1). Another cleric thought there were "extremist, national-fascist and socio-pathological individuals prone to indoctrination" (R3) who were involved in the attacks motivated by hate. He also opined that such individuals should not be given too much attention and space for public promotion.

[28] One municipal officer even suggested to the research team that this question would have been better left for a later part of the discussion (P4).

[29] For example, a news release published following this field research showed that a notorious thief had committed crimes on the territory of the City of Sarajevo, including stealing of copper drainpipes from the Serbian Orthodox Cathedral and from the Islamic Studies Faculty; cf. Dragan Pavlović, "Ponovo uhapšen Jusuf Muharemagić: 'Pošteno' živi kradući oluke sa vjerskih objekata", *Oslobođenje*, December 14, 2013, accessed February 13, 2014, http://www.oslobodjenje.ba/crna-hronika/ponovo-uhapsen-jusuf-muharemagic- posteno-zivi-kraduci-oluke-sa-vjerskih-objekata--.

[30] *Otačastveni pokret Obraz* is far-right political movement that was characterized by some as Orthodox clero-fascist organization. It is mainly active in Serbia where the Constitutional Court officially banned their activity in 2012; cf. B92, "Constitutional Court Bans Right-Wing Organization", accessed December 5, 2013, http://www.b92.net/eng/news/politics-article.php? yyyy=2012&mm=06&dd=12&nav_id=80718.; cf. Institute for War and Peace Reporting, "Serbian Radicals Elicit Church Sympathy", accessed December 5, 2013, http://iwpr.net/report-news/serbian-radicals-elicit-church-sympathy.

Regarding the effects of these attacks, the respondents criticized the media for their jumping into false conclusions and the judicial and police institutions for their ineffectiveness. One religious leader was especially vocal in this matter explaining that "we must protect ourselves from the press who are the biggest problem; they produce a conflict and enforce extremism." (R3) As an example this cleric mentioned a case when

> Mujahedin graffiti offending Serbs appeared on a wall and the media stirred the public. But later, the police uncovered that the perpetrator was actually a local Serb who was angry because he had recently lost his job. However, the media did not disclose full information. (R3)

A municipal officer in a similar manner said that "Black Chronicle sells the papers," (P4)[31] while a CSO activist agreed that "sometimes it is better to leave the problem to the community to solve it slowly than to raise it to the level of public awareness that is perhaps not necessary." (C2)

"A truly religious person cannot do such a thing" – was a comment concerning the problem of attacks on holy sites often heard from the interviewees. For instance, two religious leaders representing different denominations asserted that the motif behind the attacks could not be religious in nature but probably purely ethnic-nationalist (R1) and that the attacks and the problem of mistrust should not be labeled "interreligious" but rather "interethnic" [*međunacionalni*]. (R4)[32] One CSO activist observed the same thing: "Although religious intolerance was not the main cause of the incidents, it should not be dismissed because it is connected with ethnic intolerance." (C2) It is finally noteworthy to mention different perceptions regarding the attacks in the same town between the people working in the political institutions and those from the civil sector. While a municipal officer was content to have several minor but unorganized incidents, which was "better than to have only one but severe and organized attack," (P4) a CSO activist was concerned that it was exactly the opposite, "that it is perhaps even worse to have many smaller incidents without visible ethnic-religious motifs because it then shows that we are living in a society full of unmotivated senseless violence." (C2)

Analysis

Explanations of all respondents about the nature of the attacks on holy sites exemplify how the balance between cooperation and antagonism is being established. By emphasizing "incidental nature" of the attacks, motivated by theft, teenagers' rage, drug abuse, or psychological disorder of individuals (of various kinds running from mental illness to revenge), they deny any systematic behavior in a form of interreligious conflict.

Because, to acknowledge the persistence of systematic interreligious conflict would mean to challenge the established delicate balance and thus potentially to invoke dangerous end – not in terms of violence (yet no one can exclude it) but in terms of further deterioration of overall situation. Such undesirable outcome would significantly decrease possible gains.

So, interreligious relations are balanced by means of minimizing the effects resulting from such attacks. It is mainly done by the attempt to control the broadcast of information on these events in the public sphere through media. However, it is about suppressing the conflict for

[31] "Black Chronicle" (*crna hronika*) is local expression for the section of daily newspapers reporting on local crimes, violence, accidents or similar events.

[32] Here we can see an interesting confusion between the two concepts since the same cleric already pointed out that an ethnic identity is a mere "extension" of a religion.

the sake of immediate and short-term benefit, rather than resolving or transforming it for long-term stability.

Even if a systematic behavior is indicated as a possible cause for some attacks, it is being presented as the responsibility of some "national-chauvinists,"[33] who still recall and live from violent past.[34]

Role Of Religious Leaders In The Process Of Reconciliation And Interreligious Dialogue

Regarding the role of local religious leaders in interreligious cooperation, the interviewees' views and opinions were varied. Yet, they shared a common view that religious leaders possessed a power to affect the relations among the people in the local communities. Therefore, if these clerics were seen together at public events, religious or secular, their symbolic power could positively influence ordinary citizens in terms of mutual trust, understanding or reconciliation (in places with troubled history). An example of such event was mentioned by the cleric R9. On one occasion of religious ceremony he had hosted a religious leader from different religious community in his place of worship and introduced him to his flock. Another cleric opined that they should be more open or "transparent" to the general public in order to break negative prejudices. (R3) Many interviewees also stressed the importance for the religious leaders to be seen together in public in various cooperative situations. (R6, R8, R9, P3, and C3) There was also a general opinion that religious leaders had enough space and freedom for their activities, and that it was up to them to arrange their mutual cooperation. Some respondents noticed a lack of time on the part of the religious leaders due to their regular religious duties, (R5, C1) or a lack of will of some leaders to get more actively involved. (R9, C3)

The role of religious leaders in bridging interreligious divide was described in positive terms by a municipal officer: "Catholic contribution [to the interreligious dialogue] is very good," and also "leaders of all three religious communities are doing their job in a positive way." (P1) Two religious leaders, representing different denominations in the same town, explained: "We act in a preventive way" by "appealing from the altar to our believers to respect members of other religions" and "we regularly visit each other on religious holidays." (R1 and R4) In another place a cleric in a similar spirit said: "Religious leaders have good cooperation." (R5) Another municipal officer, although admitting lack of knowledge about this issue, said these relations were "good," (P2) while a cleric in the same area described these relations as "pretty good." (R8)

Another cleric gave somewhat neutral answer that "it is a matter of higher hierarchies" whose mutual relations might "create an atmosphere in the local communities," but nonetheless characterized the IRC work as "good thing." (R7) One municipal officer thought that religion was a private matter and that interreligious relations and their mutual cooperation "should better be left to the religious communities to mutually coordinate themselves, unless they have specific need for assistance from the public institutions." (P4)

More negative tone in this respect was heard from another cleric. Referring to his area he said:

[33] However, "national-chauvinists" were neither identified by name nor pointed out as concrete persons, movements or parties by the interviewees. They appear as some kind of unidentified agents or "force" which act behind the scene.

[34] On the other side, responsibility is also assigned to the "dysfunctional family" which will be discussed later.

"We should meet more often, not only during religious ceremonies." (R2) He was especially critical with respect to the Catholic diocesan priests: "In this region Catholic community broke the ties a bit; they slowed the process down and they are hard to cooperate with." (R2) A CSO activist in the same area said that religious leaders had no "enough space nor time nor activists to work on the process of reconciliation" and that "they lack priests and programs to organize and gather the people, especially the youth." (C1) A cleric leading a religious minority group both in his own and the neighboring municipality expressed negative opinion in relation to the neighboring town where he rarely went to meet other religious leaders, due to long travel distance and the lack of the members of his religious community (R8). A Catholic cleric described his relations with an Orthodox priest as good while those with an Islamic cleric as not so good, since the latter had given some offensive statements in the past (R9).

Finally, very negative opinion on the role of religious leaders was given by a CSO activist who said:

> None of them contributed even one per mille to the positive development [...] There was not a single joint activity between religious leaders in the past ten years attempting to organize young people to meet each other [...] When we invite them to attend some happenings, 80 percent of them do not show up [...] Religious communities contributed even more than politics to the young people's violent behavior. (C2)

This activist admitted, though, that this opinion was based on personal "atheist" convictions.

Analysis

Regarding the proposition that representatives of a religious minority generally seek more dialogue than representatives of a religious majority in a given area,[35] the field data do not entirely support that claim. While it is true that examples of negative, passive or reserved attitudes towards interreligious dialogue could be found in all three locations among the majority religious representatives, it is rather a particular position in the religious hierarchy of a given person and the local context that influence this type of attitude. With this in mind we can look at the examples given by a cleric where a representative of a religious minority acted with hostility against dialogue initiatives offered by a religious majority representative (R9) and where different members of the same religious majority expressed their mutual mistrust depending on their religious order and hierarchy (i.e. Franciscan vs. diocesan priests).

It seems that the role of religious leaders is exactly to establish and maintain the balance through controlling the image both of their own and of the communities of others, regardless of whether it is a damage control of possible unwilling incidents or a pro-active approach. Additionally, the role of religious leaders could be arguably described as bridging a certain gap between grassroots needs and "political" needs of higher instances, but again in terms of balancing interreligious relations.

As suggested before, these processes signify a presence of the mode of suppression rather than the mode of resolution or transformation of the conflict. Such a view is fairly confirmed by the CSO perception of the situation.

[35] For instance, there is a statement attributed to the Catholic Bishop of Banja Luka saying: "It is easy to be the good guy when you are in the minority"; cf. Stuebner, *USIP*, 9.

Role Of Politics Regarding Interreligious Relations In The Local Communities

In general terms, from the opinions of our respondents we may conclude there is a visible difference between the roles of the local politics at the municipal level and of the higher politics at the national-entity levels in respect of their influence to interreligious relations.

Indeed, the media were often seen as a powerful extension of certain political agendas and political parties, as opined by a cleric R7. Ethnic-nationalist discourse in the media might have contributed to the violence especially among the youth, as expressed by a CSO activist in the same town (C3). Public statements by political as well as religious leaders as reported in the media might have negative impact on interreligious relations in general, and particularly in those local communities where evident, albeit fragile, level of peace and tolerance across religious divides has been achieved and maintained in the post-war period. As a "supreme force" (P3) in the creation of a political discourse the media should act with responsibility, which is entailed in the idea of the freedom of press, in such a manner as to "pay less attention to the negative news" (R5) and to understand they "could be more productive to keep silent sometimes." (P4) As pointed out by a CSO activist, the young people, who were often target of indoctrination, should learn that "not everything reported in the media is true." (C3)

The majority of respondents expressed a level of animosity towards the politics and politicians in general. Thus, one cleric personally denied political agitation in his parish (R6).[36] According to the view of another cleric, "politicians make personal profit out of unclear and unsettled political situation in the country," (R8) while a CSO activist said:

> Politicians do nothing except promoting themselves without any visible results; they have no wish to work on reconciliation, but on the contrary, it seems that keeping *status quo* and creating more problems just affirms their power. (C1)

Slightly less critical opinion was expressed by two clerics (representing different denominations in different localities) who said: "Religion and politics should be separated but they both should act for common good," since they represent "two social realities that should act in synergy." (R1 and R3) A CSO activist confirmed the confusion between religion and ethnically defined concept of "nationality" [*nacionalnost*] (C2). One cleric, although expressing his dislike of politics, abided by the established political discourse of the "three constituent peoples" who should be equal "and only once we all know who is what [in terms of ethnicity] we can work on cooperation among us." (R5) Collapse of political institutions and inefficient public administration in BiH was simultaneously seen as an opportunity for religious communities to fill the void of the state's "doing nothing" and to help young people overcome their problems (R9). Under such a political atmosphere, where people are "diving into the past and seeing no future," a cleric explains: "We as religious leaders must direct all of our thinking, planning and doing to the very present moment," (R2) which exemplifies an interesting view on the daily pragmatism as a strategy of survival.

Relations between the local politics at the municipal level and the religious communities were described in positive terms as "good", "satisfactory", "very good" or "without problems" by the majority of our respondents. In all three locations the local municipal administration was praised for their assistance to the return of the pre-war population, which represented also a

[36] Although he was not explicit, he hinted at the ethnically based political parties claiming to represent the "interests of the people" (*narod* in the exclusivist ethnic meaning).

religious minority, in reconstruction of their homes and places of worship.[37]

However, some critical responses were also recorded. The municipal administration in Visoko was criticized by the clerics of both majority and minority religion (R7 and R8) for their alleged slow and inefficient work regarding the property return issues and the financial compensation for the confiscated cemetery land. In this latter case the minority religion representative (R8) even reported the case of corruption (offering bribe). A CSO activist in another town, although confirming "vibrant collaboration" between the mayor and the minority religious leader, expressed doubt about the level of real progress in that sense, where the municipal administration seemed not much interested to expand the collaboration with the civil society and to build lasting tolerance between religions (C2).

Regarding the influence of "higher politics" to the interreligious relations in local communities, the respondents gave a far less favorable picture. A cleric even suggested that top religious leaders had occasionally leaned on the higher political structures, while in that process some of them had given speeches in a manner contrary to the tenets of their religious community and to the religious code of conduct (R2). Another cleric said the higher political institutions had a negative impact on interreligious relations, although this was mostly due to their inefficiency (R4). A CSO activist said that, even if the link between religion and politics had decreased a bit in the past few years, it was still there waiting for a possible major political upheaval to be triggered again, since "religious communities act as political parties." (C2) The so-called "higher politics" are usually preoccupied with their self-proclaimed "national interests" so they neglect the issue of interreligious cooperation. (C2)

Representatives of municipal administration gave expectedly different opinions. According to them, there were no problems with higher political instances (P2 and P4). Only in Čapljina higher political structures acted too slow in order to solve some local problems, like that of lacking tourism resources (P1). Finally, there was a sense of apathy and weakness on the part of "ordinary citizens who objectively cannot influence the teams of political elites at higher levels, so one should not be burdened by it at all," (R1) as expressed by a cleric.

Analysis

To a great extent there is a fair relation between the clergy and local politics (but not necessarily between the clergy and local governance or administration). This confirms the strategy of "calming down for mutual benefit." Every institution does what they are supposed to do and there is mutual help offered. That is the only way for maintaining interreligious relations.

However, higher politics and particularly the media (national not local) are viewed as disturbing factors that reproduce the conflict.

Yet it is not about particular politician or political party, but rather about higher politics of some unidentified fatal ("nationalist-chauvinist") agency. It seems to be a way to identify a problem and to avoid responsibility: first towards resolving the conflict; second to interfering with actual powerful agencies that are "in charge" of the conflict.

By positioning the resolution and transformation of the conflict into the area "out of reach," local leaders, both religious and political, limit their own actions just to the preservation of

[37] The Mayor of Čapljina was commended not only by the clerics belonging to the majority religion but also by the clerics belonging to religious minorities. The Mayor of Doboj was praised particularly by the cleric belonging to a religious minority with whom he maintains friendly relationship.

local communal balance and hence also limit integration and developmental possibilities of the communities, capturing them in the surviving mode of "futureless present" (because any future is under control of a greater unreachable power, so "we" can care only about the present).

Religious Education In Public Schools And The Problem Of Juvenile Violence

When we talk about "religious education" we must first differentiate between two general types. Confessional or denominational religious education (sometimes called "religious instruction") is taught to the students belonging to a particular religious community ("teaching in religion") and is performed by qualified clerics or laypersons of that community. Non-confessional religious education (also called "religious studies", "religious culture" or similar) is taught to all students regardless of their particular religious adherence ("teaching about religion"), which may be performed by lay teachers not necessarily belonging to any religious community.

In the highly decentralized and fragmented public education system in BiH the first, confessional type of religious education (*vjeronauka*) is the norm in most public schools where the vast majority (more than 95 percent) of all students attend it as an optional course, while the non-confessional type called "culture of religions" (*kultura religija*) has been introduced only as a pilot project in selected jurisdictions, such as in the Tuzla-Zvornik Canton.[38] In this part of our study by the expression "religious education" we mean confessional religious education, unless otherwise is noted.

Majority of our respondents thought that religious education was generally a good thing having positive role in teaching children about morality, how to help fellow citizens and to respect other people. However, they tended to contradict themselves when asked about the attacks on holy sites in connection with the youth attending these classes. The respondents claimed that religious education teachers could only transfer knowledge about religion to the students, but they could not really teach them how to behave outside the classroom. General negative opinion about this type of religious education in public schools was expressed only by one CSO activist (openly irreligious person), who claimed: "Religious education does not belong to the public schools curriculum because as long as such a class is not attended by all students it becomes a root of segregation." (C2) It is interesting to note that similar opinion could be heard from some Franciscan theologians in Sarajevo warning about ideological misuse of the religious education classes (R6). Also, Islamic scholar Rešid Hafizović said in a published interview back in 2006 that instead of confessional religious education, a non-confessional course called "culture of religions" should be taught in public secondary schools, because "confessional religious education, as a specific type of religious education, can be adequately taught only within institutional structures of religious communities."[39]

However, regarding the quality of the present educational system, the opinions were much more polarized. Both the majority and the minority religious leaders in one location (R7

[38] Ahmet Alibašić, "Religious Education in Public Schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Towards a Model Supporting Coexistence and Mutual Understanding", *Policy Development Fellowship Program 2008-2009,* Open Society Fund Bosnia & Herzegovina, 8, 12, accessed September 30, 2014, http://www.osfbih.org.ba/images/Prog_docs/PDFP/pdfp_09/eng_ahmet_alibasic_full.pdf.

[39] Rešid Hafizović, "Vehabizam možda nije prijetnja BiH, ali muslimanskom svijetu svakako jest!," interview by Mirnes Kovač. *Preporod*, October 31, 2006, accessed November 11, 2014, http://www.preporod.com/index.php/intervju/1429-vehabizam-moda-nije-prijetnja-bih-ali-muslimanskom-svijetu-svakako-jest.html

and R8) as well as the majority religious leader in another location (R9) asserted that it was currently good and without problems, although the same cleric R8 complained about a lack of qualified teachers and remarked about decreasing overall quality of these classes. Some respondents in the same area presented a low number of classes per week as a major problem (C1 and R9). On the other hand, one CSO activist said there should be more classes to teach about all religions, not only about the majority one (C3).

Regarding any positive effects of this type of education most interviewees agreed that it was fruitless since the children and adolescents were daily exposed to negative influence of the media, as well as of general social decay and bad family upbringing.

What is striking, however, is negative role ascribed to the family and parenthood. Since the family was marked as an institution having a crucial role in child raising (R5, R6, R8 and R9), the religious communities played a minor role in that aspect even though they supervize religious education courses in public schools (R5). Some respondents went so far as to accuse the family of being the root of violence (R9) and the main problem in terms of neglecting to teach the children about religious tolerance (P4). One religious leader told about his experience in dealing with the parents who had resisted the idea that their children should play together with "other children" (that is, of other ethnic-religious background) in the public playgrounds (R2). Interviewees competent in pedagogy and social work (C1 and P4) explained that many parents who had suffered losses from the past (the last war) could not cope with their traumas without imposing certain negative collective prejudice onto their own children. In this way, we can call this phenomenon: "trans-generational seeding of ethnic-religious distance." Thereby the children tend to develop antagonism towards the persons assumed to belong to other religious or ethnic groups, reproducing their parents' traumas/views/attitudes from the war and past conflicts generally.

Religious education classes in public schools share general problems of ethnically segregated education system in BiH (particularly in the entity of FBiH where the international actors helped promote the concept of "two schools under one roof"), which indoctrinates children along the ethnic lines.[40] This is the fact recognized by some of the respondents (R2, R3 and C1). Another religious leader stressed negative impact of a lack of common school curriculum on the children of Serbian Orthodox background who, as a minority in this location, had to choose between Catholic-based "Croat curriculum" and Islamic-based "Bosniak curriculum." (R4) As pointed out by a cleric respondent, such an education system could not produce younger generations capable to cope with future challenges. He said: "We are living just for the present and are not prepared to face the future." (R3) Additionally, one CSO activist was afraid of what the future might bring having in mind the level of violence among the youth (C1).

Analysis

This especially negative role ascribed to the family and parenthood seems to present another strategy to avoid responsibility on the part of religious leadership.

However, almost consensual attitude of interviewees regarding this issue is symptomatic and it indicates that stakes are much higher than barely transferring responsibility.

[40] On the particular problem of ethnically based curriculum for literature and language classes in public schools, its policies and practice; cf. Nenad Veličković, *Školokrečina: Nacionalizam u bošnjačkim, hrvatskim i srpskim čitankama* (Belgrade: Fabrika knjiga, 2012).

The family is traditionally considered as the core element of a society. So it is of utmost importance to gain control over it in order to gain wider power in the society. In this regard the family is generally targeted as one of key concepts of a religious public discourse.[41] Dominant narrative, followed by the respondents, describes the family as being "dysfunctional" in its traditional function due to the processes of globalization and individualization or even due to leftovers from the past socialist regime. As such it cannot fulfill "its function" to deliver basic social skills to young generations.[42] Hence, it is "responsible" for "asocial" behavior of young generation.

However, this idea of "responsibility with negative consequences" also exposes the family as an appropriate target for the actions through which it is to be re-established in traditional sense to fulfill its "social function". With the same intervention religious communities seek to regain position and power, which are undermined by the same processes of globalization and individualization.

On the other side, the family is one of the main concepts defining key political and ideological difference in contemporary times, so it is a strong political tool.[43] At this point the family is also an area that might determine very deep connection of a number of political and religious actors.

Considering such a strong potential of the family as being simultaneously a responsible agent, a target and a tool, a firm and almost unanimous opinion of the respondents becomes reasonable to grasp.

Past And Future Activities Contributing To The Interreligious Cooperation And Mutual Understanding

Our respondents mentioned only a handful of examples of the activities involving interreligious/ethnic cooperation, as follows.

A school building in Domanovići near Čapljina was reconstructed thanks to the joint efforts of the local population, both Catholics and Muslims, under the guidance of the agile local parish priest (P1 and R9).

One cleric mentioned a dozen courses (although he was not specific) organized by his religious community, sometimes with a help of the municipality and CSOs, which were open to the public and especially target the youth in order "to move them out of the street" and to socialize people regardless of their religious background (R1).

Another cleric mentioned a cultural exchange event involving the children of different religious background, including a group of youth from Italy, paying visit to the Orthodox monastery in Žitomislići (R4).

The Islamic community in Doboj, being the only majlis[44] in BiH owning a sports field, organized

[41] This to a great extent lacks any reference to the questions of spirituality, metaphysics, the nature of divinity, or transcendence in general.

[42] Upbringing children, transfer of morality, respecting social order, reproduction of society, etc.

[43] In this regard, relation to "family values" defines someone's fundamental ideological and political position: those "pro-" are usually regarded as "conservative"; the others are "liberals".

[44] Majlis is a local organization (district) of the Islamic Community in BiH consisting of several "jamats" (parishes or

a futsal club with "ethnically mixed" membership with "two coaches in the team – one Serb and one Bosniak." (R3) Initially opposed and booed by the hooligans belonging to *Delije*,[45] this club gradually gained recognition in the Serbian Orthodox majority competition league and the local community. According to the cleric R3, "having seen Muslims playing together with Serbs, the hooligans acknowledged that these Muslims do not come from Mars"[46] and stopped their insults. Similar activity of gathering people of different religious/ethnic background for sport (football) occasions was mentioned by a cleric in a different locality (R9).

During the happening "The Days of Open Doors", sponsored by the City of Doboj, elementary school children had the opportunity to visit all major places of worship in the city (R3 and P4). There was a concert of spiritual music in the same town presenting each religious community with its own choir. The initiator of this event was the Jewish Community while the public reception of the event was warm (R3, P4 and C2).

A young CSO activist shared positive experience about a seminar organized by the Catholic Relief Service, when they had for the first time an opportunity to get together and make friends with their peers of different religious background "without anyone throwing stones at each other." (C1)

Still, some negative examples were also recorded. One religious leader was skeptical about interreligious cultural events due to his negative experience when it was "enough to have only one person against it and the entire project will be ruined." (R2) He explained that there were people still emotionally affected by the recent war who did not approve any interreligious contact. Another religious leader explained that there were no joint interreligious projects for the common purpose because "our community is concerned with strictly religious issues," (R7) while yet another cleric complained about insufficient number of interested youth and the lack of money for such kind of joint activities (R8).

One CSO activist told about negative experience in the attempt to gather all three religious leaders of major denominations to appear together in a radio show about the joint program of spiritual music previously held. She also mentioned problems surrounding the prolonged and unrealized project to organize a soup kitchen in Doboj, since some faith-based charities wanted to pursue their own particularistic agendas (C2). In contrast, another CSO activist gave a positive example of a similar soup kitchen project in Visoko that was successful due to positive contributions from the Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina (ICBH) who gave their rooms and the Franciscan Monastery who organized a humanitarian concert (C3).

When asked about possible future projects of similar nature, most of the respondents were not certain what to tell. It seems that not many people were thinking about the future, so the following is a kind of "wish list" proposed by some of the respondents.

One municipal officer offered his personal help to organize a gathering of religious leaders for a sort of seminar or retreat in order "to promote multiculturalism for the benefit of the whole society," (P1) while a somewhat pessimistic religious leader said that only economy could help overcome present divisions because "while doing business at the market nobody asks who is what." He also indicated that, instead of trying to do large-scale projects, it was perhaps

congregations). For details on the structures of religious communities see Annex 2.

[45] *Delije* are well-known football supporters and hooligans of the Belgrade-based champions club *Crvena zvezda* («Red Star»). During the Yugoslav Wars in the 1990s they acted as a recruitment base for sending volunteers to the frontlines in Croatia and Bosnia while led by paramilitary commander and criminal boss Željko Ražnatović Arkan; cf. Ivan Čolović, "Fudbal, huligani i rat", in Nebojša Popov ed. *Srpska strana rata* (Belgrade: Republika, 1996), 419-44.

[46] In the sense "they are human beings like us".

better to start gradually by organizing smaller groups of people (R2).

One cleric just mentioned they were planning workshops and concerts to gather young people (R5), while the idea of another religious leader was to use good relations between two religious secondary schools in the town (Islamic Madrasa and Franciscan Gymnasium) and the fact that both institutions received public funds from the Municipality/Canton to organize joint workshops (R7).

In contrast, a young CSO activist said it was less about money and more about sincere will to organize social events for common good, which was currently lacking (C1). Another CSO activist in a different town presented the idea that round-tables could be organized whereby religious leaders of all denominations could freely talk about their problems and interreligious challenges in an open way, possibly in the form of a radio show (C3).

Finally, another pessimistic note was present in the answers given by a CSO activist saying: "No major initiatives and no future projects are seriously discussed in Doboj because nobody wants to invest a lot of time and energy to work with younger generations." (C2) This activist did propose, however, an idea to repair old community centers where gatherings of school children could be organized to learn about "real differences between religions," or discussions about religion in general (C2).

Analysis

Whether for "right" or "wrong" reasons, for maintaining the balance or further development, all interviewees emphasize the role of interreligious encounters. They recognize an utmost importance of permanent production and reproduction of places of encounter in all variety of occasions in which people, primarily young, will meet their fellow citizens from other religious backgrounds. Regardless of motives, this is the (only) point of "hope" which, beyond immediate and short gain, builds blocks of long term trust between people and makes integrative processes (necessary both for stability and development) possible and viable.

Hypothesis And Preliminary Views Following Phase I Research

Despite a somewhat pessimistic conclusion about limited prospects of interreligious cooperation and social development in the local communities, as presented in Phase I research findings, it is a fact that local leaders (both the clergy and the laity) expressed "good will" and motivation to work together, at least to educate the public and especially the young people against ethnoreligious prejudice. But, even if a socially more inclusive interreligious cooperation succeeds locally, there is still a challenge to think in long-terms and to take wider contexts into account.

Findings of the research conducted in Phase I show a high level of disconnection, mistrust or animosity from the grass roots towards higher religious and political instances, in some cases even within a single religious community with regard to the relations between its own higher and lower clergy.

As a starting point to look further from the local to the central or countrywide level of BiH,

a discussion on the issue of the population census and its politicization is included in Annex 1. It encompasses a qualitative analysis of press releases discussing the census in BiH, which coincided with a part of the main research. Particular attention was paid to the public speech by both religious and secular leaders in relation to the long-debated and politically sensitive issue of the census questions about "ethnic-cultural characteristics" of the population including religious affiliation. This press analysis concludes *inter alia* that clerical leaders of all three major religious communities in BiH (ICBH, SOC and CC) more or less politicized these census questions along the ethnopolitical agenda of secular leaders (politicians, intellectuals and journalists).

Therefore, the following hypothesis was made in order to focus the research during Phase II of the project. From the grassroots perspective, higher religious and political structures acted as disturbing agents threatening the maintained delicate balance of local interreligious relations. In order to enable the grass roots to start thinking in long-terms about future developments this "disturbance" in relation with higher structures needed to be addressed, analyzed and possible solutions proposed.

Phase II Research Findings

General State Of Interreligious Relations In BiH

During Phase I general state of affairs regarding interreligious relations at the grass roots was described as better than expected. Interreligious cooperation existed at various levels but it was also detected that these social interactions did not challenge religious and ethnic divisions. The situation was described in terms of maintaining a balance between antagonism and cooperation. In Phase II the research aimed to ask the same question, but now taking into account BiH as a whole.

Again, majority of the respondents claimed these relations were good or positive at the moment. Specific answers included giving descriptions such as: "correct at all levels, from top to bottom," (P5) "there is a trend to improve overall interreligious relations," (P6) "generally and formally at a normal level and getting better," (P7) "good at the present time," (R10) and "currently good and substantial." (R12)

A CSO representative elaborated on the differences between three levels of interreligious relations. The level of official representatives of religious communities, such as those institutionalized through IRC, was characterized as being of declarative nature with principle statements about mutual cooperation often made. But these statements were sometimes contradicted by different public speech given by the same religious leaders. According to the opinion of this CSO activist, the top level of religious hierarchy "lacked genuine and true dedication for a dialogue." (C4) Theological level involving faculties and scholars was said to have potentials for a "trialogue thinking," (C4) but these were not utilized enough because most theologians were reluctant to take part in public discussions. Thus, cooperation at this level remains weak and it was particularly noticeable among SOC theologians. Finally, interreligious relations were best among the "ordinary people," where dialogue happened to be the most fruitful. This CSO representative mentioned a recent example of mutual interreligious cooperation for the humanitarian aid to be delivered to the areas in BiH most affected by the catastrophic storm and flood in May 2014. However, under-developed

relations at the top level burdened these positive developments. It is important to note that this respondent was aware of "strong connection between ethnicity and religion, which makes them hard to distinguish one from the other," so it was the most important task to "depoliticize and denationalize religion." (C4)

The only somewhat reserved opinion about the positive state of interreligious relations in BiH was given by a Catholic cleric, who said: "These relations depend on the concrete political situation [so that the] unsettled [political] issues in the state reflect on these relations." (R11) Some respondents recognized important role of top-level religious hierarchy who "possessed powerful symbolic potentials" and whose "good relations on the top may produce good results and vice versa." (C4) An Islamic cleric[47] explained that "now through the work of IRC we are trying to re-balance these [interreligious] relations" and "our policy is to let the representatives of a religious majority in a particular location initiate the formation of local IRC branches." (R10) A misbalance within interreligious relations was often ascribed to the recent violent conflict of the '90s which, according to the top religious leaders gathered in IRC, could not be defined as "religious war," (R10) while the same Islamic cleric characterized interreligious relations during the period of SFR Yugoslavia as "excellent." (R10)

Within this opening question the research team could notice that some respondents felt the urge to mention negative examples that spoiled this overall positive image of interreligious relations. Thus, a politician from Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina (HDZ), while talking about the city of Mostar as a "powder keg," mentioned that on the occasion of an Islamic celebration in nearby Blagaj the Mufti of Mostar had said "something in front of forty thousand people that spoiled these relations," (P5) while both a politician from the Party of Democratic Action (SDA) and the Islamic cleric mentioned the recent case of liberation of a war criminal convicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in the Hague, Dario Kordić, when some Catholic clerics behave inappropriately, by offering him a warm welcome back home (P7 and R10). These examples may indicate that representatives of both ethnopolitical parties and religious communities still display a way of thinking in terms of taking notice about negative actions by the members of "ethnic others," while turning a blind eye on the similar negative behavior by the members of their "ethnic kin."

Analysis

If taken combined, the first and the second round of interviews (Phase I and Phase II of the research) may suggest that interreligious relations in BiH should be seen at two levels, the local (grass roots) and the national (BiH as a whole).

Respondents consulted in Phase II confirm what we noticed from the answers given by local interviewees in Phase I that interreligious relations at the local level are surprisingly better then expected with regards to the general situation and popular perception. It seems that the necessities of everyday life (in multi-religious communities) pave the way for trans-ethnic cooperation and general improvement of interreligious relations in the local communities. A number of respondents saw these processes also in terms of reconstruction or reestablishment

[47] We are aware that Islamic religious leaders are not "clerics" in the sense the term is used in the Christian context; they are rather referred to as religious "officers" or "clerks" (*vjerski službenici*). As remarked by the interviewed Islamic leader, "according to our Islamic doctrine, we do not have [ordained] clerics. Imams are not clerics but ordinary people [with specialized education in Islam]... According to Islam no man can forgive sin to another man [as opposed to Christian priests]." (R10) However, we use the term "Islamic cleric" in a technical way so as to group them together with other clerics in contrast to secular leaders (politicians) for the purpose of this study.

of the "culture of neighborhood" (*komšiluk*).[48]

However, all respondents suggest that these relations are influenced, if not limited, by general political situation in BiH, which is basically ethno-antagonistic. Although a slight difference in opinions appears regarding the question on how to resolve potential antagonistic situation – either by settlements among the local actors, which is preferred by the local respondents, or by intervening from the higher governmental level, which is preferred by higher level respondents – all actions seem to be *post festum* and aimed to calm down the situation by resolving just the actual issue, rather than to systematically address (general political) problems that allegedly cause these tensions.

Interreligious relations at the countrywide level are also estimated as good. However, unlike the situation in the local communities where respondents suggested the existence of a kind of substantial, if not tangible, interreligious connection, at the higher level these relations appear to be more of a symbolic nature. They are claimed to be declarative or ceremonial, good at the present and becoming better or improved, etc. Again, it is the politics that is denounced as the main cause of "uncertainty" in these relations, since the politics act as the main "producer" of challenges for the process of stabilization of interreligious relations. Similarly to the local level, actual interreligious relations are being determined rather by responding to immediate issues that might appear than by systematic development.

Taking such perspectives into account, we can come to several conclusions regarding interreligious relations. Firstly, at both levels there seems to exist an engagement to reestablish interreligious cooperation by limiting the influence of antagonistic politics on religious communities. Secondly, we can talk about *ad hoc*, short-term, "damage control" actions, which respond only to the actual events deemed to have disturbing effects on the local or the countrywide interreligious relations. Besides praising the potentials of organized interreligious encounters as pointed out during Phase I, the interviewees never mentioned nor envisioned, let alone elaborated on, any systematic mid- and long-term approach to substantially address the general situation. In this regard, interreligious relations could finally be labeled as highly pragmatic. They are responsive to geo-political and historical contingencies, which may also imply a certain level of fatalism and a lack of conceptualization of the future.

Pragmatic character of these relations may also be illustrated with a fact one of the respondents presented. In essence, it seems there is no theological animosity between different religions in a sense that there is no public debate about theological ideas and dogmas, hence no mutual denial between different religions exists on these terms.[49] So, all contested interreligious issues allegedly arise mostly from secular, or better to say, political domain. In conclusion, we

[48] Simplistically, it is a traditional type of social behavior in BiH in which neighbors, regardless of their ethnicity, religion or any other social status, exercise a whole spectrum of reciprocal material and symbolic exchanges beneficial for everybody: from helping each other in various occasions, through everyday socialization, respecting each others' religious affiliations and celebrations, to mutual marriage witnessing and even interethnic marriages. For more insight into *komšiluk* see Zilka Spahic Siljak, "Merhametli Peace is Woman's Peace," in *Women and Peace in the Islamic World: Gender, Agency, and Influence*, ed. Yasmin Saikia and Chad Haines (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014); cf. Tone Bringa, *Being Muslim the Bosnian Way: Identity and Community in a Central Bosnian Village* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

[49] This conclusion, drawn solely on the respondents' opinions, should not be taken as to suggest that there is no theological dispute between religions in general in BiH. A content analysis of school textbooks used in the academic year 2005/06 revealed there were many examples in religious education textbooks that did not support the development of a mature and intrinsic religiosity among the students; it was mostly about the creation of stereotypical images of one's own religion and of the religion of "others", where these "others" were not only the adherents of other religions but also those belonging to the same religion who were not "true believers"; moreover, religious education textbooks treated the diversity between religions as well as diversity between religion and irreligion as a problem, thereby enforcing a social distance among the students; cf. Dženana Husremović et al., *Obrazovanje u Bosni i Hercegovini: Čemu učimo djecu? Analiza sadržaja udžbenika nacionalne grupe predmeta*, Dženana Trbić ed. (Sarajevo: FOD BiH, 2007), 176.

can characterize interreligious relations in BiH as being a matter of power relations at their core.

In a complex framework of various factors influencing interreligious relations, it seems that most of the respondents, both politicians and clerics, agree about IRC being important, if not the only, systematic channel to mediate these factors and to contribute to the improvement of these relations.

Vertical Communication Channels Within Religious Structures

In the chapter following Phase I research findings we hypothesized that there existed a disconnection between higher and lower structures within both religious and political hierarchies to which a production of conflicts might be attributed. Before posing this question, the team presented to the interviewees our findings from Phase I and we particularly stressed negative opinion of the role of higher levels of authority that representatives of the grass roots often complained about. We particularly asked our respondents whether the lower religious or political leaders did articulate their problems and present them to their higher leadership and whether such vertical communication channels did function inside their own organization. The following table represents answers given by all twenty-three respondents in both phases of the research to the question on quality of communication or cooperation within religious and political structures.

Table 1: Respondents' Opinion on Vertical Communication or Cooperation Between Higher and Lower Levels of Religious and Political Structures

				Religious Structures			Political Structures		
No.	**Phase**	**Sector**	**Respond**	**Pos**	**Neutr**	**Neg**	**Pos**	**Neutr**	**Neg**
1	II	CSO	C4			x		x	
2	II	Pol	P5			x	x		x
3	II	Pol	P6			x	x		
4	II	Pol	P7			x	x		x
5	II	Rel	R10	x					x
6	II	Rel	R11	x					x
7	II	Rel	R12	x		x			x
8	I	CSO	C1			x			x
9	I	CSO	C2			x			x
10	I	CSO	C3		x				x
11	I	Pol	P1	x		x			x
12	I	Pol	P2		x		x		
13	I	Pol	P3		x			x	
14	I	Pol	P4		x		x		
15	I	Rel	R1		x			x	
16	I	Rel	R2			x			x
17	I	Rel	R3			x	x		x
18	I	Rel	R4		x				x
19	I	Rel	R5		x			x	
20	I	Rel	R6		x				x
21	I	Rel	R7			x			x
22	I	Rel	R8		x				x
23	I	Rel	R9	x		x			x
Total:				**5**	**9**	**12**	**6**	**4**	**16**

As showed in Table 1, there was a noticeable difference in the answers between clerical and secular respondents in Phase II regarding the communication within religious structures. While all three representatives of religious communities praised good quality of vertical communication inside their religious hierarchies, which allegedly ran smoothly in both top-down and bottom-up directions (R10, R11 and R12), politicians and a CSO activist had negative opinion (C4, P5, P6 and P7). Some respondents gave more than one opinion on the same issue, though.

In Phase I, in contrast, majority of both secular and clerical respondents gave neutral to negative opinion on the communication within religious communities. To express the answers from Table 1 in percentage, more than half of all respondents (twelve out of twenty-three or 52 percent) estimated the quality of this communication as negative, while positive answer

was given by 22 percent (five out of twenty-three) of respondents. Finally, although similar communication within political structures was tackled only marginally, answers given by the respondents suggested that the image of the political sphere was more negative than that of religion (sixteen out of twenty-three or almost 70 percent).

Turning back to specific Phase II answers, HDZ politician said that "political vertical communication was a bigger problem" than the same communication within religious communities (P5). In contrast, politicians from both Serb Democratic Party (SDS) and SDA claimed there were problems with the communication inside religious structures, which they linked with the instances of religious hierarchy's stepping into the political sphere for the private interests of certain clerics (P6), or with the phenomenon of intertwined interests between the politics, business and religion (P7). All three politicians, however, agreed that vertical communication inside each of their own political parties was good, claiming that in each case the local branches of their respective parties regularly reported to the central party bodies, which then acted top-down to solve incidents or major problems in the affected localities (P5, P6 and P7).

CSO representative gave the most critical answers. He simply said "there is no communication from lower clergy towards higher religious structures." (C4) What is interesting to note is that he linked this lack of communication with the general lack of "civic consciousness" of the population at large, where the citizens were rarely in a position to act at the grass roots and where "the people are generally poorly educated about their own religion" and displayed "frightening level of ignorance, primitive pseudo-religiosity and banality in the comprehension of faith." (C4) He also added a negative opinion about "global trends of retraditionalization, emotionalization and increasing spirituality outside of the organized religion, which sometimes act as opium for the masses with severe manipulation of the people." (C4)

Analysis

Expectedly, both politicians and religious leaders who were interviewed in Phase II confirmed the existence of structured hierarchical vertical channels of communication within religious communities, both top-down and bottom-up. Politicians additionally confirmed the existence of similar channels within their respective political parties.

In practice, these vertical relations are by no means simple and straightforward as formal hierarchy structure might suggest.[50] Generally, although higher instances admit there is a need to get information from the grass roots, they seem to be more in favor of regular top-down, order implementation relationships, sometimes expressing a patronizing tone towards lower instances. On the other side a number of local actors, usually indirectly, complain about too general attitudes taken or badly informed decisions made by higher instances. These local respondents rarely name their own religious or political structures, talking instead about "higher politics."

It may be concluded that, to a great extent, vertical communication within religious structures depends on regional and local situation, minority-majority relations and, what is probably the most important, on the personalities at stake; on their position, interests and agendas, as pointed out by many respondents.

[50] For instance, there were cases inside the Islamic Community when, despite Grand Mufti's authority to appoint local imams, certain Jamat Boards in local communities denied such appointments by higher religious authority. For this observation we are thankful to prof. Dino Abazović.

Role Of Religious Leaders In The Peace-Building And Their Limitations

Results from the research during Phase I showed that the role of religious leadership at the grassroots level was to establish and maintain the balance between cooperation and antagonism mainly through controlling the image of both their own religious community and the communities of "others". These leaders also acted in a way to bridge a gap between grassroots needs and political needs of higher structures as well as to suppress rather than to resolve the conflicts. At the local level, where one religion is usually a religion of the majority population, the research team also found that negative or reserved attitude towards interreligious dialogue could be found among the representatives of both majority and minority religions, depending on the personal clerical positions, particular locations and the social context. When conducting Phase II of the research we repeated the same question but now having in mind the general BiH context.

When asked about their opinion on the role of clerical leaders in the processes of reconciliation and peace-building, both Catholic and Orthodox clerical respondents said their clerics were obliged by their faith to act as peace-makers, but also that it was "not necessary to make a big show-business about reconciliation" (R11) and that "the church is not a CSO because it cannot act on short-term projects." (R12) Islamic respondent was more ambiguous and he just said that their top religious leadership at the Riyasat "prepares a common weekly Friday sermon (*hutba*) containing precisely defined tasks for Islamic clerics about particular topics." (R10) He also again mentioned examples of negative behavior on the part of CC regarding raising crosses on public land that ran against reconciliation practices and complained that he could not get a clear position of the church authorities on this issue, except that they allegedly said "it was the politicians raising crosses, not us." (R10) In contrast, he mentioned affirmative examples of his Islamic co-religionists inviting their Christian neighbors to attend the reconstruction and opening of new mosques when the latter responded positively to their calls.

All politicians and the CSO representative agreed that religious leaders had enough space for their activities, "perhaps even more than necessary." (C4) HDZ politician added that the space was "perhaps bigger for Catholic clerics because church going is higher among the Catholic Croats and Catholic priests always speak publicly about reconciliation." (P5) SDA politician said that religious leaders were supposed to work on the reconciliation processes but they did not do it sufficiently. He concluded that "many individual clerics are doing a great job, but there are also those who do not, so that most of these issues should be considered at the personality level." (P7) SDS politician additionally mentioned the problem of unregulated legal status of clerics, nontransparent funding of religious communities and the "need for the state to supervise the spending of such funds." (P6)

Again the most critical view of the role of religious leaders came from the CSO representative. Sudden opening of the public space during the collapse of the socialist system in the late '80s took the religious leaders by surprise, so "they stuck to nationalism and pseudo-religiosity." (C4) Even HDZ politician agreed that "during the '90s it became fashionable to attend the church." (P5) "Many clerics behave irresponsibly towards the public sphere and they often maintain strong relations with political power." (C4) It is noteworthy mentioning that similar to the Islamic cleric who also praised the past Yugoslav society, CSO representative said "it is harder to openly be atheist today than it was to openly be religious in the previous system." (C4) He concluded that religious leaders had power, authority and influence (this was also admitted by the Catholic cleric), which could be used in a positive way but that it was not always the case.

Analysis

Unlike the majority of local religious leaders who are actively engaged in the activities of interreligious reconciliation and peace building, religious leaders from higher levels see their role in terms of sending (theological) message on peace and love primarily to their own congregations. Only occasionally, for various ceremonial events where presence of different religious representatives is welcomed and expected, do they give such statements in a more general or inclusive manner.

Such "self-oriented" attitude is actually challenged by political and CSO representatives who recognize great symbolic potential of religious leaders for the promotion of religious tolerance. They think these potentials are not used to the full scale of possibilities. Even popular trust in religious leaders, in terms of their capacity for the reconciliation process, as presented in another previous study,[51] though slightly higher than that of politicians, seems to be much lower than that of other figures who would represent all citizens inclusively.

Two important reasons were pointed out. One reason is a huge dependence on personalities at stake: it mostly matters who is a person in charge both in the field and inside higher structures, and what are their interests and agendas. So again, this points out to a lack of systematic efforts. The other reason lies in the collapse of socialism and sudden opening of the public space. Instead of repositioning themselves toward the "open society," religious communities continue to play a protective role for their followers, who coincide in most cases with ethnic denominations. This situation forces religious leaders to play along the identity politics and to be involved in ethno-political antagonism. It is something that most of the interviewed religious leaders are aware of now and most of them somehow look for a way-out towards repositioning themselves. However, these "identity protective" practices are well established and it seems it would be quite hard to overcome them.

Interreligious Cooperation And Its Implications For The Development Of Civil Society

Besides the general conclusion in Phase I that the state of interreligious relations in local communities rested on a fine balance between antagonism and cooperation, the research team did not pose a specific question on the nature of this cooperation at that time. We only learned about several empirical examples of past events that emphasized the role of interreligious encounters in the public space as perhaps the only way for a viable interreligious cooperation in the future. This time in Phase II we asked more specific questions about the nature of this cooperation and its prospects towards a better communication with the CSOs. Most of our respondents, however, could not give us any substantial response besides some general remarks.

The nature of cooperation was to some detail explained only by the Islamic cleric with respect to his own religious community and even then only between religious leaders: "We always recommend our imams to maintain good neighborly relations and we remind them they are obliged to cooperate with priests of other religions." (R10) He also reiterated the importance

[51] The survey conducted in 2013 on the sample of 2 060 respondents across BiH showed that teachers (67,2% respondents answered "important" or "very important") and figures representing all citizens and not any one single ethnicity (72,7%) were most trusted to advance the reconciliation process, while politicians (48,6%) and religious leaders (54,3%) fared lower; cf. Wilkes et al., Factors in Reconciliation, 6.

of encounter between the clerics of different religions, "especially when done in public space, because it helps promote mutual cooperation and dialogue" and said that "our imams have excellent cooperation with Christian priests as well as with the citizens of non-Islamic background." (R10) Other responses tackled the question of civil society only in general terms. We can here again contrast the generally positive view of current interreligious cooperation highlighting the good work of IRC as presented by politicians and clerics (such as P5, P6 and R10), with radically negative estimate of the CSO representative who said that "there is almost no cooperation at all, especially at higher levels [of religious communities]." (C4) Only HDZ politician was somewhat uncertain, questioning the extent to what "the higher religious levels send positive messages to their lower levels." (P5) He also rhetorically asked "to what degree and how the media follow these [interreligious] relations and cooperation" saying that "perhaps not enough has been done so far." (P5) SDA politician referred to a local traditional customs where both Muslims and Orthodox Serbs together celebrate St. Peter's Day as an example to follow in order to "strengthen the multireligious dialogue in a practical way" and that should be based on "patriarchal morality including preservation of religious values." (P7) Catholic and Orthodox clerics did not mention any cooperation between religious leaders at this point.

We also asked our respondents to give their interpretation of the fact that many CSOs are rather critical of the work of religious communities and to explain whether there are possibilities to rebuild collaboration and to improve communication channels with the civil society. The CSO representative elaborated at length what he saw as a problem. According to his opinion, religious communities view CSOs as their competitors because "their interests and activities are partly overlapping." (C4) Because "religious communities act as a sort of parallel societies, there is a latent antagonism between religion and the civil society." (C4) Despite the opinion that religious communities are actually a sort of CSO and that they should be a model for other CSOs, especially in "discussing a number of common themes such as people's dignity, human rights and social issues," (C4) currently the networking process between them is not going in a desirable direction. In contrast, two politicians (HDZ and SDS) were critical of the civil society actors. The former painted a particularly negative picture of the civil sector saying that "many CSOs are manipulated by the politics" and that the so-called "civic model" of the society building "is not suitable for Croats because it is promoted by Bosniaks who prefer it since they are a majority." (P5) Many CSOs, according to his opinion, misuse the institutions of civil society and create animosity against civil society in general, while they "should be more tolerant, not exclusive." (P5) Additionally, he said that "many CSOs are critical of religious communities because 90 percent of their activists are atheists." (P5) The latter respondent was more moderate saying that "religious communities have great influence on the public opinion and they have potentials to contribute more to the development of civil society." (P6) Thus, they bear great responsibility since they should act as the avant-garde of the society, while in reality "there is still plenty of space to be filled with the activities aimed at interethnic reconciliation and humanitarian issues." (P6) Without mentioning any, he said there were some negative examples of CSO activity. Among the clerics, the Orthodox said "there should be synergy between religion and civil society" because "a believer must also be a citizen," while he saw positive results in the process of building civil society in spite of "occasional missteps." (R12) Catholic cleric, without specifically referring to CSOs, was of the opinion that it was "essential for religious communities to be present in the public space" and that they "should be allowed more to come up with their own initiatives, because we have the right to public speech and to work on social issues." (R11)

Analysis

Probably no question brought such heterogeneous answers as the one about the implications of interreligious cooperation for the development of the civil society. They range from labeling CSOs as predominantly "atheist organizations" who work in favor of one political ideology, namely "civic republicanism," which allegedly opposes ethnic identity politics, to those assuming that "there should be synergy between religion and the civil society," because "a believer must also be a citizen." The conclusion made from these answers is that there is a huge misconception among majority of respondents about the civil society and its role. This kind of misconception is actually a general phenomenon in BiH, even among the members of the civil society themselves, which could be ascribed to a lack of understanding of democracy and democratic culture in general.

This misconception causes a great level of misunderstanding between religious communities, CSOs and politics, and it seems that the three sectors operate in the mode of antagonism based on mutual prejudices, rather than in the mode of synergy.

Also, one should not neglect an ideological aspect of this problem. CSOs are considered to be organizations promoting "liberal values" (or sometimes even "leftist agenda"), while religious communities and political parties at stake (all of which are self-declared "peoples' parties" – in a ethno-populist sense - *narodne stranke*) are thought to promote "traditional values."[52]

Religious Education In Public Schools And The Problem Of Juvenile Violence

When analyzing this issue in Phase I we found that, besides being generally praised as a classroom practice, confessional religious education in public schools was not recognized as a factor that might contribute to the improvement of interreligious relations in real life. The reason for this suspicion was connected with the existence of "dysfunctional families". This prevented the young people living under such "dysfunctional parenthood" from practicing what they had allegedly learned at religious education classes. This blame on the family deficiencies was also recognized as a strategy of religious leaders to avoid their own responsibility.

This question was repeated in Phase II in a somewhat streamlined form. We asked our respondents to evaluate the role of religious education in public schools after twenty-odd years of its practice in BiH, its real effects on the processes of interreligious reconciliation and we specifically asked whether the younger generations, who attended these classes, are more open for cooperation and ready for a dialogue across the religious divides than their parents were.

Firstly, the opinion on the very place of this type of religious education in public schools was repeated in a pattern similar to that in Phase I. All respondents but one agreed that confessional education was necessary to keep in public schools. It is interesting to note: while the only opposing voice in Phase I was a CSO activist self-identifying as irreligious person, now in Phase II the only differing opinion came from a CSO activist who is theologian. According to his view, "there was a big mistake when this type of education was introduced in the public schools curriculum in the first place" because "confessional type of religious education is not suitable for public schools." (C4) All other respondents, politicians and clerics alike, agreed

[52] Again, what is visible is a misconception that all civil society organizations promote exclusively liberal values, while there are in fact many CSOs promoting quite illiberal values. Yet, this binary opposition model - "liberal" vs. "traditional" - is taken as the main distinction.

that confessional religious education had to remain a part of the public schools curricula because it was either in line with their party programs (P5), they had a "positive attitude" to remain in public schools (P6), it was a "consensus among all religious communities," (R11) "our permanent policy" (R10) or because it was simply "necessary." (R12) SDA politician explicitly linked this issue with a political conflict between his party and another party, saying that "children who attend religious education classes usually do not become supporters of SDP."[53] (P7)

When speaking about the purpose of this type of education we heard answers that "it can turn students into better persons," (P5) "it is important for the students' character building" and that "the kids have accepted religious education as something good," (P6) "we believe that it helps inform the students about their own identity" and it "represents a great democratic success" (R11) as well as that "religious education can give positive values, to teach the children about positive relationship towards oneself and towards others." (R12)

Regarding the questions about the quality and effects of this program several respondents agreed that "classes are not sufficient for the above goals" (P5) and that "attending these classes did not mean that the pupils will become religious persons" (R12), because regarding religious practice the focus had to be on the family or on the religious community or on both (P5, P6 and R12). CSO representative estimated there was "a great level of ignorance among the students about religion in general" so that they might acquire "dangerous knowledge" concerning the images of "others," especially because the quality of teaching staff was "not very good," while some textbooks had intolerant content that was only recently improved (C4). Islamic cleric confirmed that "textbooks for religious education courses have been prepared in coordination among the representatives of religious communities in order to avoid including a content potentially offensive for other religions." (R10) The problem of segregation among the students along the religious divides during these classes was recognized by SDS politician who "would not like to see these classes used for segregating the pupils" (P6) and by SDA politician who blamed it on "monoethnic grouping in schools." (P7) For the Catholic cleric, solution to this problem was "in order to suppress segregation, the teacher [of religious education] must take care of the minority religion pupils so that they should not feel segregated." (R11) He also said that the quality of these classes depended on the person of a teacher.

We hereby note a difference in opinion regarding the alternative course called "the culture of religions". While SDS politician and Islamic cleric both gave affirmative opinion about this non-confessional religious education program, Orthodox cleric said he was not in favor of this alternative course.

Regarding the question whether the younger generations are generally more open towards "others" than their parents, the CSO representative warned that given the circumstances surrounding the education system "the younger generations are to be turned into religiously exclusive persons, which may lead to dangerous situations." (C4) Answers given by politicians and clerics were polarized. HDZ and SDA politicians as well as the Orthodox cleric agreed that "they are worse than their parents,"(R12) and "more nationalistically oriented" (P7) because "the young people are subject to many negative influences from the society that is too liberal offering the Internet, night clubs, consumerism." (P5) On the other hand, the SDS politician and the Catholic cleric opined that the younger generations were more open and tolerant than their parents, because they had "stronger feeling and respect for their own identity" (P6) and "exactly because they are young." (R11) Finally, although expressing negative opinion about

[53] Social-Democratic Party or SDP is often deemed to support irreligious values since it developed through the reformation of their antecendent, the League of Communists.

the younger generations who acted "sometimes aggressively due to their isolation from their peers and family while living under a globalized system of values," the Orthodox cleric saw a contradiction in the recent case of catastrophic floods that affected BiH when "many young people were actively engaged in delivering humanitarian aid. They seem to be negative, but maybe it is a sign of a new era that only appears as negative to us, an older generation." (R12) Still, he warned about what he saw as instability of their characters that might be used for dangerous purposes in the future.

Analysis

Confessional religious education is one of the issues where common understanding between politicians and religious leaders seems to be the most coherent. Since the expected results of this type of education were pointed out by the respondents as to encompass the building of personality, of identity, etc., one can hardly avoid the impression that it is really a matter of power to be gained through public education system in general, and through the process of religious indoctrination of youngsters in particular.[54] Yet, almost everybody agrees that this is not enough and that the religious community and the family should provide more effort in the process of upbringing the children with regards to religion.

A number of interesting points came out from this topic. None of the respondents acknowledges that it is their obligation to improve this type of education; religious leaders blame the politicians, and the politicians blame the "complicated state."

Another important characteristic is that a number of respondents, politicians and clerics alike, make suggestion on the ways to avoid segregation of students during religious education classes. This indicates poor awareness that introduction of this type of religious education into public schools curricula has been, along with the courses belonging to the so-called "national group of subjects,"[55] an integral part of the overall ethnically segregationist educational system(s) in BiH.[56]

However, none of the interviewees, apart from the CSO representative, link religious education with the current condition of the youth – whether they perceive it as bad or as good. Again the responsibility is projected on the family and the society in general, thus making a link between religious education and its consequences incoherent, obscure, and basically an ideological one.

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[54] It seems also that this type of education is well founded in the previous system either through the subject of "Marxism" or through all spectrum of humanities and social sciences taught during socialism.

[55] That is, Mother Tongue, Geography and History; cf. Husremović et al., *Obrazovanje u Bosni i Hercegovini*..., 11-12.

[56] Introduction of the confessional type of religious education (*vjeronauka*) into public schools curricula was contemplated already in 1991, when ethnopolitical parties took power, while under severe war circumstances in 1994, when any public discussion on the subject was not possible, these courses started to be implemented; cf. Ibid., 148. A study of ideological instrumentalization of education in BiH conducted by Midhat Kapo shows, inter alia, that in general terms the textbooks for the courses belonging to the "national group of subjects" and for religious education are mono-ethnically oriented thereby promoting illegal segregation of students and of the society at large; cf. Midhat Kapo, *Nacionalizam i obrazovanje: Studija slučaja Bosna i Hercegovina* (Sarajevo: FOD BiH, 2012), 174. Religious education textbooks in particular contained, besides some positive and pluralistic values, many cases of glorification of own religion, treatment of religious diversity as a problem, imposition of the sense that one's own religion is threatened by others, implicit political messages, critical thinking being discouraged, while "non-believers" coming from own "ethnic" ranks are treated as inferior human beings; cf. Ibid., 175.; cf. Husremović et al., *Obrazovanje u Bosni i Hercegovini...*, 176.

Interreligious Relations In Sensitive Political Contexts: Corelation Between Religion And Politics In BiH

During Phase I the research team came to the conclusion that, in respect of their influence to the development of interreligious relations, there existed a visible difference between the local and the national socio-political levels. While the relations between religious leaders and the local politics at the grassroots level were found to be fair, higher politics at the level of BiH as a whole (and the media associated with it) were seen as disturbing factors. Moreover, results of the analysis suggested that the local leaders (both secular and religious) situated the reproduction and resolution of the conflict into the area of an unidentified higher politics of "nationalism-chauvinism," thereby avoiding their own responsibility. As a core question of the entire research project, this one was not only repeated during Phase II, but it was also stressed by asking several more specific sub-questions.

Thus, we first asked our respondents to what extent the politics in BiH could contribute to the improvement of interreligious relations. While most respondents did not answer directly, here are their views about this general issue. The CSO activist characterized the correlation between religion and politics in BiH as a "burdening relationship" where, ever since the first multi-party elections in BiH that took place in 1990, there had been a "close symbiosis between religion and politics" and where "frightening manipulation of religious symbols" had occurred (C4). SDS and SDA politicians were visibly critical against religious communities or against what they saw as "interference between religion and politics." (P6) The former said that his party (SDS), having reformed from the wartime past (when it was led by the war crimes indictee Radovan Karadžić), did not support this kind of interference and that religious communities should refrain from imposing a "totalitarian understanding of the society." (P6) The latter was similarly critical against both the politicians and the religious institutions. According to his view, "once the politicians start acting on behalf of God, it is a recipe for a disaster." (P7) This SDA politician also saw some murky economic interests as a motif for such a behavior by certain political leaders. He also noticed a paradox that "during communism the believers were appreciated as moral people, while today those who attend religious ceremonies are perceived as crooks [*muljatori*]." (P7) In contrast, HDZ politician was more inclined to respect a strong influence that CC had among the people, so it was "in the best interest of politicians to maintain fair relations with religious communities," while "there is still space to improve these [interreligious] relations." (P5) The Islamic cleric was perhaps the most direct when he said:

> It is not possible for the current politics to give contribution to the improvement of interreligious relations, since they were conceived during the war [...] when we had Greater Serbian, Greater Croatian and later even Greater Bosniak ideologies. (R10)

He added that "we need new political forces" because "the present politicians are too ethnically oriented [*nacionalno obojeni*]," and that this situation was unacceptable for ICBH.

Specific sub-questions tackled the issue of the demands or pressures posed from the politicians towards religious leaders and the problem of close relationship between certain political parties and religious communities. The Islamic cleric, who already expressed his bitterness over the politics in BiH, said that "almost every our imam was at some point put under the pressure of the politics." (R10) The Catholic cleric sounded less critical but he confirmed that "politicians do seek contacts with religious leaders, they come to the church

[... but they also] receive our clerics to talk to them." (R11) Yet he questioned the sincerity of their faith suggesting that these politicians appear at the places of worship mostly for the opportunistic reasons. The Orthodox cleric confirmed that the pressure from the politicians towards religious leaders "exists and has always existed" because "it is in the nature of politics to seek to extend or to affirm their power," (R12) although he denied his personal experience in this matter. All three political parties whose representatives were interviewed (SDA, HDZ and SDS) have generally been associated with each of the three major religious communities respectively (Islamic, Catholic and Orthodox). HDZ politician admitted that the majority of Catholic priests supported his party, although "we do not ask them to vote for us or to promote us because it is the matter of their personal choice." (P5) As an example of a strong influence religion had on the politics, he mentioned the case when his party lost local elections due to the influence of a local Catholic cleric who favored a rival political party (HDZ1990). The SDA politician specifically mentioned ICBH which "used to directly interfere with SDA policies" (P7) especially during the time of the former Grand Mufti Mustafa Cerić, when it got a negative image. The SDS politician stressed that his party "currently does not support interference between religion and politics" (P6) suggesting that it might have supported it in the earlier period, when the party had held power in RS. Similarly to this cautious or critical view of the religious leaders' interference into the political party affairs expressed by our political respondents, all three clerical respondents were in turn more or less critical against politicians and their perceived influence to the religious communities. The Islamic cleric said "we have no intention to interfere into the matters of political parties" and that "no religious community should promote any one political party," admitting that SDA had conducted such an influence in the past, so "we still have mixed feelings about SDA." (R10) The Catholic cleric also admitted that "there were cases in the past when HDZ and individual Catholic priests traded services among themselves." (R11) The Orthodox cleric saw no "real political parties here, we can only talk about some interest groups" in which "we have been looking at the same persons for a long time [...] regardless of their nominal party membership or the election results." (R12) The CSO representative highlighted material/financial interests at the core of this "burdening relationship," mentioning the example of religious buildings reconstruction projects after the war when these activities were "conducted in close partnership with politicians and almost exclusively along the political party lines, outside of state or public institutions." (C4)

When asked about their opinion on the fact that some higher religious leaders publicly advised the citizens how to self-identify during the population census in October 2013 (see Annex 1), the Islamic cleric and the SDA politician provided similar explanation. ICBH was actively involved in the public advocacy "because it was motivated by the belief that Bosniaks [Bosnian Muslims] should register for the census in the places of their pre-war residence as of 1991." (R10) In a similar manner, these "activities of religious communities were positive in terms of advocating that the people of BiH should register [for the census] in their pre-war places of residence." (P7) None of respondents actually mentioned the problem of politicization of (ethnic) self-identification, or of the census in general, except the Catholic cleric who said that "the [Catholic] church issued just a general instruction for the census, including the one saying that the Catholics should freely declare their ethnicity [*narod*], which cannot be 'Bosnian' but mostly 'Croat' or perhaps 'Slovene' or some other minority." (R11) The Orthodox cleric, in contrast, said that "our [Serbian Orthodox] church did not suggest to the people how to declare" and that "from religious perspective this issue should not play any big role." (R12) Finally, the SDS politician observed that religious leaders' advocacy for the census was "understandable," (P6) while the CSO activist remarked that this "census politicization mostly happened in FBiH." (C4)

Finally, within this broad topic the respondents were asked about their opinion on the existence of "radical" or "fundamentalist" religious groups in BiH, and whether they represented a real threat to the social stability. The only such groups actually identified and confirmed by our respondents to exist in BiH were Islamic Salafis (Wahhabis) and Christian Charismatics (although it was not specified whether the latter belonged to the Catholic or the Protestant branch or both). Orthodox Christian Zealots were mentioned to exist in Serbia but not in BiH. SDA and SDS politicians generally tried to minimize social influence of such groups by saying that "traditional Bosnian Islam belongs to Hanafi madhab [school of jurisprudence] and about 95 percent of Bosnian Muslims reject such radical versions of Islam," (P7) and "it is true they exist but I think they are not very influential to the degree that they may become dangerous" since "this type of behavior is not accepted by the society at large." (P6) The CSO representative highlighted that, although small in numbers, these communities might have "potentially big destructive power." (C4) They are especially destructive for the state and for democratic institutions, so it is "basically the responsibility of the state to fight them because these groups often violate the law." (C4) Mentioning the example of increasing number of "Charismatics" who stress emotional aspects of religion, the CSO activist warned that if religion were separated from rationality it would lead to fundamentalism. Therefore, according to his opinion, these groups "should be neither neglected nor overrated" but "we should closely follow their work and try to decrease their power." (C4) The Islamic cleric spoke about the "Salafis" who were present but who were actually "imported from outside BiH during the war," while "many of them in fact have no connection with Islam." (R10) He mentioned personal experience that "in some cases when they were killed and their bodies taken for the preparation for Islamic burial, we found out that many of them had not been even circumcised in a proper Islamic manner." (R10) The Catholic cleric did not mention existence of any radical group within CC but agreed that "radical Islam is present" and that "it is a potential threat." (R11) Whether it was a real danger or not "depends on the institutions of ICBH," where the incumbent Grand Mufti Kavazović was praised as "more confident to deal with this problem than it was the case with his predecessor." (R11) The Orthodox cleric explicitly denied existence of any fundamentalist movement within SOC in BiH, such as "Zealotism", and made general observation that "severe living conditions may push certain people to turn to religion," and that sometimes "it is difficult to distinguish between a religion or faith and a psychiatric condition or illness." (R12) He concluded that "these groups are dangerous for the society because they present a false image of the relationship between the human being and God." (R12)

Analysis

From the conducted interviews it is more than evident that the relations between religion and politics in BiH are very complex, with numerous factors affecting them both. It is about the heterogeneity in both these areas that determine complex intertwining among the actors: four main religions[57] and quite a number of political parties with more or less affiliation towards particular religious communities or religion in general. To narrow the area of research we have chosen three most numbered and powerful religious communities, namely Islamic, Orthodox and Catholic, and political parties which have the longest history of cooperation and ideological affinity with these religious communities, namely SDA, SDS and HDZ respectively.

[57] Besides three major religious communities studied in this research, the Jewish Community may also be counted as one of the four "traditional religions" that historically had a significant role in the society. Although numerically small, the Jewish Community is prominently represented in the IRC (unlike other minority religious communities), while on occassion the political sphere in BiH was marked by "Jewish element", such as in the notorius legal case of "Sejdić and Finci Vs. BiH" before the European Court of Human Rights.

The key concept around which cooperation and ideological affinity between religion and politics has been built is the concept of ethnicity. Due to geopolitical and historical reasons, which cannot be elaborated here,[58] ethnic identity in BiH evolved from the three mentioned religious communities, so basically we are operating with the notion of ethno-religious groups.[59] For the same reasons modern politics has been deployed in "ethnic registers" and operates as ethno-politics.[60] Having ethnic identity at the core of their activities, the main narrative[61] and the practice of both religious and political actors exhaust themselves in the idea of "protecting (their own) people," which also involves identity (re)building.[62] It is religious heterogeneity of BiH population that is a precondition for these practices.

The second important link, mentioned by a number of respondents, is the collapse of socialism and opening of the public space, both for religious communities and for political pluralism. In the previous system the former were marginalized and to a great extent pushed into the private sphere, while the latter did not exist in the organized form of a multi-party system. "Ethnic" political parties then appeared as the only (viable) alternative after the break of socialism and logically their most "natural" allies had to be "ethnic" religious communities. So one may say that these two social structures jointly adventured with the aim to conquer the public space and take the power, all based on the narrative of "protecting our people." Somehow, this can be seen as a mutually instrumental and very pragmatic move. Particularly the war events of the '90s give "justification" for such a protective behavior, and the living memory of the war still determines both religious and political relations.

None of the interviewees, except the CSO representative C4,[63] challenges the existence of these "ethnic" links between politics and religion. However, most of them express a kind of criticism towards the other pole within their own "ethnicity" (clerics towards politicians and vice versa), whether for the abuse of religious symbols done by politicians, or for directly interfering in politics done by religious leaders. It seems that this strong "ethnic" link has been to some extent exhausted in terms of mutual benefit, and even became to a certain degree counterproductive for both religious leaders and politicians.

Interestingly, there is a prevailing opinion that new political forces/relations are necessary to move on, and these should not rely upon "nationalist-chauvinist" agendas that had brought to the war. Of course, none of the respondents suggests as to who these new forces might be. Rather than some genuinely new "players", it seems that certain evolution within the existing

[58] See Robert J. Donia and John V. A. Fine Jr., *Bosnia and Herzegovina – A Tradition Betrayed* (London: Hurst and Company, 1994); cf. Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia – A Short History* (London and Oxford: Pan Books and Basingstoke, 2002).

[59] Besides the obvious examples of this duality in the cases of Serbian (Orthodox) Church [*Srpska crkva*] and (Catholic) Church of Croats [*Crkva u Hrvata*], it is worth mentioning that the Constitution of ICBH (Art. 1) defines Bosnian Islamic community as a community of both Islamic believers living in the country and of ethnic Bosniaks living outside the country; cf. Annex 2, Chapter 1.2.

[60] We refer here to the modern politics since the establishment of modern political parties in BiH in the early 1900s, until the World War II, and the recent period after socialist era, although nonexistence of ethno-politics in the period of socialism 1945-1990 could be challenged; cf. Ugo Vlaisavljević, *Etnopolitika i građanstvo* (Mostar: Dijalog, 2006). On the Bosnian ethnopolitics also; cf. Asim Mujkić, *We, the Citizens of Ethnopolis* (Sarajevo: Centar za ljudska prava Univerziteta u Sarajevu, 2008).

[61] This narrative can be summarized by quoting a respondent from Phase I when he said that only "once you know your own identity you can respect others." (R6) The respondent talked about ethnic [*nacionalni*] group identity, as something a person is supposedly born into, hence not subject to change. This manner of thinking in terms of "categorical identities," which is a dominant practice in the political discourse in BiH, claims for instance that in order to respect other individuals or groups, a person cannot stand as individual human being, a citizen, but must do it as a member of a "categorical identity" instead; cf. Craig Calhoun, *Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 42.

[62] This process of identity (re)building is again confirmed by the case of politicization of the population census in 2013, see Annex 1; cf. Fetahagić et al., *Popis 2013 u BiH...*

[63] See his answers on the first question about general state of interreligious relations in BiH.

establishment is being expected on all sides.

However, what might be concluded about these attempts to move on from the status quo is that it is mostly about re-composition of power and defining areas of its exercise among the players, rather than systematic political and social engagement aimed to improve interethnic and interreligious relations on both the national and the local scale as a precondition for fair social distribution. So it seems that in short-term a continuity of balancing between cooperation and antagonism in interethnic and interreligious relations will remain a dominant practice. While for a long-term development of these relations, beyond declarative support for democratization processes, nothing can be said, because no respondent projects their thinking for such extended period. Until the appearance of some feasible long-term vision, it seems that Močnik's formulation of the practice in which "antagonism is the specific mode in which co-operation is performed"[64] is at work.

[64] Rastko Močnik, "The Balkans as an Element in Ideological Mechanisms," in *Balkan as Metaphor: Between Globalization and Fragmentation*, ed. Dušan I. Bijelić and Obrad Savić (Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 2002), 84.

ANNEX 1 - ROLE OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN THE POLITICIZATION OF THE POPULATION CENSUS 2013

a) A Press Analysis

Within the framework of the research project "The Dynamics Between Religion and Politics in Sensitive Political Contexts: Case of Bosnia and Herzegovina" a monitoring of the press in relation to the population census has been included in this report. Since the census of 2013 was the first one conducted in BiH as an independent country (the last census took place back in 1991, when BiH was still a constitutive republic of SFR Yugoslavia) and observing the fact that it was to be undertaken in the period when the main project had already started (October 1-15, 2013), the research team took this opportunity to explore the issue of expected politicization of religious and ethnic identities and to include it into the main report. Observations presented in this annex can also serve as a supplement to the analysis on dynamic relationships among higher levels of religious and political power, which were examined in Phase II of this research.

However, given the "marginal" nature of this press analysis, only limited methods were used for this purpose, and regarding the publishing period these were:

1) Intensive day-to-day monitoring focused on the two-week period preceding the beginning of the census, that is September 15-30, 2013, and screening two daily papers, and

2) Non-intensive monitoring within a more extensive period, starting from July 19, 2013 and ending on October 11, 2013, using random selection of various publications.

Regarding the type of press, this monitoring included the following:

1) General (secular) press – two Sarajevo-based daily newspapers (*Oslobođenje* and *Dnevni avaz*), including the Internet sources, and

2) Religious press – two issues of bi-weekly Islamic bulletin *Preporod* (published by the Riyasat of ICBH in Sarajevo), one issue of Orthodox occasional bulletin *Dabar* and one issue of biannual Orthodox bulletin *Soko* (both published by the Dobrun Monastery under the auspices of the Metropolitanate of Dabar-Bosnia of SOC), two issues of Catholic weekly *Katolički tjednik* (published by the Archbishopric of Vrhbosna in Sarajevo), one issue of Catholic monthly *Svjetlo riječi* (published under the auspices of the Franciscan Province *Bosna Srebrena* in Sarajevo), two issues of Catholic monthly *Naša ognjišta* (published in Tomislavgrad) and one issue of Catholic monthly *Glasnik mira* (published in Međugorje), including the Internet sources.

The above sources were scrutinized using qualitative analysis with special focus on the use of

words[65] and images linking religion with ethnic-national issues in the context of public debates surrounding the questions on "ethno-cultural characteristics" of the population (questions number 24-26 in the personal questionnaire form "P-1"). The following discussion focuses on several key themes identified within the political discourse in the press.

b) Moral Panic of Being or Not Being "Bosniak"

By far the most vocal and politically active were the advocates of "Bosniak identity". Institutionally, this advocacy was concentrated around the "Foundation Census 2013", with five member institutions: The Council of the Bosniak Intellectuals' Congress, the Bosniak Cultural Community *Preporod*, the Bosniak Institute – Adil Zulfikarpašić Foundation, the Islamic Charitable Society *Merhamet* and ICBH, as presented in a leaflet insert of *Preporod* on October 1, 2013. Individuals associated with these institutions as well as certain like-minded intellectuals and publicists were active in the campaign called "It is important to be Bosniak" [*Bitno je biti Bošnjak*].[66] Essentially, this campaign reflected a sense of fear spread among certain strata of the society, with its concentration in Sarajevo, that a considerable number of persons, instead of identifying along the officially established (constitutional) norm as "Bosniaks", would choose some other, non-ethnic or trans-ethnic label or would deny any such "ethnic-national" self-identification during the census.[67] The most frequently mentioned examples for the latter were "Bosnians" [*Bosanci* or *Bosanci i Hercegovci*], as those identifying primarily with BiH as a nation-state in terms of citizenship, and "Muslims" [*Muslimani*] as those identifying primarily in this ethnic-religious term, a remnant from the past socialist times.[68] Thus, a sociology professor from the University of Sarajevo warned about the existence of those persons active in public and political discourse

> who would gladly see one ethnic group [*nekog naroda*] decreased in numbers, and who would like to position this group in terms of social status in a wrong way, or to disorientate and frustrate them.[69]

The Mufti of Banja Luka, while proposing what we may mark for the purpose of this study as "tripartite building block of identity construction", similarly warned about the existence of the enemies of Bosniaks:

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[65] All direct quotations in this section are translated to English by Sead S. Fetahagić. Original wording is occassionally included in the square brackets for the sake of linguistic comparison.

[66] Maja Radević, "Povratak popisanih, Popis stanovništva 2013," *Slobodna Bosna*, September 12, 2013, 31.

[67] A sociological study conducted by Dino Abazović in 2007 on the sample of 500 persons self-identified as Bosnian Muslims confirms that only 22,7% of respondents chose "national self-identification" as "Bosniak" [*Bošnjak*], with additional 16,8% as "Bosniak/Muslim" [*Bošnjak/Musliman*], while more than 55% self-declared just as "Muslims" [*Musliman*]; cf. Abazović, Bosanskohercegovački muslimani, 122.

[68] In fact, it would be wrong to translate this specific ethnonym *Muslimani* simply as "Muslims" in English, in the meaning of Islamic adherents, because the former expression referred to something much wider than a mere religious identity, but for the sake of simplicity the English form "Muslims" is still retained. For a better understanding of these identities a semantic observation is needed nonetheless. *Muslimani*, written with the capital "M" in Serbo-Croat, during the period of the socialist Yugoslavia and under the ideology of Titoist "brotherhood and unity", were politically recognized as *narod*, a sort of ethnic "nationality" along with Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Montenegrins and Macedonians, in contrast to the word *muslimani*, written with lower case "m", which denoted adherents of Islam. For a detailed background; cf. Sead S. Fetahagić, "Islam in Socialism and Post-Socialism," in *Contesting Female, Feminist and Muslim Identities: Post-Socialist Contexts of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo*, ed. Zilka Spahić-Šiljak (Sarajevo: Center for Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Studies, University of Sarajevo, 2012), 114-15.

[69] N. Šunj, "Nekima je stalo da se narod dezorijentira," *Dnevni avaz*, September 23, 2013, 8.

> Our faith is Islam, our ethnicity [*nacija*] is Bosniak [*Bošnjak*] and our language is Bosnian [*bosanski*]. To propose any other combination, to confuse or to change these tags is the deed of those people who have been for centuries wishing no good for Bosniaks.[70]

An Islamic scholar and *Oslobođenje* columnist, confirming the fact that ICBH was actively engaged in the pro-Bosniak campaign, explained that this religious institution

> had to do this mostly because there was a trap set for Bosniaks in the census questionnaire forms allowing them to ethnically declare under religious nomination as "Muslim".[71]

An unbreakable link between the identity of Bosniaks as a "nation" and Islamic faith was also presented by an imam as one of essential conditions even for the very survival of Bosniaks.[72] Such a public discourse resembles the characteristics of a "moral panic", as described by Stanley Cohen in 1972, when a

> condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians, and other right-thinking people.[73]

In short, the one who might disagree with such a normative proposition for this ethnic self-identification is considered enemy of the people and of the established social order. It is important here to understand that the historical roots - when Slav Muslims in the former Yugoslavia struggled for the most part of the twentieth century to preserve or to redefine their identity in response to the processes of Croatisation and Serbisation or under the Yugoslav concept of "brotherhood and unity"[74] and the recent war when their community suffered more losses in comparison to others - had heavy impact on today's identity crisis and fear among certain strata of Islamic population in BiH.[75]

Different explanations notwithstanding, we shall look here at the elements constituting this "tripartite building block of identity construction." Public actors affiliated with all three major religions in BiH provided some clues in their public speeches.

c) Tripartite Building Block of Bosniak Identity Construction

Besides the above examples, there are some additional statements reflecting the discourse on Bosniak identity. An author and journalist claimed that a Bosniak should identify exclusively as a Bosniak and that his language could only be Bosnian [*bosanski*]. Regarding religion, he opined that this question was "of personal nature, but it is expected that majority of Bosniaks claim it is Islam."[76] A well-known academician and a pundit wrote a pamphlet published in

[70] A. Džonlić, "Popis će biti ovjera jedinstva i identiteta," *Dnevni avaz*, August 12, 2013, 8.

[71] Dževad Hodžić, "Popis Bošnjaka," *Oslobođenje*, October 4, 2013, 10.

[72] Muhamed Velić, "Bošnjaci po svojoj mjeri, popis kao propis," *Preporod*, July 19, 2013, accessed September 3, 2013, http://www.preporod.com/index.php/component/k2/item/255-bo%C5%A1njaci-po-svojoj-mjeri-popis-kao-propis.html

[73] Ronald Burns and Charles Crawford, "School Shootings, the Media, and Public Fear: Ingredients for a Moral Panic," *Crime, Law & Social Change* 32 (1999): 148.

[74] Fetahagić, "Islam in Socialism," 111-19.

[75] Valery Perry, *The 2013 Census in Bosnia and Herzegovina – A Basic Review: DPC Policy Note New Series #03* (Sarajevo: Democratization Policy Council, 2013), 13-14.

[76] M. Dedić, "Trud je uzaludan ako se neki Bošnjak izjasni kao musliman," *Dnevni avaz*, September 20, 2013, 12.

Dnevni avaz, concluding that

> we should be true to ourselves and declare, according to the historical truth and the right of our people [*našeg naroda*], regarding our ethnicity as Bosniaks, regarding our religion as Islamic believers and regarding our mother tongue as the speakers of the Bosnian language.[77]

On the same page *Dnevni avaz* published an image of the part of the census form P-1 with three questions on "ethnic-cultural characteristics." The three questions were reproduced in a way so to suggest "correct answers," namely the Question 24 on "ethnic/national declaration" suggested the answer "Bosniak" [*Bošnjak*], the Question 25 on religion suggested the answer "Islam" [*islamska*] and the Question 26 on "mother tongue" suggested the answer "Bosnian" [*bosanski*].[78] The heading of the page carried the logo of the Alliance for Better Future (SBB), a political party headed by the incumbent Minister of Security of BiH, who had been the founder and longtime director of this daily paper. A few days later the same political party held a meeting whereby this "tripartite block" was re-affirmed.[79]

Finally, an instruction on how to respond to the census questions came from the highest Islamic authority in BiH. In late September a Friday sermon by the Grand Mufti was read during the *juma* prayer in the mosques across BiH and in the diaspora. On that occasion he spoke about the upcoming census and stressed the importance of ethnic self-identification [*narodnosnim određenjem*] under the name "Bosniak" [*Bošnjak*], of the preservation of Bosnian language [*bosanski*] and of declaring affiliation to Islam.[80] On the first day of the census, Grand Mufti again stressed this issue by saying "as Muslims we know our confession is Islam and we shall say so to the census takers," while regarding the questions of "ethnic or national" [*etničke odnosno nacionalne*] identity and of mother tongue he summarized: "We, Bosniaks, shall say we are Bosniaks and that our mother tongue is Bosnian [*bosanski*]."[81]

To show that the process of identity building ran smoothly in practice, *Dnevni avaz* carried stories about elderly and presumably less educated people in small villages in central Bosnia who apparently learned to repeat the three elements of this identity construction exactly as tutored by the political, intellectual and religious authorities.[82]

d) It Is Important To Be "Croat" and "Serb" Too

Although most prominent in respect to Islam[83] this ethnic identity construction efforts were present also among the affiliates of other two major religious communities. Somewhat less specific in terms of giving "correct answers" to all three census questions 24-26, CC stressed that equalization between religion and ethnic identity was unambiguously a very important

[77] Muhamed Filipović, "Bošnjaci, budite Bošnjaci," *Dnevni avaz*, September 24, 2013, 2.

[78] This "instruction" was in fact misleading. The suggested answers had already been pre-defined as "closed" answers in the Census form. They could have been given by crossing the corresponding cross-boxes and not by writing the actual answers into the "open" free text boxes as depicted in the graphic. However, this false instruction carried a strong visual propagandistic effect when seen on a newspaper page.

[79] A. Dž. "Bošnjaci, budimo Bošnjaci!," *Dnevni avaz*, October 4, 2013, 8.

[80] "Reis Kavazović: Izjasnite se kao Bošnjaci," Radiosarajevo.ba, accessed September 28, 2013, http://www.radiosarajevo.ba/novost/126716/reis-kavazovic-izjasnite-se-kao-bosnjaci; cf. *Preporod*, September 15, 2013, 27, 31.

[81] Reis Husein ef. Kavazović, "Obaveza važna za BiH i njen napredak," *Dnevni avaz*, October 1, 2013, 3.

[82] A. Džonlić, "Što prave dramu, zna se da smo Bošnjaci!," *Dnevni avaz*, September 26, 2013, 9.

[83] Press monitoring focused on the publications issued or available in Sarajevo, which is urban center with Islam as the majority religion of its citizens.

issue. The Archbishop Metropolitan of Vrhbosna in Sarajevo sent a circular instruction to all parish priests in BiH in late August to remind the Catholic believers about their civic duties regarding the population census:

> It is a moral duty of every Catholic to publicly and proudly express their religion and always identify as Catholic, even under such circumstances as the population census [...] And it is an honorable duty to keep and cherish one's ethnic identity [*narodni identitet*], especially now in BiH where almost all Catholics belong to the Croat people [*hrvatskom narodu*].[84]

Similarly, the Bishop of Banja Luka instructed all his parishioners that every Catholic should clearly declare his/her religious and ethnic [*nacionalni*] identity.[85] Unlike the Catholic prelates, some politicians claiming to represent the "will of the Croat people" were more consistent in following the "tripartite building block." Thus, Deputy President of HDZ appealed to "all Croats in BiH to declare as Croats, Catholics and as those who speak Croatian language."[86] Even their eponymous mother-party in the neighboring Republic of Croatia appealed to all Croats of the Bosnian background who lived in Croatia to turnout for the census "because the future position and status of Croats [*hrvatskog naroda*] in BiH would depend on the results of this census."[87] There were in fact concerted efforts not only by political parties but also involving CC in Croatia, the Croatian Radio Television (HRT) and even the Croatian Government, in what strikingly resembled the pro-Bosniak campaign from the preceding chapter:

> all Croats with BiH citizenship have a "patriotic duty" to get enumerated and to declare themselves as Croats and Catholics, with Croatian as their mother tongue.[88]

As far as the representatives of SOC are concerned there were no explicit statements regarding the census issues published in the sources consulted during this monitoring. Still, public speeches implying what a true SOC adherent or a "true Serb" should feel about ethnic self-identification were detected. Thus, during his official visit to the Metropolitan Bishopric of Dabar-Bosnia and to both cities of Sarajevo (in FBiH) and East Sarajevo (in RS) in mid-September, the Serbian Patriarch said it was most important that Serbs in times of great spiritual, moral and material crisis, should survive as a people [*narod*], and should keep their faith, culture and language.[89] A Sarajevo parish priest reportedly said during a sermon that "ethnic essence [*nacionalno biće*] of the Serb people" should be based on the ideal set by medieval prince, monk and archbishop St. Sava.[90] Metropolitan of Dabar-Bosnia made clear what was unnatural and potentially dangerous for a Serb:

> To change their religion, for Serbs it means to change their spirit and civilization [...] It is clear that by denying their Orthodox faith they also deny their soul. [Therefore] for Serbs it is natural to be Orthodox Christians, and unnatural to be anything else.[91]

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[84] "Uvijek se izjasniti katolikom," *Oslobođenje*, August 30, 2013, 5.; cf. Katolička tiskovna agencija Biskupske konferencije Bosne i Hercegovine, "Poruka kardinala Puljića u vezi s predstojećim popisom stanovništva," August 28, 2013, accessed September 3, 2013, http://www.ktabkbih.net/info.asp?id=38966

[85] "Komarica pozvao katolike na popis," *Oslobođenje*, September 13, 2013, 11.

[86] Radević, "Povratak popisanih," 33.

[87] "Splitski HDZ pozvao bh. Hrvate na popis," *Oslobođenje*, September 27, 2013, 6.

[88] Tijana Cvjetićanin, "Having an EU Neighbour: How Does It Affect Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina?," *Novi pogledi* 22 (2014): 19-38, accessed October 16, 2014, http://www.acips.ba/bos/uploads/novi%20pogledi/np22.pdf

[89] "Patrijarh Irinej pozvao sarajevske Srbe da sačuvaju svoju vjeru, kulturu i jezik," Dabar info, Informativna služba Mitropolije dabrobosanske, accessed September 16, 2013, http://www.mitropolijadabrobosanska.org/vijest324.html

[90] Dabrov informator 46, *Dabar* 46, 2013, 10.

[91] "Privrženost svojoj veri – jemstvo nacionalne pripadnosti," *Soko* IX, 23-24 (2013): 5.

Thus, although publicly presented in slightly different forms, all three major religious communities in BiH (or more specifically, their clerics and top-level authorities), together with a number of politicians and intellectuals, agreed that every inhabitant of BiH should ideally choose only one of the three prescribed "tripartite building blocks of identity construction." Each of these blocks consisted of "correct" lexis and morphology regarding the proper names for the purpose of self-identification of one's "ethnicity/nationality", "religion" and "mother tongue."

Within that process, each of the three identity markers was set in a way that, by opting for only one of them, a person should willy-nilly accept the other two simultaneously. Legal requirement that the Question 26 on "mother tongue" was mandatory (which ran against the recommendations of the Eurostat) enabled smooth building of these blocks, especially when formulated in a manner to resemble "narrow conceptions of mother tongue that might serve as an ethnic marker or proxy."[92] For example, if a person XY were irreligious and/or did not wish to ethnically declare (two non-mandatory questions), by choosing to name her mother tongue "Bosnian" (mandatory question) she put herself in a position to be further identified along the "building block" as ethnic "Bosniak" (although she might have perceived herself just as a Bosnian national/citizen), and by extension also an adherent of Islam as a "culture" (see the following chapter).

An argument often proposed was that such self-identification of citizens carried important political implications due to the constitutional structure of BiH as a state. But, before we address this argumentation, it is noteworthy mentioning some alternative views and misconceptions on the subject matter.

e) Alternative Views, Misconceptions and Politicization of the Census

Even inside the "pro-Bosniak camp" one could find opinions that the "tripartite building block" ought not be based on accumulation of all three elements. A professor of Oriental Studies at the University of Sarajevo wrote in *Oslobođenje* that equalization between the affiliation with Bosniak ethnicity [*naciji*] and Islamic religion was "wrong and can be counter-productive, because one should respect the fact that there are Bosniaks who are not religious at all."[93] Some of the "pro-Bosniak" campaigners, such as one former politician and businessman and one author, similarly advocated that the "Bosniak" self-identification needed not be accompanied by Islamic religious self-declaration, because they were motivated primarily by the idea that the population should ethnically declare based on the constitutional categories of "constituent peoples."[94] In a similar fashion, a professor of international law stressed, in an interview published in *Dnevni avaz*, that "Bosniak" is not religious but ethnic category and that not all Bosniaks need be Muslims.[95]

An argument for the imposition of these rigid ascriptions of ideal ethnic-cultural identities to the BiH citizens during the census ran along the line that the act of giving answers to those

[92] Perry, *2013 Census in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 9.

[93] Esad Duraković, "Zamke i zablude u nacionalnom izjašnjavanju," *Oslobođenje*, September 2, 2013, 11.

[94] Radević, "Povratak popisanih," 31.

[95] A. Hadžić, "Bošnjaci neće nasjesti na novo jugoslavenstvo," *Dnevni avaz*, September 18, 2013, 5.

questions would have serious political ramifications based on the political system of ethnic quotas as established by the Dayton Peace Agreement and the constitutions of both entities (RS and FBiH). Although it is true that the law requires ethnic quotas among the appointees and civil servants in the executive bodies based on 1991 census (while its consistent application in practice should be subject to detailed investigation), this argument shows utter confusion and misconception about the purpose of the population census as such,[96] which was evident in several public statements by both religious and secular persons.

Major confusion about whether the census was all about registering documented facts or just opinions and beliefs of individuals was noticed in the press statement by the Director of the Agency for Statistics of BiH. On the first day of the census he said that

> all citizens must be registered and they must give full and correct answers. It means that by giving answers to the census taker they assume responsibility for giving incorrect or false answers [but also that] the census taker must not ask for a personal ID card or any other document from the interviewed citizen, because the census is a statistical research based on declaration of the interviewed person.[97]

How an interviewed citizen was supposed to give correct answers to the census questions without checking and presenting personal or other documents in case of not knowing a particular answer (for instance about some technical aspects of the housing) was not explained by the Director.

Having admitted that "even noble feelings such as the feeling of belonging to a religious community or to an ethnic group [*narod*] might be abused for the purpose of taking power," the General Secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of BiH could not resist mentioning the present political construction of BiH "in which Croat people should be equal with other two constituent peoples."[98] Since, according to a professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences, "Bosniaks have resolved their national question [*nacionalno pitanje*] and this census shall just confirm such a status,"[99] self-declaration of ethnic membership at the census was understood as a political act of intent aimed even to reverse the processes of ethnic cleansing during the recent war. The Vice-Chairman of the Assembly of RS and member of SDA said that the census represented a "chance for all of us to at least partially neutralize the effects of ethnic cleansing, by our self-declaration."[100] Another Islamic scholar, overtaking a role of a legal expert, wrote an opinion on the consequences of "incorrect" self-identification:

> Due to the fact that constitutions and laws in BiH recognize only the category of Bosniak, [as one of three constituent peoples] it is obvious that Bosniaks must clearly and unambiguously declare as 'Bosniak' for this census. All answers in different modalities like 'Muslim', or different variants such as 'Bosniak-Muslim', 'Bosniak-Bosnian', 'Bosnian-Muslim' or 'Muslim-Bosnian' will statistically be processed and put into the category of 'Others'.[101]

In order to prevent such an undesirable and perilous outcome, the Bosnian muftis expressed concern during one of their meetings that there was a lack of code-book [*šifrarnik*] whose purpose would be to interpret and classify an expected array of different answers by citizens

[96] The problem of a conflict between technical and political aspects of the census is not unique to BiH and has been detected in other countries as well; cf. Perry, *2013 Census in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 2-4.

[97] Lana Rizvanović, "U narednih 15 dana, popisivači kucaju na vrata," *Oslobođenje*, October 1, 2013, 3.

[98] Radević, "Povratak popisanih," 33.

[99] Rizvanović, "U narednih 15 dana," 2.

[100] Ibid., 3.

[101] *Preporod*, September 15, 2013, 31.

written down as "freely expressed" on the open lines of the questionnaire forms. Therefore they felt competent to instruct the statistical agencies to enable consolidation of the expected variety of answers such as "Bosniak", "Bosnian-Muslim" or "Muslim" into only one category or code as "Bosniak."[102]

It is noteworthy mentioning that even the very notion of "religion" was subject to different interpretations in the Bosnian context. For instance, there were opinions that Islam was not (only) a religion but a culture. According to the Islamic bulletin *Preporod* the census question about religion, or more properly translated as "confession" or "faith" [*vjeroispovijest*], was

> neither related to the personal conviction, nor it represents a level of individual belief, nor whether a person is committed to various forms of religious or confessional practice. The primary meaning here relates to the religious cultural values that a citizen respects as his tradition, so within this context the answer "ISLAM" primarily means the Islamic cultural values[103]

and

> Islam is not just a religion but also a specific cultural universe [so that] Bosniak culture is impossible to imagine without Islam, which essentially shaped it.[104]

Finally, a serious misunderstanding about who should actually be registered on the census could be seen in public calls to all the people, who had been forced to leave their pre-war homes during the war in Bosnia, to return to the places of their pre-war residence and to register there for the census,[105] even if some of those "diaspora" members could no longer be considered the residents or citizens of BiH.

An Op-Ed writer of *Oslobođenje* noted the absurd of ethnic self-identification in the example of the RS Government where a minister coming from the ruling party, the Alliance of Independent Social-Democrats (SNSD), had occasionally been "Serb" or "Croat" as well as "Bosniak", depending on the actual political circumstances. Politicization of these non-mandatory questions was linked with the future ethnic parity in the process of assigning ministry appointments, judicial functions, and executive positions in the public enterprises.[106] Another *Oslobođenje* Op-Ed reminded the readers that the same "pro-Bosniak" political, religious and intellectual elite who had been a starch opponent to the ethnic identification of the Bosnian citizens in the past, suddenly changed their mind and raised this issue to the level of the Hamletesque dilemma "to be or not to be."[107] Even the prominent American author of Bosnian background observed, in the online article titled "The Last of the Bosnians," that the ongoing Bosnian census had no other purpose but to provide the ethnopolitical parties [*nacionalnim strankama*] with a mandate based on ethnic numbers, concluding that this "census is perhaps one of the last operations of the state actively working on its own demise."[108] Publication of the complete census results, including the data taken from the infamous three questions about "ethnic-cultural characteristics," might

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[102] Mina/Fena, "Naglašena važnost i za IZ," *Dnevni avaz*, September 24, 2013, 8.

[103] *Preporod*, September 15, 2013, 31.

[104] Mevludin Dizdarević, "O identitetu, bošnjaštvu, bosanskom jeziku i islamu," *Preporod*, October 1, 2013, 37.

[105] "Reis Kavazović: Izjasnite se kao Bošnjaci," Radiosarajevo.ba; cf. "Obaveza važna za BiH i njen napredak," *Dnevni avaz*, October 1, 2013, 3.

[106] Gordana Katana, "Popis ili prebrojavanje nacija, vjera i jezika," *Oslobođenje*, October 1, 2013, 11.

[107] Gojko Berić, "Što nas ima, mašala," *Oslobođenje*, September 26, 2013, 10.

[108] Aleksandar Hemon, "Posljednji Bosanci," Radiosarajevo.ba, accessed October 7, 2013, http://www.radiosarajevo.ba/novost/127669/posljednji-bosanci

even pose a risk of deepening ethnic rifts as suggested by December 2013 IWPR Report.[109]

f) Conclusion

To conclude this press analysis, we can say the following. According to the views, opinions and public statements documented in this text, the first population census in BiH after the dissolution of SFR Yugoslavia was not understood in terms of a procedure to establish demographic, social and economic facts about the residents and their households in BiH, but in terms of a political opportunity to incite the citizens to "cast votes" for (or against) one or another "constituent people." This happens in a manner similar to the one seen during the political parties' campaigns for general elections. Since ethnic numbers are extremely important for the very existence of political and institutional setting in the countries defined as "ethnic-democracies,"[110] it is no wonder that the public discourse about the census in BiH displays characteristics of a sociological moral panic. In order to affirm and cement the ethnic nature of "constituent peoples," tripartite building blocks of identity construction - ethnicity, religion and language - were publicly advocated and enforced. Given the fact that our primary focus in this research was politicization of religion or religious identities, the results of this analysis show that all three major religious institutions (ICBH, SOC and CC) and their clerical representatives more or less politicized the questions of religious and ethnic identities along the lines of secular intelligentsia in their efforts to come up with the "final political solution" to the "national question" in the contemporary BiH context.

[109] Institute for War & Peace Reporting, "Bosnian Census Risks Deepening Ethnic Rifts," accessed December 23, 2013, http://iwpr.net/report-news/bosnian-census-risks-deepening-ethnic-rifts

[110] Dejan Jović, "Važnost brojeva u etnodemokracijama," *Novosti* 592, April 23, 2011, accessed December 23, 2013, http://www.novossti.com/2011/04/vaznost-brojeva-u-etnodemokracijama

ANNEX 2 - ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN BIH

Purpose of this annex is to provide an overview for better understanding of internal organizational structure of three major religious communities in BiH that were studied in the main part of the report. Each of them shall be presented starting from a brief historical background in the modern, post-Ottoman era. This shall be followed by geographical and demographical presentation and finally by their current internal organizational and legal structure.

1. Islamic Community in BiH

1.1 Brief History

Following the 1878 occupation of BiH, Austro-Hungarian authorities made efforts to take control of the appointment of senior religious leaders in all three major confessional groups.[111] Since Islam now lost its privileges of the established religion, which it held for centuries under the Ottoman rule,[112] new authorities strived to ensure loyalty of Muslims by making tactical moves, such as the signing of the Istanbul Convention in 1879 guaranteeing the Bosnian Muslims' right to maintain spiritual links with the Grand Mufti of Istanbul.[113] The strategy of the Habsburg Court was, however, to ensure that no external authority would have any role in the appointment of senior religious leaders but the Emperor-King of Austria-Hungary himself, which meant in the case of Islam to separate ICBH from the Islamic authorities in the Ottoman Empire. Finally, the Emperor-King appointed the first Bosnian Grand Mufti (*Raisu-l-ulama*) in 1882 as the supreme Islamic leader,[114] along with the four-member Religious Council (*Ulama Majlis*) as a precursor to modern *Riyasat*.[115] The question of legitimacy of the Grand Mufti

[111] Malcolm, Bosnia, 144.

[112] During the Ottoman rule Islam was the established religion of the Empire, so the Muslim community had no need for separate and autonomous religious institutions. Besides his political and military role, Ottoman Sultan simultaneously held the position of the Caliph, the supreme Islamic authority, given that Islam was inseparable from secular political structures of the state. However, as the Sultan was getting more engaged in political and military affairs, a hierarchy of Islamic scholars (*ulama*) headed by the Grand Mufti of Istanbul (*Sheikh ul-Islam*) was assigned to administer the interpretation and application of Islamic law (*sharia*), including the giving of obligatory legal opinions (*fatwa*). In the Bosnia Vilayet, which was an Ottoman province in the decade preceding the Austro-Hungarian occupation, local Islamic leaders (*mufti*) and Islamic judges (*qadi*) in principle acted as representatives of the supreme religious authority of the Grand Mufti of Istanbul; cf. Abazović, *Bosanskohercegovački muslimani*, 63.; cf. Enes Durmišević, *Uspostava i pravni položaj Rijaseta Islamske zajednice u Bosni i Hercegovini 1882-1899* (Sarajevo: Magistrat, 2002), 93-95, 98-99.

[113] Durmišević, *Uspostava i pravni položaj Rijaseta*, 101.

[114] Ifet Mustafic, "Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina," in *Religions in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Profile of Religious Communities and Churches*, ed. Ifet Mustafic (Sarajevo: Interreligious Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2012), 21.; cf. Abazović, *Bosanskohercegovački muslimani*, 66-67.

[115] Durmišević, *Uspostava i pravni položaj Rijaseta*, 113.; cf. Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 21.; cf. Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 144.; cf. "History," The Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, accessed February 27, 2014, http://www.rijaset.ba/english/index.php/modules-menu/history

institution and of ICBH, as an Islamic polity independent from the Ottoman Caliphate and subject to a non-Islamic ruler, was solved applying liberal interpretation of the Hanafi school of law within Sunni Islam,[116] the one traditionally present in the Ottoman Balkans since the early sixteenth century.[117] Yet, only the third successive Bosnian Grand Mufti finally received a formal charter (*Manshurah*) from the Grand Mufti of Istanbul licensing him to appoint junior muftis and qadis – a practice that continued until the abolishment of the Caliphate in 1924.[118] In spite of proclaimed autonomy of ICBH, Austro-Hungarian state retained supervision and administration of Islamic endowment institutions and properties (*vakuf*), which sparked off a political movement for religious autonomy amongst Bosnian Muslims. Following the 1908 Annexation of BiH, Islamic Autonomy Act of 1909 guaranteed *de jure* full autonomy of ICBH.[119]

Under the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes that was formed in 1918 the Bosnian Muslims were subjected to a wider and formally unified Islamic organization in the new state, which included also some non-Slav (e.g. Albanian, Turkish) linguistic groups.[120] Although ICBH retained much of its autonomy, the Grand Mufti of Sarajevo exercised in fact little authority over the Muslim communities outside BiH.[121] The latter ones (in Montenegro, Serbia proper, Kosovo and Macedonia) were subordinated to the Royal Government in Belgrade thus making the Islamic community in the Kingdom fragmented. Following King Alexander's dictatorial measures ICBH became a part of the centralized Islamic Religious Community of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia as of 1930, albeit with much of its previous autonomy being revoked.[122] According to the imposed Constitution of the Yugoslav Islamic Community in 1930, there were two religious councils (*Ulama Majlis*), in Sarajevo and in Skopje, and nine muftiates while the Supreme Religious Authority (*Vrhovno vjersko starješinstvo*) headed by the Grand Mufti was moved from Sarajevo to Belgrade.[123] New Constitution of the Islamic Religious Community was adopted in 1936 after the dictatorship ended. Muftiates were abolished while a single Ulama Majlis with a centralized Vakuf Directorate was reinstated and in 1938 the Grand Muftiate was relocated back to Sarajevo.[124]

Similar legal and organizational structure was retained in the Yugoslav Federation after 1945. New Constitution of the Islamic Religious Community was adopted in 1947, which reflected newly proclaimed principles of secularization and separation of church and the state.[125] In this period the state abolished Islamic courts, banned veiling of women and closed down Islamic elementary schools, while the Islamic establishment itself shut down all Sufi houses (*tekke*).[126] According to this Constitution there were four regional Vakuf Councils (Sarajevo, Skopje, Priština and Titograd/Podgorica) that elected members of the Ulama Majlis, while the central Vakuf Council in Sarajevo elected the Grand Mufti of the Supreme Islamic Authority (*Vrhovno islamsko starješinstvo*). Muslim women gained voting rights for the Islamic bodies, while all members of the Islamic Religious Community were treated equally regardless of ethnicity.[127]

[116] Durmišević, *Uspostava i pravni položaj Rijaseta*, 116-117.

[117] Henri Laoust, *Vjerske podjele u islamu* (Sarajevo: Rabic, 2004), 280.

[118] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 22.

[119] Ibid.; cf. Durmišević, *Uspostava i pravni položaj Rijaseta*, 134-41.; cf. Abazović, *Bosanskohercegovački muslimani*, 68-69.

[120] Abazović, *Bosanskohercegovački muslimani*, 71.

[121] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 23.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Ibid.; cf. Abazović, *Bosanskohercegovački muslimani*, 72.

[124] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 23-25.; cf. Abazović, *Bosanskohercegovački muslimani*, 73.

[125] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 24.

[126] Fetahagić, "Islam in Socialism", 112.; cf. Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 44.

[127] Abazović, *Bosanskohercegovački muslimani*, 79.

Islamic elementary schools were reinstated in 1953,[128] while the Association of Islamic Clerics (*Ilmiyya*) was re-established in 1950 as an integral part of the mass political organization - the Socialist Alliance of the Working People of Yugoslavia - that took care of their legal status and labor rights.[129] Yet another reorganization followed the 1969 Constitution when jamat councils were abolished and muftiates reinstated. The name of the religious community was now shortened to simply "Islamic Community".[130] During 1977, the same year when the Islamic Theological Faculty was established in Sarajevo, the Supreme Islamic Authority of Yugoslavia renewed the activity of Sufi tekkes in BiH,[131] while some Albanian-speaking tekkes in Kosovo separated from the Yugoslav Islamic Community forming an independent association of dervish brotherhoods.[132] In the eve of dissolution of SFR Yugoslavia the new Constitution of the Islamic Community was adopted in 1990 that proclaimed stricter application of Islamic law and more independence from the government interference in religious matters. The titles of the bodies of Islamic authority (*starješinstvo*) were renamed so that the Supreme Authority was now called "Riyasat", while a regional body was called "Mashikhat".[133] Following the independence of BiH from Yugoslavia the new Constitution of ICBH was adopted in 1997.

1.2 Geography and Demography

According to Art. 1 of the 1997 Constitution, ICBH has been defined as "the sole and united community of Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina, of Bosniaks outside their homeland, and of other Muslims who accept it as their own."[134] The same article regulates that there are three mashikhats on the territories of the former Yugoslav Republics that are integral parts of ICBH: Mashikhat of the Islamic Community of Sanjak (in the Republic of Serbia), Mashikhat of the Islamic Community of Croatia and Mashikhat of the Islamic Community of Slovenia. Additionally, there is another "Mashikhat" - the Islamic Community of Bosniaks in Germany, with its seat in Wiesbaden, organized as "Federal umbrella organization of its members, local Islamic religious communities of Bosniaks and other nationalities in Germany,"[135] which is also a part of ICBH. The Council of ICBH, as a supreme legislative body, apart from consisting of deputies from eight elective districts in BiH and from three above-mentioned mashikhats, also includes representatives from three "diaspora" regions: Western Europe, North America and Australia.[136] It should be noted, however, that there are several autonomous Islamic communities on the territories of former Yugoslavia that are not affiliated with ICBH. Islamic Community of Kosovo, Islamic Community in Montenegro and Islamic Community in Macedonia have retained their traditional autonomy inherited from the Yugoslav period and reorganized themselves as such during the period of dissolution of SFR Yugoslavia in the '90s. More recently, two Islamic communities separated from ICBH and organized themselves independently: Slovene Muslim

[128] Ibid.

[129] Sabrina Petra Ramet, *Balkan Babel: Politics, Culture and Religion in Yugoslavia* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 168. Ilmiyya Association was originally founded in 1912; cf. Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 46.

[130] Abazović, *Bosanskohercegovački muslimani*, 80.; cf. Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 25.

[131] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 44.

[132] Fetahagić, "Islam in Socialism", 116.

[133] Ibid., 117.

[134] English version of the Constitution is available at official Web site, The Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, accessed August 4, 2014, http://www.rijaset.ba/english/images/stories/Constitution.pdf

[135] Art. 1.3 of its Statute of Association; cf. "Satzung - Statut zajednice", IGBD - Islamische Gemeinschaft der Bosniaken in Deutschland - Zentralrat e.V., accessed August 4, 2014, http://igbd.org/?page_id=84

[136] Art. 63 of the Constitution of ICBH.

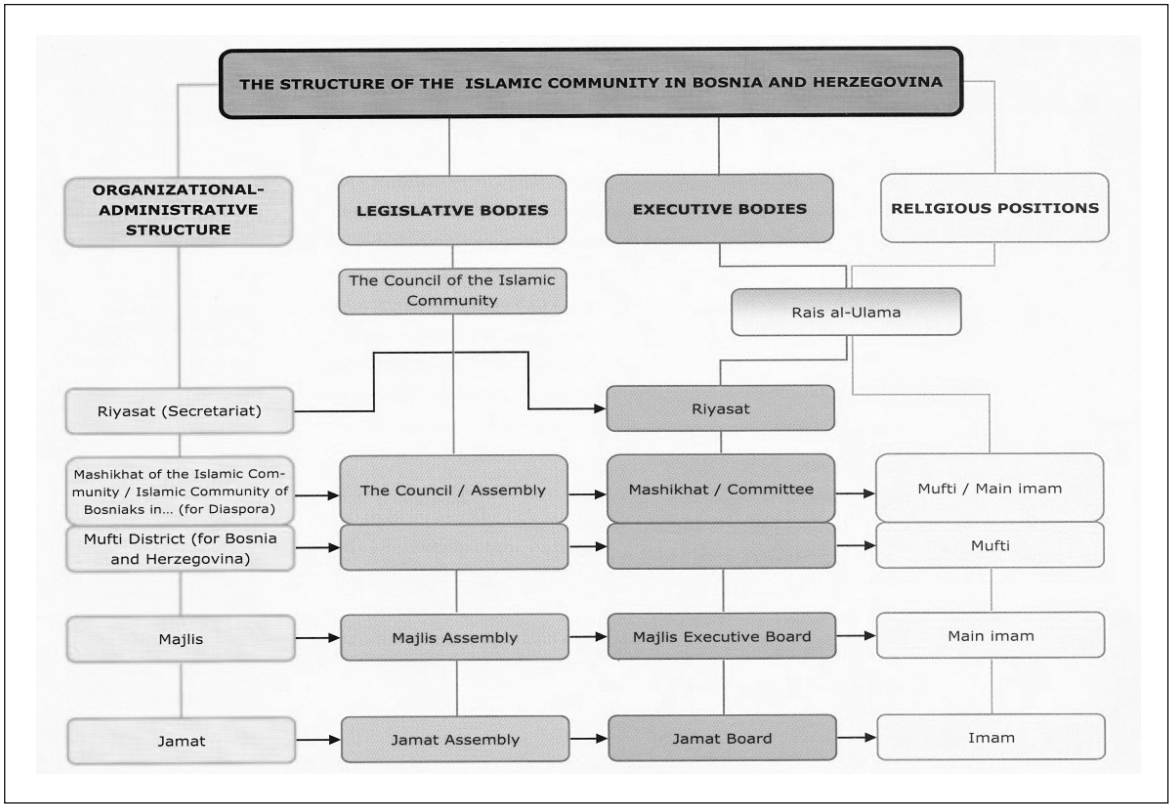
Community seceded from the Mashikhat of the Islamic Community of Slovenia in 2006, while Islamic Community of Serbia was organized in 2007 independently from the Mashikhat of the Islamic Community of Sanjak covering the whole territory of Serbia.

According to the population census in 1991 the number of self-identified Islamic adherents in the Republic of BiH was slightly less than 1 872 000 or about 43 percent of the Bosnian population,[137] while recent unofficial estimates speak about 2,16 million Muslims in BiH.[138] According to the same source, however, not all self-identified "Muslims" are actual members of ICBH.[139] The official membership figure is just 672 958 meaning that only about one third of all self-declared "Muslims" are members of ICBH. Results of the still unpublished latest census, conducted in 2013, are yet to prove or disprove these numbers.

1.3 Legal and Organizational Structure

According to its Constitution (1997) ICBH has been organized in a four-level pyramidal structure, with each level having its administrative tasks, official bodies and religious positions. Image 1 shows the organizational chart of the structure of ICBH.

Image 1: The Structure of ICBH



(Source: Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 39.)

[137] "Etnička obilježja stanovništva," 14. Ifet Mustafic came up with the number of almost 2,003,000 but without referencing any sources; cf. Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 27.

[138] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 29.

[139] Ibid., 27-31.

1.3.1 Jamat

Jamat[140] is a basic organizational unit of ICBH consisting of at least one hundred Muslim households in a given area. Jamat has a legislative (Jamat Assembly) and an executive body (Jamat Board). President of the Jamat Board as a layperson is elected by the Jamat Assembly, which also elects the members of Jamat Board and delegates for the higher bodies of ICBH. Imam is a religious position and he is also *ex officio* member of the Jamat Board. The Grand Mufti officially appoints imam after a public advertisement procedure conducted by the Jamat or the Majlis.[141] Currently there are 1 368 jamats in ICBH.

1.3.2 Majlis

Majlis[142] is a higher organizational unit consisting of at least seven jamats. Each Majlis also has a legislative (Majlis Assembly) and an executive body (Majlis Executive Board). President of the Executive Board as a layperson is elected by the Majlis Assembly, which also elects members of the Executive Board. Grand Imam is a religious leader who is also *ex officio* member of the Majlis Executive Board, and is appointed by the Grand Mufti upon the proposal by the Mufti in charge. Currently there are 91 majlises within ICBH.

1.3.3 Muftiate

Still higher organizational level is muftiate or mufti district,[143] which consists of two or more majlises. Unlike the two previous levels, a muftiate does not have its own legislative and executive bodies. A Mufti, as a senior religious leader, who is aided by his Mufti Council, heads a muftiate. This council consists of grand imams and directors of educational institutions in the muftiate. The Council of ICBH, upon the proposal by the Grand Mufti, appoints the Mufti. Currently there are eight muftiates in BiH, with their seats in Banja Luka, Bihać, Goražde, Mostar, Sarajevo, Travnik, Tuzla and Zenica, with a special Military Muftiate for the Armed Forces of BiH.

1.3.4 Islamic Communities of Bosniaks in Diaspora

There are special organizational units outside BiH that independently regulate their own affairs but legally belong to ICBH, respect its Constitution and recognize Bosnian Grand Mufti as their religious leader. Each of these communities has a legislative (Council or Assembly) and an executive body (Mashikhat or Committee) and is headed by a mufti or a grand imam. Currently there are thirteen such units outside BiH organized in the following countries: Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Germany (communities in these four countries are organized as mashikhats), Austria, the Netherlands (Benelux), Denmark, Finland, France, Norway, Sweden, Australia and North America (US and Canada). Each of these units is represented by certain number of selected members in the Council of ICBH in Sarajevo, while three members represent all Western European countries collectively.[144]

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[140] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 36.; cf. Art. 34-38 of the Constitution of ICBH.

[141] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 51-52.

[142] Ibid. 36-37.; cf. Art. 39-42 of the Constitution of ICBH.

[143] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 37.; cf. Art. 43-48 of the Constitution of ICBH.

[144] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 37-38.; cf. Art. 63 of the Constitution of ICBH.

1.3.5 The Riyasat, The Council and Other Top-Level Institutions

The Riyasat[145] is the top-level religious and administrative body of ICBH and is headed by the Grand Mufti (*Raisu-l-ulama*). It is also the highest executive body of ICBH and it consists of fifteen members including the Grand Mufti. Other members are either official members by their position (Deputy Grand Mufti, Secretary General of the Riyasat, presidents of mashikhats and Director of the Vakuf Directorate), or are selected by the Council of ICBH from the ranks of muftis, deans and directors of educational institutions and other distinguished members of ICBH.

Grand Mufti[146] is the presiding member of the Riyasat and is responsible to the Council of ICBH for his work. He is assisted by the Advisory Council and together with his Deputy and the staff makes the Cabinet of the Grand Mufti. Once the Council of ICBH nominates three candidates for each position of Grand Mufti and of Deputy Grand Mufti, a special elective body selects one of the candidates for Grand Mufti and one for his Deputy. The mandate of the Grand Mufti and his Deputy is seven years with possibility to be re-elected once. Upon the election, the Council of ICBH selects a special committee to hand over the *manshurah* to the new Grand Mufti. Secretariat of the Riyasat consists of five professional services (religion and education, legal and administrative, accounting and finance, building and technical and public relations) as well as several departments, commissions, agencies, centers and directorates.

The Council of ICBH (*Sabor*)[147] is the highest representative and legislative body, which *inter alia* adopts the Constitution and other regulatory acts, issues directives, adopts the budget of the Riyasat, appoints muftis, selects members of the Riyasat, appoints Secretary General of the Riyasat and members of the Constitutional Court. The Council consists of eighty-three members, it elects its President and nominates candidates for the Grand Mufti and his Deputy. The Constitutional Court of ICBH[148] is the highest body overseeing the constitutionality of the activities of all institutions of ICBH. It consists of five members appointed by the Council for a six-year mandate. Also within the structure of ICBH there is the Tariqat Center,[149] which oversees the activities of five active Sufi orders (*tariqat*) in BiH: *Naqshbandi*, *Mawlawi*, *Qadiri*, *Rufai* and *Halveti*. Shaykh heads each tariqat, while members of the tariqat (dervishes) are gathered in a tekke.

Among other institutions of special significance for ICBH[150] worth mentioning are: the Vakuf Directorate, primarily responsible for the protection of vakuf property (religious endowment), the Center for Islamic Architecture taking care of the buildings of ICBH, Ilmiyya Association takes care of the status of employees and retired persons of ICBH, Gazi Husrev-bey's Library and the Agency for Certification of Halal Quality.[151]

Islamic institutions of higher education in BiH are: The Faculty of Islamic Studies in Sarajevo (est. 1977), Islamic Faculty of Pedagogy in Zenica (est. 1993) and Islamic Faculty of Pedagogy in Bihać (est. 1995).[152]

Relations between ICBH and the state of BiH are regulated with the Religious Freedom Act of

[145] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 38-43.; cf. Art. 49-54 of the Constitution of ICBH.

[146] Art. 55-61 of the Constitution of ICBH.

[147] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 43.; cf. Art. 62-64 of the Constitution of ICBH.

[148] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 43.; cf. Art. 65-68 of the Constitution of ICBH.

[149] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 44-45.; cf. Art. 71 of the Constitution of ICBH.

[150] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 45-48.

[151] Halal quality certifies that a product (mainly food and drink) has been prepared or manufactured in accordance with the Islamic law.

[152] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 55-57.

2004,[153] a state-level law applying on the whole territory of BiH. According to its Art. 8, ICBH enjoys a status of a legal person that is also conferred upon some particular institutions of ICBH such as the Riyasat, muftiates and majlises. According to Art. 15, religious communities may regulate mutual obligations and rights with the state of BiH with a special agreement, but ICBH has yet to conclude such an agreement with the Bosnian government.[154]

2. Serbian Orthodox Church

2.1 Brief History

At the moment of the Austro-Hungarian occupation of BiH in 1878 the Eastern Orthodox Christians were organized in three eparchies (dioceses): Metropolitanate of Dabar-Bosnia in Sarajevo, Metropolitanate of Zvornik-Tuzla in Tuzla and Metropolitanate of Zachlumia-Herzegovina in Mostar. After the abolition of the Patriarchate of Peć in 1766,[155] all these eparchies had been subjected to the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and administered by Greek bishops (Phanariotes)[156] under the Ottoman millet system. As was the case with Islamic religious structures, the Habsburg Emperor-King's policy was to separate the Orthodox churches in BiH from their supreme religious authorities in the Ottoman Empire so as to obtain the power to appoint higher Orthodox clergy himself. To that end the Habsburg Court concluded a convention with the Patriarch of Constantinople in 1880 according to which Austro-Hungarian state was to pay annual tribute in gold to the Patriarchate while the Bosnian bishops were to be appointed by the Emperor-King and to receive salaries from the state treasury. The Patriarch retained canonical formalities,[157] but in effect the three Bosnian metropolitanates became autonomous.[158] Greek bishops were soon replaced with local clerics who took over the metropolitan seats in Sarajevo (1881) and in Mostar (1888), while the indigenous bishop in Tuzla had been already in place since the occupation.[159] Although nominally autonomous, the Orthodox community was under the Habsburg rule subject to frequent state's interference into internal matters of the church, especially in the matters of education, while the Roman Catholic episcopate simultaneously

[153] Full title of the act is "Law on Freedom of Religion and Legal Status of Churches and Religious Communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina", and it was published in the "Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina", 5/04.

[154] Mustafic, "Islamic Community", 63-64.

[155] The Patriarchate of Peć was established in 1346 by Dušan the Mighty. By expanding his territorial domains to include most of the Balkans, Dušan had ambition to occupy Constantinople and establish a new "Serbian-Byzantine Empire". To that end he proclaimed himself as "Emperor of Serbs and Greeks", but in order to do so a Patriarch had to crown him. Since he failed to capture Constantinople, there was no Patriarch in his domain, so he summoned a local church council whereupon the Archbishop was elevated to the rank of Patriarch. This first Patriarchate ended in 1459 under the Ottoman conquest of the Serbian Despotate. The Patriarchate was re-established in 1557 under the Ottoman rule - thanks to the efforts of Grand Vizier Mehmed Pasha Sokolović, himself of Orthodox Christian background - and abolished again in 1766; cf. Radoslav M. Grujić, *Pravoslavna srpska crkva* (Belgrade: Izdavačka knjižarnica Gece Kona, 1921, reprint Belgrade and Kragujevac: Evro and Kalenić, 1995), 24-34, 85.

[156] Vanja Jovanovic, "Serbian Orthodox Church in Bosnia and Herzegovina," in *Religions in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Profile of Religious Communities and Churches*, ed. Ifet Mustafic (Sarajevo: Interreligious Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2012), 84-85.; cf. Grujić, *Pravoslavna srpska crkva*, 168.

[157] During liturgical services in the church the name of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople was invoked, while he had the right to send the holy myrrh to the metropolitanates in BiH; cf. Jovanovic, "Serbian Orthodox Church", 88.

[158] Ibid., 87-88.

[159] Grujić, *Pravoslavna srpska crkva*, 169.

engaged in the proselytizing efforts among the Orthodox Christians.[160] This situation sparked off a political movement for religious and educational autonomy that resulted in a compromise between the state, the local Orthodox leaders and the Patriarchate of Constantinople, which was formalized as a Decree on Administration of the Church and Educational Affairs in the Orthodox Eparchies in 1905.[161]

Since prior to this act the Orthodox Church in BiH was not particularly organized, so that occasional strife even between the clergy and the believers had occurred,[162] this Decree was important for introducing a modern organization inside this religious community. There were four eparchies in BiH, including the Metropolitanate of Banja Luka-Bihać that was newly established in 1900.[163] Each was headed by a bishop who, in accordance with the tradition of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, held a title of Metropolitan-Archbishop. The eparchies were divided into deaneries and those into parishes. At the parish level there were lay institutions of a church council or a congregation (*crkvena opština*), an assembly and a church-school board. At the eparchy level there was a diocesan ecclesiastical court and a diocesan administrative and educational council. The only central bodies of the Orthodox Church in BiH were the Grand Ecclesiastical Court[164] and the Grand Administrative and Educational Council, both located in Sarajevo, whose members included the clergy in the former and both the clergy and the lay members in the latter case, selected from all four eparchies. There was also the Orthodox Seminary School opened in 1883 in Reljevo near Sarajevo.[165]

Following the unification of South Slav lands into the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, there was a major reorganization of the Eastern Orthodox churches across the entire region, including the territory of BiH. At the Belgrade gathering in 1919, all regional Orthodox bishops from the dioceses once belonging to the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Peć "proclaimed spiritual, moral and administrative unity of all regional Churches"[166] in the newly formed Kingdom. In August 1920 the Serbian Patriarchate was solemnly proclaimed in Karlowitz while the Royal Government successfully negotiated with the Ecumenical Patriarch so he relinquished his jurisdiction over the Orthodox dioceses in Bosnia and Macedonia for a compensation fee.[167] The Patriarch issued the Synodical Decree thereby granting the (re)establishment of the Serbian Patriarchate[168] as one of autocephalous Eastern Orthodox Churches that recognize spiritual unity under the leadership of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople (Istanbul). The first Serbian Patriarch was elected in late 1920. In this period several new eparchies were established including the Eparchy of Bihać in BiH as of 1925, while the Constitution of SOC was adopted in 1931.[169] According to this Constitution, and regarding the matters affecting the territory of BiH, there were again only four eparchies (the Eparchy of Bihać being abolished): Eparchy of Banja Luka, Eparchy of Dabar-Bosnia, Eparchy of Zvornik-Tuzla and Eparchy of Zachlumia-Herzegovina, with only the Eparchy of Dabar-

[160] Catholic prozelytism affected also the Muslim population; cf. Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 145.

[161] Jovanovic, "Serbian Orthodox Church", 88-89.; cf. Durmišević, *Uspostava i pravni položaj Rijaseta*, 142-148.

[162] Grujić, *Pravoslavna srpska crkva*, 170.

[163] Ibid., 169.; cf. Jovanovic, "Serbian Orthodox Church", 89.

[164] This institution, responsible for canonical legal matters, was established as "Consistoria" in 1882; cf. Jovanovic, "Serbian Orthodox Church", 88.

[165] Ibid.

[166] Ibid., 90.; cf. Juraj Kolarić, *Pravoslavni* (Zagreb: Veritas, 1985), 135.

[167] Kolarić, *Pravoslavni*, 135.

[168] Jovanovic, "Serbian Orthodox Church", 91.

[169] Ibid.

Bosnia in Sarajevo retaining the rank of Metropolitanate.[170]

SOC in BiH suffered heavy losses during the World War II. Under the occupation of the Nazi-allied Independent State of Croatia, the church, its clergy and believers were target of the state's policy of persecution and Croatisation of Orthodoxy.[171] After the war, in parallel with its recuperation the church had to cope with the policy of secularization by the new Yugoslav socialist government, in the matters such as confiscation of the church property or ban on religious education after 1952.[172] New constitution of the church was adopted in 1947 and, having been amended in 1967,[173] is still in force.[174]

2.2 Geography and Demography

According to its Constitution, SOC is defined as "one and inseparable autocephalous church", which maintains "dogmatic and canonical unity with other Orthodox Churches" (Art. 1) and has "the dignity of Patriarchate" (Art. 2). The Church is divided into twenty-four eparchies on the territory of former Yugoslavia (Art. 14), with the Patriarchal seat in Belgrade, Republic of Serbia, as the supreme religious authority. Out of these, bishops of four eparchies hold the rank of metropolitan bishops with their seats in: Cetinje (Republic of Montenegro), Bitola (Republic of Macedonia), Sarajevo (BiH) and Zagreb (Republic of Croatia). Metropolitan of Skopje with his seat in Bitola is the head of the Orthodox Ohrid Archbishopric, which has canonical status of autonomous church within the hierarchy of SOC. This is not to be confused with the non-canonical autocephalous Macedonian Orthodox Church fully independent since 1967. Additionally, there were six eparchies outside the territory of former Yugoslavia falling under the jurisdiction of SOC (Art. 15).

On the Bosnian territory, there are five eparchies: Eparchy of Banja Luka, Metropolitanate of Dabar-Bosnia, Eparchy of Zachlumia-Herzegovina, Eparchy of Zvornik-Tuzla and Eparchy of Bihać-Petrovac, the latter being re-established in 1990.[175] Diocesan borders of these eparchies mostly correspond to the international state borders of BiH, with the exception of Eparchy of Zachlumia-Herzegovina with its seat in Mostar, which extends its authority over the neighboring Republic of Croatia in the littoral around Dubrovnik.

The last population census (1991) numbered 1 286 828 self-declared adherents of the Orthodox Christianity in the Republic of BiH, which represented about 29 percent of total Bosnian population. As an indicator of the widespread confusion between religion and ethnicity, it is worth mentioning that, in addition to the above, more than thirty thousand people responded to the question on religion by saying "Serb" (*srpska*).[176] In a recent publication by IRC one

[170] "Sprovedbena naredba Svetog arhijerejskog sinoda za Ustav Srpske pravoslavne crkve od god. 1931," Svetosavlje, accessed August 12, 2014, http://www.svetosavlje.org/biblioteka/zakoni/sprovedbena-naredba-sv-arh-sinoda-za-ustav-spc-od-1931.htm

[171] Jovanovic, "Serbian Orthodox Church", 91-93.

[172] Stella Alexander, *Church and State in Yugoslavia since 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 161.

[173] Among the most important were changes made in the procedure of election of new Patriarch and strengthening the role of bishop in the appointment of parish council members; cf. Ibid. 171-172.

[174] "Constitution of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Second Edition by the Holy Synod of Bishops, Belgrade 1957," Serbian Orthodox Church, accessed August 10, 2014, http://www.spc.rs/eng/church

[175] "Istorija," Srpska pravoslavna crkva, Eparhija bihaćko-petrovačka, accessed August 16, 2014, http://www.eparhijabihackopetrovacka.org/2009-07-15-09-54-46/38-2009-07-21-11-54-35/53-2009-07-21-11-58-00

[176] "Etnička obilježja stanovništva", 14.

may read that the number of Orthodox adherents in BiH was "1 390 000 (based on the last census in 1991 when 99 percent of the Serbs declared themselves as Orthodox),"[177] which is certainly not what the official census results mentioned under the category of "Orthodox" (*pravoslavni*). As for the current number of Orthodox adherents, the same publication says: "It is not possible to determine the total number of Orthodox faithful in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which largely depends on the population census which the state needs to carry out."[178] As already mentioned, the results of the latest census of 2013 are yet to be published.

2.3 Legal and Organizational Structure

The Constitution of SOC prescribes a five-level hierarchical organizational structure of the Church.[179]

2.3.1 Parish

A parish is a local community of Orthodox believers under the spiritual guidance of a parish priest (Art. 22), who takes care of the parish church. As a rule, a parish comprises of three hundred to five hundred Orthodox homes in one area (Art. 23). Parish priest is ordained cleric of the priestly rank (presbyter) and may come from the ranks of either monastic or non-monastic (secular) priestly order. The latter are allowed to marry and raise a family. A bishop appoints parish priest and he performs liturgical-pastoral duties and is in charge of religious education and administration (keeping registry books of baptisms, marriages and deaths).[180]

2.3.2 Church Congregation

A church congregation (*crkvena opština*) consists of one or more parishes in the same area (Art. 21). Members of the congregation are all lay believers, members of the church. Selected members of the congregation together with a priest form a church congregation board.

2.3.3 Episcopal Deanery

An episcopal deanery (*arhijerejsko namjesništvo*) is a larger regional organization that consists of several church congregations and parishes, under the supervision of an episcopal dean (Art. 18). Episcopal Dean usually holds the title of "Archpriest-Cross bearer" (*protojerej-stavrofor*) and is the highest hierarchical position to be occupied by a non-monastic priest.

2.3.4 Eparchy

The main hierarchical and administrative division within SOC is that of the eparchies. An eparchy (diocese, bishopric) is a church division (district) whose spiritual life and order is overseen and administered by a diocesan bishop as its head, and who is the main representative

[177] Jovanovic, "Serbian Orthodox Church", 72.

[178] Ibid., 97.

[179] "Constitution of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Second Edition by the Holy Synod of Bishops, Belgrade 1957," Serbian Orthodox Church, accessed August 17, 2014, http://www.spc.rs/eng/church

[180] Jovanovic, "Serbian Orthodox Church", 104-105.

and administrator of all ecclesiastical, spiritual life and order in the eparchy (Art. 13, Ch. II.6).[181] A bishop is a top hierarch who may carry one of the following titles: Vicar Bishop, Bishop, Metropolitan, Archbishop or Patriarch. Election and appointment of bishops as well as decisions on organizational status of eparchies are the competencies of the Holy Episcopal Assembly under the presidency of the Patriarch. A bishop is recognized by outward insignia such as the miter (head cover) and the staff (scepter).[182] The main bodies at the level of the eparchy are diocesan ecclesiastical court authorized to deal with canonical legal disputes (Ch. II.7) and diocesan council for administrative affairs (Ch. II.8). As we have seen, there are five SOC eparchies on the territory of BiH.

2.3.5 The Patriarchate and Other Top-Level Institutions

The supreme head of SOC is the Archbishop of Peć, Metropolitan of Belgrade-Karlowitz and Serbian Patriarch residing in Belgrade, Serbia. The Patriarch (Ch. II.1) is elected from the ranks of active hierarchs (metropolitans and bishops) and enjoys special rights of honor, ministry, representation and administration.[183] Similarly to the position of the Ecumenical Patriarch in his relation to other autocephalous churches, the Serbian Patriarch is only "the first among the equals" (*primus inter pares*) in relation to other SOC bishops.

The Holy Episcopal Assembly (Ch. II.2) is the highest legislative authority of the church. It consists of all hierarchs, convenes twice a year in Belgrade and makes all important decisions regarding internal church matters.[184] It is presided by the Patriarch. The Holy Episcopal Synod (Ch. II.2) is the highest executive and judicial body of the church. It consists of four diocesan bishops and is chaired by the Patriarch.[185] The Grand Ecclesiastical Court (Ch. II.3) is the highest judicial authority adjudicating the canonical matters including transgressions of the clergy and of the faithful members of the church. It consists of three bishops from the Holy Episcopal Synod, two clerics as honorary members and one cleric as administrator.

The Patriarchal Council (Ch. II.4), as a legislative body, and its executive Board of Directors of the Patriarchate (Ch. II.5) take care of external matters of the church such as administration and finance. Both these bodies, apart from the clerics, also include laypersons as their members.

Although the supreme religious authorities of SOC in BiH are located abroad, there are two Orthodox bodies in BiH having a countrywide authority (see Image 2).[186] The Episcopal Council of SOC in BiH,[187] which consists of all five Bosnian bishops under the chair of the Metropolitan of Dabar-Bosnia, discusses the matters such as church property restitution, retirement and health insurance of Orthodox clerics. The Catechesis Board of SOC in BiH with its seat in Banja Luka,[188] chaired by one Bosnian bishop and consisting of both clerical and lay members, takes care of the curriculum for Orthodox religious education and the training of religious teachers.

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[181] cf. Jovanovic, "Serbian Orthodox Church", 103.

[182] Ibid., 103-104.

[183] Ibid., 102.

[184] Ibid.

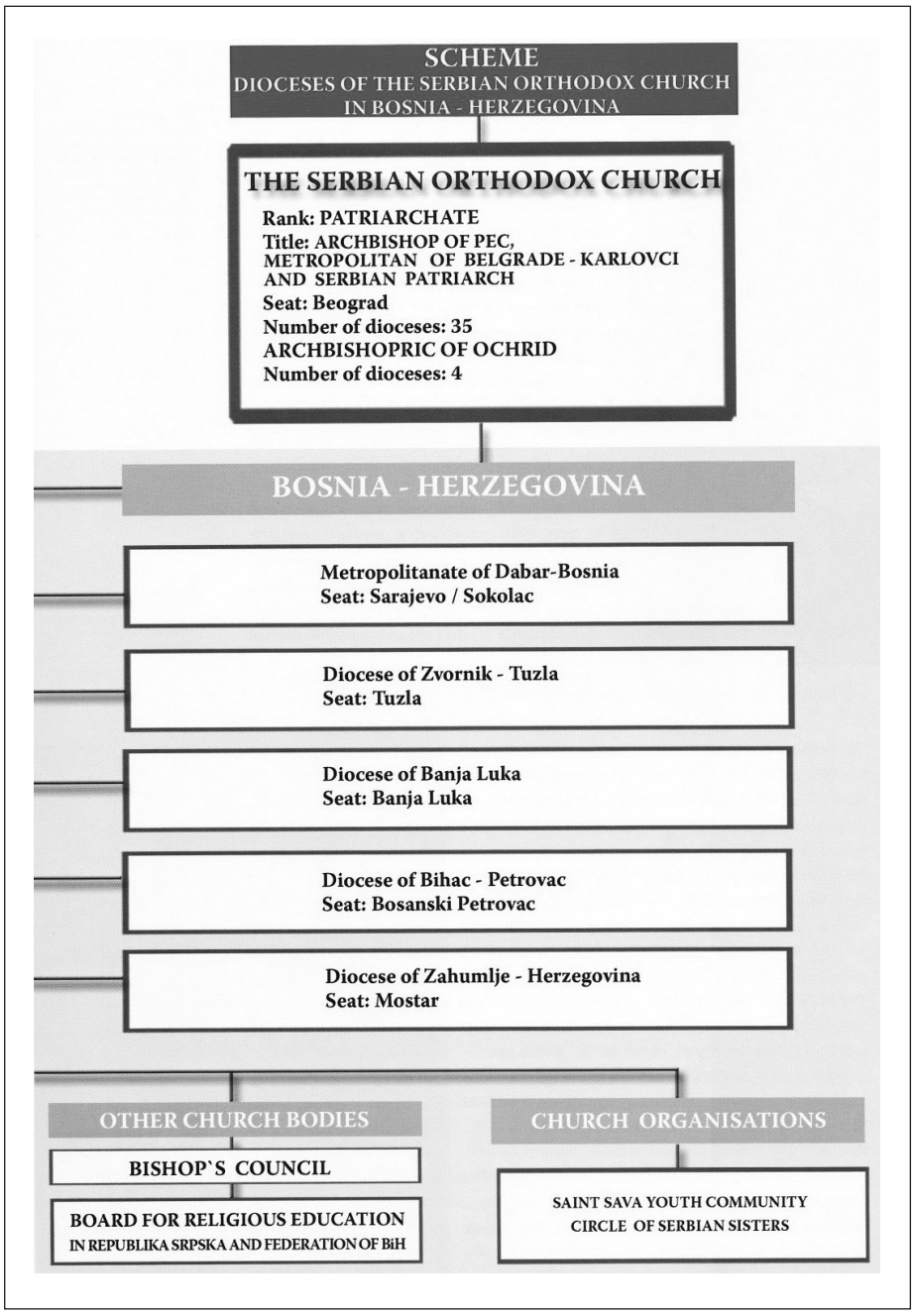
[185] Ibid.

[186] Ibid., 101.

[187] "Zasedao Episkopski savjet SPC u BiH," Srpska pravoslavna crkva, accessed August 27, 2014, http://www.spc.rs/sr/zasedao_episkopski_savjet_spc_u_bih

[188] Katihetski odbor Srpske pravoslavne crkve u BiH, accessed August 27, 2014, http://www.katihetskiodbor.org/

Image 2: Scheme of Dioceses of SOC in BiH



(Source: Jovanovic, "Serbian Orthodox Church", 101)

There are two Orthodox institutions of higher education in BiH: the Orthodox Theological Faculty of St. Basil of Ostrog and the Orthodox Seminary of St. Peter of Dabar-Bosnia. Both are located in Foča and have "historical continuity of the Sarajevo-Reljevo Theological Seminary, established in 1882."[189] Regarding the relationship between SOC and the state, it has been regulated with the Religious Freedom Act of 2004 and with the Agreement (Concordat) between the Serbian Patriarchate in Belgrade and BiH that was signed in 2007 and ratified in 2008.[190]

[189] Jovanovic, "Serbian Orthodox Church", 109-110.

[190] Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "Answers to the Questionnaire on the International

3. Catholic Church

3.1 Brief History

Following Austro-Hungarian occupation in 1878, the Holy See established a diocesan organization of CC in Bosnia in 1881 – for the first time after the retreat of diocesan clergy from Bosnian territory in the thirteenth century. In the meantime, during the centuries under the Ottomans, only the Franciscan friars within their monasteries and surrounding parishes had preserved Bosnian Catholicism. In 1881 Josip Stadler was conferred the title of the first Archbishop of Vrhbosna with his episcopal see in Sarajevo and with suffragan bishoprics established in Banja Luka and Mostar.[191] CC used its position as the Empire's established religion to expand organizationally, economically and politically. The Church in this period had full freedom for pastoral activities, diocesan and educational institutions were built, a theological seminary was established in Sarajevo, Catholic publication flourished and religious instruction was introduced in public schools.[192] To indicate a rapid growth of Catholicism one can take a note that the number of Catholic adherents in BiH between 1879 and 1910 more than doubled.[193] An important characteristic of this period was the emergence of an internal conflict between the newly established diocesan clergy headed by the Archbishop and the traditional Franciscan possessions and authority. The Archbishop, in coordination with the Imperial Government, made efforts to minimize Franciscan influence by taking over a certain number of Franciscan parishes and submitting them to the diocesan clergy. In order to fill vacant positions in the newly established dioceses the Archbishop urged Franciscans to leave the Order and become secular priests, a policy met with less than enthusiastic response by many Franciscans. Against the backdrop of the Papal Bull issued in 1897, by which the Pope aimed to unify different branches of the Franciscan Order and restore orderly discipline including the abolishment of friars' private possessions, a canonical controversy over parochial possessions transformed into a long-lasting conflict between Franciscans and the Episcopate that in some ways continued to the present.[194] After the mid nineteenth century separation from the Province of *Bosna Argentina*, the Franciscans in Herzegovina were recognized as the new Herzegovina Province in 1892.[195] Additionally, the Jesuits, who were tasked to organize seminary schools,[196] and the Trappists[197] along with several both male and female orders and societies[198] settled in Bosnia for the first time in history.

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)," 9, Office of the High Commissionaire for Human Rights, accessed August 27, 2014, http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Racism/AdHoc/5thsession/Bosnia_Herz.pdf

[191] Mato Zovkić, "The Catholic Church in Bosnia and Herzegovina," in *Religions in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Profile of Religious Communities and Churches*, ed. Ifet Mustafic (Sarajevo: Interreligious Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2012), 132.; cf. Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 144.

[192] Zovkić, "Catholic Church," 133.

[193] This is evident when comparing sheer numbers of Catholic population from official census records during the Austro-Hungarian reign. While there were 209 391 Roman Catholics, or 18.08% of the total population, in Bosnia in 1879, by 1910 that number increased to 434 061 (22.87%); cf. Clemens Cavallin and Sead S. Fetahagić, "The Role of the Catholic Church in the Bosnian Conflict 1992-1995: A Historical Approach," in *Politicization of Religion, the Power of State, Nation, and Faith: The Case of Former Yugoslavia and its Successor States*, ed. Gorana Ognjenović and Jasna Jozelić (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014) 64.

[194] Ibid., 65.

[195] Ibid. 63.; cf. Zovkić, "Catholic Church," 151.

[196] Malcolm, *Bosnia*, 144. The Jesuits were responsible for opening and running theological seminary schools in Travnik and in Sarajevo where they acted as professors; cf. Zovkić, "Catholic Church," 152.

[197] Trappists are a reformed branch of the Cistercian Order, who founded Mary the Star Monastery near Banja Luka, known also for the production of the eponymous cheese brand; cf. Zovkić, "Catholic Church," 151-52.

[198] Dominicans, Salesians, Carmelites, Sisters of Mercy of St. Vincent de Paul, Daughters of Divine Love, Servants of the Infant

Although none of two constitutions of the Yugoslav Kingdom (1921 and 1931) explicitly mentioned any religious denomination, SOC as a religion of the ruling Karađorđević dynasty enjoyed privileged position. Following the law of 1929 SOC was *de jure* state church, which was not fully autonomous but was placed under the overall administrative supervision of the government.[199] In general terms, a major contesting issue between CC and the Yugoslav Kingdom was signing of the Concordat. Negotiations for this agreement between the Royal Government and the Vatican started in 1920 but by 1938 the whole project collapsed due to strong political opposition and the efforts of SOC, which deemed that the Concordat was to endanger their own interests. The Catholic Episcopate in Yugoslavia including BiH was never too enthusiastic for the Concordat negotiated without their participation while Bosnian Franciscans were mostly silent regarding the issues. They were interested only to get state subsidies for the educational institutions of Franciscan Province *Bosna Argentina* and for special bonuses for Franciscan priests working as chaplains.[200] Regarding the Catholic community in Bosnia, although they no longer belonged to the religion privileged by the state, it seems that they now had a more favorable position than before.[201] Although Stadler's successor Archbishop Šarić continued his policy of suppression of the Franciscans from public influence, in this period the Franciscan activity in the fields of schooling, education, literature and church building was considerable. In spite of serious problems with the Government in Belgrade to get their approval to be appointed, Archbishop Šarić of Vrhbosna organized charities, deanery conferences and established a Catholic publishing house. He also translated the Bible and published it in Sarajevo during the World War II.[202] This is also a period when the Catholic population in BiH reached their peak in numbers,[203] ever since the fall of the medieval Kingdom of Bosnia.

CC in BiH aligned with the extreme pro-Nazi policy of the Pavelić regime during the World War II and although voices of resistance did exist among their clerical ranks - particularly among the Bosnian Franciscans[204] - the Catholics were collectively stigmatized by the post-war Titoist reconstruction. Having its supreme religious authority outside of Yugoslavia - and even worse, in the capitalist Western Bloc - CC was far more engaged in a political conflict with the socialist state in comparison to the Islamic Community and SOC. This was especially evident in the period until the mid '60s in which many clerics and believers were persecuted.[205] After the Second Council of Vatican relations with the state improved and in 1966 both parties signed a protocol affirming mutual rights and obligations. Another burdening issue in this period reflected internal historical conflict within the Church. The Association of Catholic Priests "Good Shepherd" was organized in 1950 and under the auspices of the socialist establishment it took care of personal status of clerics (subsidies, pensions etc.). In general terms, most Franciscans and lower clergy were members of this organization while the Episcopate was strongly against its activity.[206] After 1989 religious freedoms were gradually re-affirmed in BiH, so CC became more active in the public space. In particular, during the collapse of Yugoslavia,

Jesus, Herzegovinian Franciscan Sisters, Bosnian Franciscan Sisters, Adorers of the Blood of Christ are among the most notable. Of these, only Dominicans and Sisters of Mercy existed in BiH before 1881; cf. Zovkić, "Catholic Church,", 152-59.

[199] Cavallin and Fetahagić, "Role of Catholic Church," 70.

[200] Ibid., 71.

[201] Ibid. 70.

[202] Zovkić, "Catholic Church," 133.

[203] The census of 1931 listed almost a quarter of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina as Catholics, total 547 948 or 23.58%, while some church sources came up even with 571 130 or 24.6%; cf. Cavallin and Fetahagić, "Role of Catholic Church," 70-71.

[204] Ibid. 69-70.

[205] Zovkić, "Catholic Church," 133-34.; cf. Cavallin and Fetahagić, "Role of Catholic Church," 72-74.

[206] Cavallin and Fetahagić, "Role of Catholic Church," 73.

CC was among the strongest advocates of the international recognition of sovereignty of each individual republic, particularly of Slovenia, Croatia and BiH, and of their greater participation in the European integration processes.

3.2 Geography and Demography

On the territory of BiH CC is divided into four dioceses: Archbishopric of Vrhbosna with its seat in Sarajevo, Bishopric of Banja Luka, Bishopric of Mostar-Duvno and Bishopric of Trebinje-Mrkan. The outer borders of these dioceses follow the international borders of BiH, with one exception: a small area in the North-West, which encompasses the parish of Zavalje in the vicinity of the town of Bihać, belongs to the Bishopric of Gospić-Senj, the Deanery of Slunj[207] whose diocesan territory is situated in the Republic of Croatia. The Bishop of Mostar-Duvno has administered historic Bishopric of Trebinje-Mrkan since 1890.[208] Although the supreme Catholic leadership headed by the Pope is located outside the territory of BiH, there is the Episcopal Conference of BiH[209] at the national level, which is a canonical institution organized to coordinate mutual pastoral and other activities for the Catholic community in the entire Bosnian ecclesiastical province. Besides this Bosnian Episcopate, CC also has a diplomatic representation of the Vatican in BiH, the Apostolic Nunciature, with its seat in Sarajevo.[210]

The number of Catholic adherents in BiH is again hard to determine since official census results do not necessarily match internal church registers. As is the case with other religious affiliations, there is always a problem of methodology used to gather such information. If we take official results of the 1991 census,[211] there were total 765 993 self-declared as either "Roman-Catholics" (13,5 percent) or "Catholics" (3,9 percent) in BiH, which combined represents 17,5 percent of total population. There were however other responses on the question of religious adherence that might be added into overall Catholic amount depending on who is making a calculation, such as "Greek-Catholic" (3 139),[212] "Croat" (2 924),[213] or "Bosnian Catholics" (106).

In contrast, according to the church registers, there were 828 000 Catholics in four Bosnian dioceses in 1991.[214] The results of the last census conducted in 2013 are yet to be published, but there are official church membership results available to consult. The IRC publication presents the number of 461 112 Catholic adherents in BiH as of 2007.[215] The Church Statistics for 2011 published by the Episcopal Conference of BiH[216] comes up with 443 084 Catholics

[207] Gospićko-senjska biskupija, "Shematizam (ustanove, župe, osobe)," (Gospić, 2013), 46, 52. Document available through "Shematizam, dekanati naše biskupije," Gospićko-senjska biskupija, accessed September 7, 2014, http://www.gospicko-senjska-biskupija.hr/shematizam-gospicko-senjske-biskupije.html

[208] Zovkić, "Catholic Church," 144.

[209] Biskupska konferencija Bosne i Hercegovine, Conferentia Episcoporum Bosniae et Hercegovinae, accessed September 8, 2014, http://www.bkbih.ba/

[210] Ibid.

[211] "Etnička obilježja stanovništva," 14.

[212] Because they are canonically united with the Catholic Church headed by the Pope.

[213] Because of general confusion between ethnicity and religion whereby most Croats are deemed to be Catholic and vice versa.

[214] Zovkić, "Catholic Church," 137.

[215] Ibid., 118, 137.

[216] "Crkvena statistika za 2011," Biskupska konferencija Bosne i Hercegovine, Conferentia Episcoporum Bosniae et Hercegovinae, accessed September 8, 2014, http://www.bkbih.ba/info.php?id=534

in BiH. Should we contrast the latter figure with the total number of 3 791 622 persons enumerated two years later, based on preliminary results of the 2013 Census,[217] we might find that the percentage of Catholic adherents was approximately 11,5 percent, which marks a considerable decrease from 1991.

3.3 Legal and Organizational Structure

Similarly to SOC, CC in BiH is internally organized into five levels of authority. Basic canonical legal documents are the Code of Canon Law (1983)[218] and the Statute of the Episcopal Conference of BiH.[219] Information on bishops and dioceses can also be found on the Web site "Catholic Hierarchy."[220] Image 3 presents an organizational chart of CC in BiH.

3.3.1 Parish

A parish is, according to Can. 515, a local community of (Catholic) Christian faithful constituted in a particular church (diocese), whose pastoral care is entrusted to a pastor (*parochus*) and under the authority of a diocesan bishop. It is only for a diocesan bishop to erect, suppress, or alter parishes. A parish is generally speaking a territorial unit, but in exceptional cases it may be organized personally (Can. 518). A pastor (parish priest) must be a person in the sacred order of presbyter (priest), not a deacon, although the latter may be entrusted a pastoral care in case of a lack of priests (Can. 517, 521). A pastor is appointed by a diocesan bishop and is particularly entrusted to administer holy sacraments (baptism, confirmation, marriage, funeral), to care for the religious education of children and to administer Eucharistic celebrations (Can. 530). A bishop may establish a pastoral council in a parish with lay membership to assist and consult a pastor (Can. 536). If a parish becomes vacant or if a pastor is prevented from exercising his duties, a parochial administrator or a parochial vicar takes responsibility to run a parish (Can. 539, 541). In 2011 there were 284 Roman-Catholic parishes in BiH,[221] not including ten Greek-Catholic parishes.

[217] "Preliminary Results of the 2013 Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in Bosnia and Herzegovina," Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, First Release, November 5, 2013, accessed September 8, 2014, http://www.bhas.ba/obavjestenja/Preliminarni_rezultati_bos.pdf

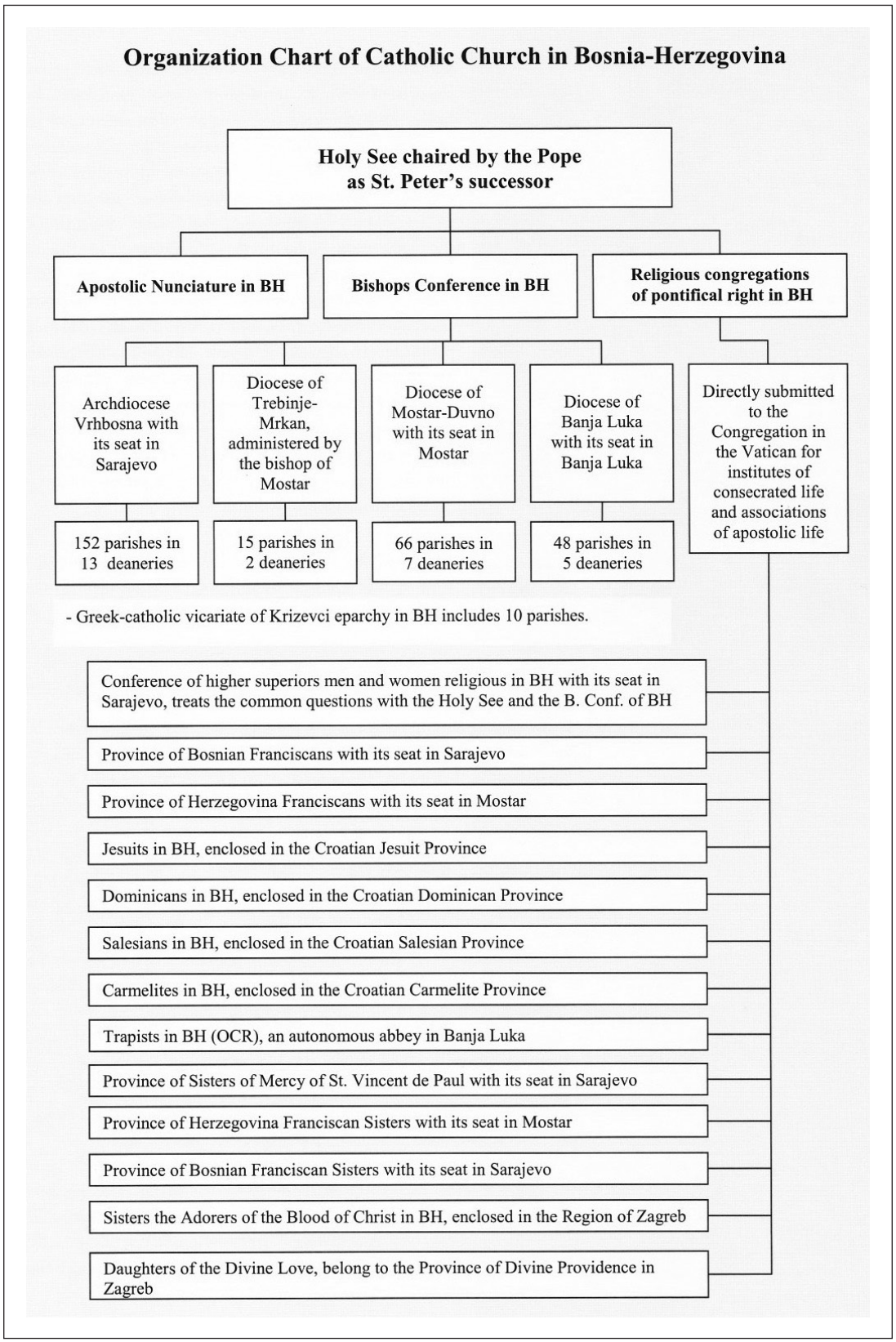
[218] "Code of Canon Law," the Holy See, accessed September 10, 2014, http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/_INDEX.HTM

[219] "Statut Biskupske konferencije Bosne i Hercegovine," Biskupska konferencija Bosne i Hercegovine, Conferentia Episcoporum Bosniae et Hercegovinae, accessed September 10, 2014, http://www.bkbih.ba/info.php?id=142

[220] "Catholic Church in Bosnia and Herzegovina," Catholic Hierarchy, accessed September 10, 2014, http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/country/ba.html

[221] "Crkvena statistika za 2011." In contrast, IRC publication of 2012 comes up with the number of 281 parishes; cf. Zovkić, "Catholic Church," 140-41.

Image 3: Organization Chart of CC in BiH



(Source: Zovkić, "Catholic Church," 141.)

3.3.2 Deanery

Several parishes together constitute a regional unit - a deanery. A dean whose task is to coordinate the work among the parishes heads it. There are twenty-seven deaneries in BiH.[222]

3.3.3 Diocese (Bishopric)

A diocese is a principal type of a "particular church", which gathers the faithful on its territory and is headed by a diocesan bishop (Can. 368-369). The right to erect a particular church (diocese) is exclusive to the Supreme Pontiff (the Pope) (Can. 373). Every diocese is divided into parishes (Can. 374). Special types of particular churches, which due to different reasons are not established as a diocese, are territorial prelature, territorial abbacy, apostolic vicariate, apostolic prefecture and apostolic administration (Can. 370-371). The Supreme Pontiff appoints bishops (Can. 377); they exercise legislative, executive and judicial power (Can. 391) and are representatives of a diocese (Can. 393). There are four dioceses in BiH: Archdiocese of Vrhbosna with its seat in Sarajevo (thirteen deaneries), Diocese of Banja Luka (five deaneries), Diocese of Mostar-Duvno (seven deaneries) and Diocese of Trebinje-Mrkan (two deaneries). The bishop of Mostar has administered the latter. Additionally, there is the Greek-Catholic Vicariate consisting of ten parishes in BiH (mostly located in the north-west, in Krajina), which has been administered by the Bishop of Greek-Catholic Eparchy of Križevci in Croatia.[223]

3.3.4 Catholic Institutions at the National Level

Canonical term for a church organization within a sovereign state or nation is "ecclesiastical province", so BiH acts as the one. At this national level the major Catholic institutions are the Episcopal Conference of BiH, Particular Council and the Apostolic Nunciature. The Episcopal Conference currently consists of six bishops: two diocesan bishops, one diocesan archbishop/metropolitan, two auxiliary bishops and one bishop military ordinary.[224] According to its Statute (Art. 4-5), one of the bishops is elected as presiding member of the Conference, which also has the following bodies: Assembly, Permanent Council, Councils and Commissions, Boards, General Secretary and Offices. When presiding over the ecclesiastical province, the archbishop holds the title of metropolitan. Episcopal Conference may decide to hold Plenary Council or Provincial Council. There are also several "institutes of consecrated life" and "societies of apostolic life" in BiH, such as monastic orders, as mentioned above. Most of these are congregations of "pontifical right", which means that the supreme authority for each of them is in their central administration in Rome, so they enjoy a level of independence from the diocesan bishops on whose territory they live and work, unless a member of such a society is simultaneously a parish priest, in which case he is submitted to the authority of the respective diocesan bishop.[225] Episcopal Conference coordinates their work and through the Conference of Superiors of the Orders communicates with Rome. Apostolic Nuncio in BiH is a representative of the Holy See and performs threefold function: diplomatic, ecclesiastical and ecumenical/interreligious.[226]

[222] Zovkić, "Catholic Church," 141, 145-146.

[223] Ibid., 148-149.

[224] "Biskupi BK BiH - Biskupsku konferenciju Bosne i Hercegovine čine šest nad/biskupa," Biskupska konferencija Bosne i Hercegovine, Conferentia Episcoporum Bosniae et Hercegovinae, accessed September 10, 2014, http://www.bkbih.ba/info.php?id=2

[225] Zovkić, "Catholic Church," 159-160.

[226] "Apostolska nuncijatura u BiH," Biskupska konferencija Bosne i Hercegovine, Conferentia Episcoporum Bosniae et

3.3.5 The Holy See and the Papacy

Supreme authority of CC is the Holy See located in the city state of Vatican, Rome. The Supreme Authority is represented by the Roman Pontiff (the Pope) and the College of Bishops (Can. 330). The Pope is also the Bishop of the Roman Church, the Vicar of Christ, the Pastor of the Universal Church and the Head of the College of Bishops (Can. 331). Among other titles, he is also referred to as Successor Prince of the Apostles, the Primate of Italy, Metropolitan Archbishop of the Roman Province, the Sovereign of the State of Vatican, and Servant of the Servants of God.[227] The governing body of CC is the Roman Curia, which consists of a complex of offices administering church affairs, such as the Secretariat of State, Congregations, Tribunals, Pontifical Councils and Pontifical Commissions.[228]

CC in BiH possesses the following institutions of higher education: Franciscan Theology in Sarajevo (est. 1968), Catholic Theology of Vrhbosna in Sarajevo (est. 1996 as separate from the Catholic Seminary School of Vrhbosna that existed in Sarajevo since 1893) and Theological Institute in Mostar (est. 1987).[229] The Religious Freedom Act of 2004 as well as the Basic Agreement Between the Holy See and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Concordat), which has been in effect since 2007, regulate the relations between CC and the state of BiH.[230]

4. General Remarks on Religious Structures in BiH

From above it seems clear that, although the three major religious communities in BiH, studied in this report, do share some similarities, there are nonetheless important differences between them in terms of their historical and organizational setting.

To begin with, all three religious organizations in their present form were established in the turbulent period in the eve and in the aftermath of World War I - from 1881 to 1920. Prior to 1945 all three religions exercised some authority in the field of public administration, while they were simultaneously engaged in a struggle to preserve religious autonomy and privileges on one hand and for a greater protection by the state on the other. Finally, during the socialist period all three religious communities were to a greater or a lesser extent affected by the policies and processes of secularization (separation from the state) and privatization (restriction of religion to a private sphere) and all three continue to view the Titoist Yugoslav period with more or less suspicion and animosity.

Differences between these three religions in BiH can be broadly described in terms of a) territorial organization in relation to the state of BiH and location of supreme religious authorities, and b) internal organizational structure, hierarchy and ecclesiastical governance.

Regarding the former issue, there is a notable difference between ICBH on one side and both CC and SOC on the other. Internal territorial organization of ICBH perfectly follows the state borders of BiH while its supreme religious authority is domestically based (in Sarajevo as the

Hercegovinae, accessed September 10, 2014, http://www.bkbih.ba/info.php?id=147

[227] "The Catholic Hierarchy, the Pontifical Yearbook," The Holy See, accessed September 13, 2014, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/cardinals/documents/rc_cardinals_gerarchia-cattolica_it.htm

[228] Details on the structure of the Holy See is avalable at the official Web site of the Holy See, accessed September 13, 2014, http://w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html

[229] Zovkić, "Catholic Church," 162-64.

[230] Ibid., 171.

state capital). In contrast, supreme religious authorities of both CC and SOC are located outside BiH, while their internal territorial units (dioceses) for the most part, but not perfectly, follow the international borders of BiH.

Regarding the latter issue, both CC and SOC are hierarchically organized into five levels while ICBH has four levels. CC is internationally centralized church with its Code of Canon Law (1983) globally in force for each of its "particular churches", so there is no special "constitution" for CC in BiH. SOC, however, is a "national" church (in ethno-national sense) with less centralized structure where each diocesan bishop possesses more autonomy from his supreme authorities, while the church has its own Constitution (1947) organizing itself independently from other Orthodox churches. ICBH is also "autocephalous" religious community with its own Constitution (1997), and although nominally a Bosnian organization, it extends its authority to the neighboring countries of former Yugoslavia. In both SOC and CC there is a more rigid distinction between clergy and laity than it is in ICBH, where religious leaders (imams) are not "clerics" in its sacramental meaning. Lower level bodies of ICBH (jamat, majlis) seem to enjoy relatively more self-governance than their counterparts in CC and SOC (parishes). Additionally, while a parish council with lay members may be organized in CC only optionally, a church congregation with lay membership is an obligatory constitutional unit within SOC. Finally, to use the terminology from the field of ecclesiastical governance, ICBH may be characterized to have elements of congregational and presbyterian polity, while CC and SOC undoubtedly belong to the type of episcopal polity.

ANNEX 3 - FIELDTRIPS AND INTERVIEWS

Phase I

During Phase I of the project, the study included three towns in BiH – Visoko, Doboj and Čapljina – the places that are not major urban centers of ethnic, political and religious power. All these locations were selected based on several criteria. According to the IRC reports on monitoring and responses to attacks on religious buildings and holy sites, in all three towns holy sites had been targeted over the period from 2010-2012, specifically:

- In Visoko five attacks were reported. One was conducted against the Catholic site (Franciscan Monastery of St. Bonaventure) in March 2011, while four attacks were conducted against the Orthodox sites (The Church of Conception of St. John the Baptist in the nearby village Zimča was attacked in September 2011 and again in June 2012, while the Church of St. Great-Martyr Procopius was attacked in April and in August 2012). Visoko is the town and municipality located in central Bosnia, on the road E73 running from Sarajevo to Zenica. It is a local self-government unit (*općina*) within the Zenica-Doboj Canton in the entity of FBiH. According to 1991 Census, religious demography of the population of the entire municipality of Visoko (total 46 160) was: Islam 74,49 percent; Serbian Orthodox 15,58 percent; Roman Catholic 4,33 percent; Atheists 3,41 percent; undeclared/unknown 2,10 percent. According to the Preliminary Results of the 2013 Census, there were total 41 352 enumerated persons.[231]

- In Doboj there were total four reported attacks; one against the Jewish site (the "House of Peace" Synagogue) in November 2010 and one attack against the Islamic site (the Mosque and the Majlis Office) in May 2011. There were also two attacks against the Catholic site (the Parish Office of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus) in November 2010 and again in January 2011. Doboj is the city located in northern Bosnia, on the road E73 running from Zenica towards the Croatian border and Sava river. It is a local self-government unit (*grad*) within the entity of RS. According to the 1991 Census, religious demography of the population of the entire pre-war municipality of Doboj (total 102 549) was: Islam 39,16 percent; Serbian Orthodox 37,41 percent; Roman Catholic 13,04 percent; Atheists 5,97 percent; undeclared/unknown 4,25 percent. Since that time the pre-war municipality has been divided into three parts: the city municipality (*gradska opština*) is located in RS while two smaller municipalities (East and South) belong to FBiH. Preliminary results of 2013 Census report 77 223 residents enumerated in the City of Doboj in RS, while in FBiH municipalities there were 10 866 (Doboj East) and 4 409 (Doboj South).[232] There are still no official figures of the religious composition, but it is generally believed that the number of Muslims and Catholics declined substantially during the 1992-1995 conflict,[233] so that Serbian Orthodoxy is now majority religion.

[231] "Preliminary Results of the 2013 Census."

[232] Ibid.

[233] For instance, the number of Catholic adherents in the Parish of Doboj declined from 4000 in 1991 to 800 in the post-war period; cf. The City of Doboj, "Religija," accessed November 25, 2013, http://www.opstina-doboj.ba/zivot-u-doboju/religija.html

- In Čapljina one attack was conducted against the Islamic site. The mosque in the nearby village Višići was targeted in March 2011. Čapljina is the town and municipality located in the region of Herzegovina, near the road E73 running from Mostar towards the Croatian border and the Adriatic coast to the south. It is a local self-government unit (*općina*) within the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, the entity of FBiH. According to 1991 Census, religious demography of the population (total 27 882) was: Roman Catholic 53,44 percent, Islam 26,91 percent, Serbian Orthodox 12,9 percent, Atheists 4,77 percent and undeclared/unknown 1,93 percent. According to preliminary results of 2013 Census, there were total 28 122 persons enumerated,[234] while data on religion have not yet been published.

Other selection criteria were: that each of the selected three locations had different religious majority (Islam in Visoko, Serbian Orthodoxy in Doboj and Roman Catholicism in Čapljina); that each was located in different geographical regions of BiH (Visoko in central Bosnia, Doboj in northern Bosnia, Čapljina in Herzegovina in the south); that each political entity was covered (Visoko in FBiH with Bosniak ethnic majority, Doboj in RS with Bosnian Serb ethnic majority, Čapljina in FBiH with Bosnian Croat ethnic majority); and that in terms of communication all three locations were similarly accessible (all three towns were located on the main roads, along the future international highway "Corridor Vc" north-south route, so neither location could be characterized as territorially isolated).

While applying all these criteria we decided nevertheless to include Čapljina despite the fact that it had experienced only one attack. Čapljina was also the place where bitter intra-Catholic conflict between the local Franciscans and diocesan priests headed by the Bishop of Mostar had taken place.

Regarding the selection of interviewees we decided to arrange meetings with the following persons in each of the three locations:

- a religious leader of ICBH,
- a religious leader of SOC,
- a religious leader of CC,
- a representative of political institutions or municipal administration, and
- a representative of CSO.

Therefore, total number of interviews conducted would have been fifteen, with possible additional one in Doboj (a representative of the local IRC branch). However, during the field trips we decided to make the following adjustments.

In Visoko we first met a municipal officer who appeared not to have enough information about the main questions for this study, so we selected another interviewee, a local politician – a member of the Municipal Assembly simultaneously chairing a commission for the relations with religious communities.

In Čapljina, besides interviewing a member of the Franciscan community, we decided to meet also a local diocesan parish priest. The person had been recommended to us as active in promoting interreligious dialogue and also due to the mentioned strife between Franciscans

[234] "Preliminary Results of the 2013 Census."

and the Bishopric we thought it might be useful to hear opinions of "both sides" of CC in this region.

In Doboj, we planned to interview a person from the local branch of IRC, but in the course of the fieldtrip we learned that this IRC-affiliated body had been established just recently and that up to that point they had not been much active, so we gave up the idea to contact them. We also planned but were unable to organize a meeting with a representative of SOC in Doboj. During our first visit to Doboj on September 25, 2013 we approached a local parish priest who advised us to contact the newly appointed Episcopal Dean (*arhijerejski namjesnik*). We made a phone call to this senior priest asking for an interview for our project but he declined saying he was not authorized to give interview. Then, we sent an official fax to the Orthodox Bishop of Zvornik-Tuzla on October 22 asking for his permission or advice. The Bishop replied on October 23 greeting our project but refrained from giving any suggestion about whom we might contact for an interview. We then turned back to the parish priest in Doboj we had initially met and this time sent him an official e-mail on November 6, asking him about possible interview. In his e-mail reply on the same day he reiterated that he was not authorized to set any meeting without the permission of his Episcopal Dean. Finally, we decided not to pursue a representative of SOC in Doboj for the time being.

This is a brief chronological overview of the field trips conducted in Phase I with coded names of our respondents:

- On September 24, 2013 the team visited Čapljina and interviewed a municipal officer (P1) and two religious leaders (R1 and R2).
- On September 25, 2013 the team visited Doboj and interviewed a religious leader (R3).
- On September 26, 2013 the team conducted the second trip to Čapljina and interviewed a religious leader (R4).
- On September 30, 2013 the team conducted the second trip to Doboj and interviewed a religious leader (R5), as well as the first trip to Visoko where we interviewed a municipal officer (P2) and a religious leader (R6).
- On October 9, 2013 the team conducted the second trip to Visoko and interviewed two religious leaders (R7 and R8) and a municipal assembly member (P3).
- On October 29, 2013 the team conducted the third trip to Čapljina and interviewed a CSO activist (C1) and a religious leader (R9).
- On October 31, 2013 the team conducted the third trip to Doboj and interviewed a municipal officer (P4) and a CSO activist (C2).
- On November 11, 2013 the team conducted the third trip to Visoko and interviewed a CSO activist (C3).

In total, we conducted sixteen interviews: nine with religious leaders (four Catholic, three Islamic and two Orthodox) and seven with secular persons (four municipal representatives and three CSO activists).

During Phase I the research team concluded that the prospects of interreligious cooperation and its impact on the civil society development in the local communities are limited. The local

religious and secular leaders expressed their will and motivation to work together, especially to educate the public and the young people against interreligious prejudices and hostility. However, there seemed to be a challenge for these people to think in long-terms and to take wider contexts into account. Findings of the research conducted in Phase I showed a high level of disconnection and mistrust at the grassroots level towards higher religious and political instances. In some cases even within the same religious community there appeared problems in vertical communication between its own higher and lower clergy. Whereas the lower clergy was generally, with few exceptions, committed to work locally on the development of interreligious dialogue and cooperation, the top religious leaders were often characterized as being too politically oriented. A discourse analysis of the press on the eve of a population census in BiH (Annex 1) showed that religious leaders of all three major religious communities in BiH to various degrees politicized the census questions on "ethno-cultural characteristics" of the citizens along the ethnopolitical agenda of secular leaders.

In order to prepare for Phase II of the research, whereby the focus would be on the urban centers of religious and political power affecting BiH as a whole, the following hypothesis was made. From the grassroots perspective, higher religious and political structures act as disturbing agents posing threat against the maintained delicate balance of local interreligious relations. In order to enable the grassroots to start thinking in long-terms about future developments, this disturbance in relation with higher structures needs to be detected, analyzed and possible solutions proposed.

Phase II

In the course of Phase II the research team strived to interview the highest leaders of the above three religious communities as well as of three major (ethno)political parties in BiH, which have continuously been instrumental in shaping the overall politics in the country since their coming to power in 1990. Additionally, an interview with a representative of a CSO engaged in interreligious dialogue across BiH provides yet another alternative view on this problem.

Although Phase II was initially planned to include fieldtrip visits to major urban centers of ethnic, political and religious power, in the course of the preparation we decided to focus rather on the institutions than on the geography. Besides the top-level hierarchy of religious communities we chose to target three political parties that have long been associated with ethnopolitics in BiH, rather than those currently in power at any of multiple governmental levels in BiH. However, the circumstances dictated the tempo and methods of our work, so some adjustments had to be made.

It was initially decided to conduct seven interviews during May 2014 in order to have enough time to prepare a final report by the end of June 2014. But, the severe storm and flood that affected BiH and the region during May 2014 prevented the research team to proceed as planned. It was particularly difficult to organize interviews with top religious leaders, who at the time were preoccupied with humanitarian issues in the areas heavily hit by the disaster. After several weeks of active communication with the highest institutions of religious communities including IRC, we met three religious leaders who had been nominated for interview by their top-level religious authorities in BiH. Along with a representative of a CSO working in the field of interreligious dialogue, all these four interviews were conducted in Sarajevo.

As far as the representatives of political parties are concerned, we were able to interview

highly positioned party members of all three selected parties - HDZ, SDA and SDS. Decision to contact these three parties was made after a consultative discussion with Dino Abazović, Assistant Professor at the Sociology Department, the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Sarajevo, on May 6, 2014. Since SDA politician was located in Sarajevo, only two fieldtrips were made - one to Mostar and one to Banja Luka, in order to interview HDZ and SDS politicians, respectively. In total, all seven interviews, out of which five in Sarajevo, were conducted in the period from May 26 to June 27, 2014.

This is a brief chronological overview of the field trips conducted in Phase II with coded names of our respondents:

- On May 26, 2014 the team interviewed a CSO activist in Sarajevo (C4).
- On May 28, 2014 the team visited Mostar and interviewed a HDZ politician (P5).
- On June 2, 2014 the team visited Banja Luka and interviewed a SDS politician (P6).
- On June 17, 2014 the team interviewed a SDA politician in Sarajevo (P7).
- On June 19, 2014 the team conducted interviews with two religious leaders in Sarajevo (R10 and R11).
- On June 27, 2014 the team conducted the final interview in Sarajevo, with a religious leader (R12).

In total, we conducted seven interviews in Phase II: three with clerical leaders (each representing one of the three major religions) and four with secular persons (three politicians and one CSO activist).

ANNEX 4 - GUIDING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Phase I

- Can you tell us something about yourself and the community where you work?
- How do you see interreligious relations in your community?
- What is your take on the problem of attacks on holy sites and in what way does it affect interreligious relations in your community?
- What do you think it might be a motif for these attacks?
- What do you think about the role of religious leaders in reconciliation and peace building? Do they have enough space for their activities?
- What do you think about the cooperation between religious leaders of different religious communities in your town?
- To what extent does the politics in your local community contribute to the improvement of interreligious relations? What do you think about the contribution of higher politics in that respect?
- What is the stand of the local politics in your town on your religious community?
- What is the role of religious education in these matters? How much interreligious collaboration and non-violence approach in resolving conflicts has been taught at these classes?
- If mostly young people have been involved in the attacks on holy sites and if over 95 percent of children have attended religious education classes in last twenty years, what might be the reason for this vandalism and what should be done to guide young people toward interreligious cooperation?
- What might contribute to the improvement of interreligious cooperation and understanding and what specific measures and activities would you find the most important to undertake in your local community?
- What actions would you propose to take both within your community or institution and in communication with other relevant stakeholders in your local community?

Phase II

- How do you see or how do you evaluate interreligious relations in BiH?
- In our previous research we found that in the local communities these relations are better than publicly presented, but also we saw a balance between antagonism and cooperation. There is little initiatives or projects proposed towards wider civil society development and most activity is confined within each religious community. Local religious leaders explain that they do not posses enough authority in order to be more active because they must respect the hierarchy of their religious community. Do religious leaders at the grass roots articulate their problems and communicate them to higher authorities within your religious community? Are there vertical bottom-up communication channels within your religious community or within your political party?
- What do you think about the role of religious leaders in reconciliation and peace building? Do they have enough space for their activities?
- What do you think about the cooperation between religious leaders and generally between different religious communities in BiH? Civil society actors generally express negative opinion about religious communities. How do you think it might be overcome and how to open the channels for better communication with the civil society? Is there a possibility for you as a religious leader to influence or to affect the change of conditions and to go for a more integrative approach?
- To what extent does the politics in BiH contribute to the improvement of interreligious relations? Can you and your religious community and in what way influence the politicians to improve interreligious relations? Do you receive demands from politicians and do you respond to them? Do you know whether religious leaders receive demands from politicians and do they respond to them? It is often remarked that religious communities maintain close relations with certain political parties. What would you answer to that? Last year a long-awaited population census was conducted. Some religious leaders publicly instructed the citizens how to respond to certain census questions. What is your take on this? What is your opinion on radical or fundamentalist religious groups and do they present a real threat for the society?
- There has been more than twenty years passed since religious education was introduced into the public schools curricula in BiH. How do you see its role in the society, its results and its impact on the building of interreligious collaboration and trust? Do you think that younger generations are generally more open and ready for interreligious dialogue than their parents? There is a problem of youth violence associated with occurrences of religious intolerance and attacks on holy sites. In your opinion, what are the real effects of religious education and is it possible to influence the young people through these classes so the situation could be improved?

ANNEX 5 - INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Organization Title: Nansen Dialogue Center – Sarajevo

Project Title: "Dynamics Between Religion And Politics In Sensitive Political Contexts: Case Of Bosnia And Herzegovina"

1. I agree to be interviewed for the purpose of the above research project.

2. I certify that I have been told of the nature and the purpose of the interview.

3. I agree to participate in the electronically recorded interview. Please mark your answer:

a) YES or b) NO

4. I have been given satisfactory answers to my inquiries concerning project procedures and other matters.

5. Please choose and mark one of the following options: a), b) or c)

a) I agree to be identified by name in the project and related materials only, but not for publishing.

or

b) I understand that the information contained in the interviews may be used in materials to be published so my name may be used for that purpose.

or

c) I do not agree to be identified by name in any form in this project.

Full name of Interviewee _____

Signature of Interviewee _____

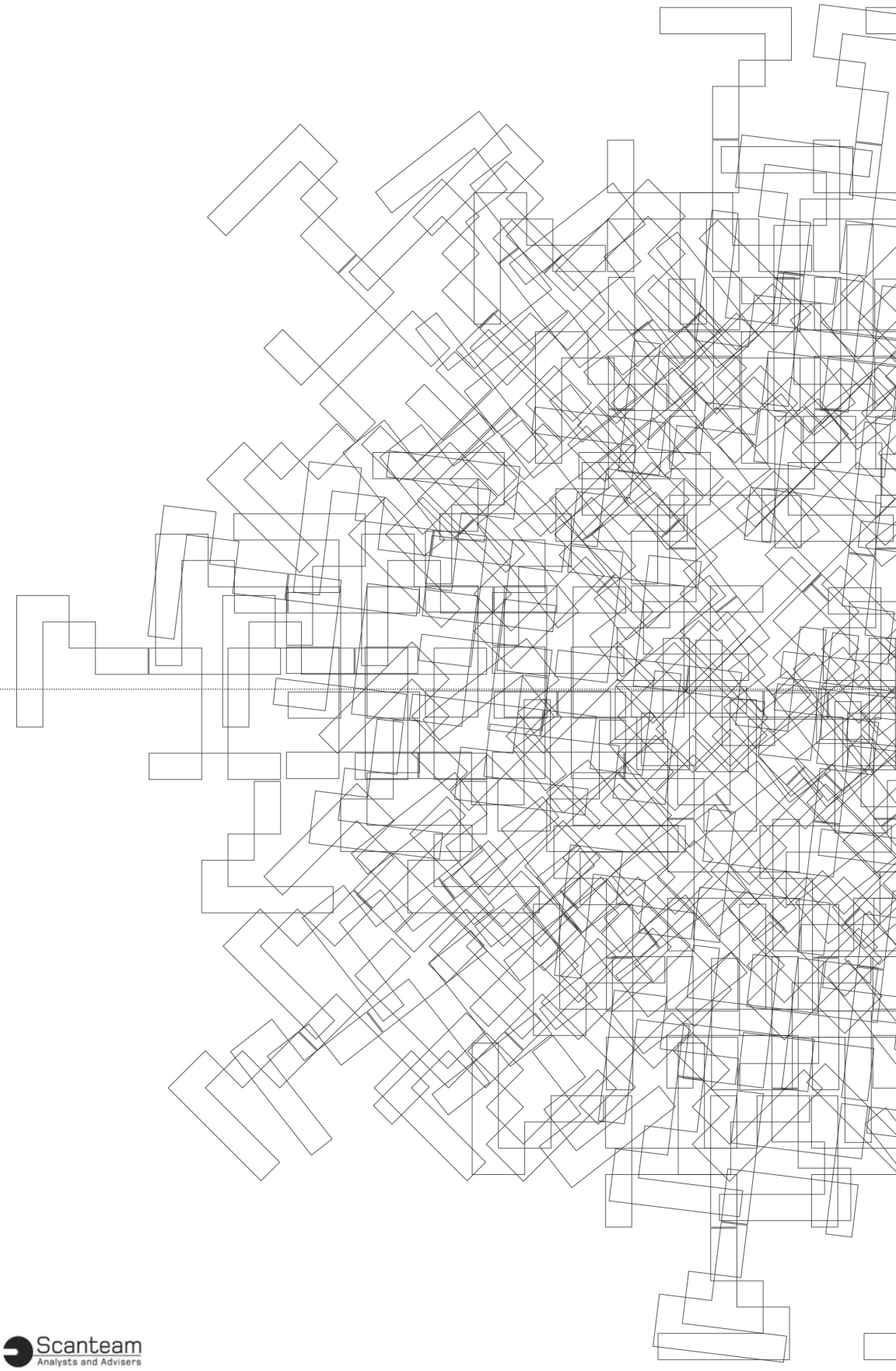
Date _____

6. I have explained the purpose of the project to the interviewee and in what manner the results of the interview will be used, therefore I believe that her/his agreement is free and conscious, and that the interviewee understands all implications of the given interview.

Full name of Interviewer _____

Signature of Interviewer _____

Date _____



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