WAR OF MEMORIES

Centre for
Nonviolent Action

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Places of suffering and remembrance of war in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Centre for Nonviolent Action
Sarajevo – Belgrade, 2016

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Edited by:
Ivana Franović
Nenad Vukosavljević

Photographs:
Nedžad Horozović
Nenad Vukosavljević

Photo editing:
Nenad Vukosavljević

Research team:
Amer Delić
Davorka Turk
Ivana Franović
Katarina Milićević
Nedžad Horozović
Nenad Vukosavljević
Sanja Burazerović

Design:
Ivana Franović

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Translation:
Ulvija Tanović

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* available only in hard copies and online: www.kulturasjecanja.org *

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Abbreviations

ARBiH	Armija Republike Bosne i Hercegovine / Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
BORS	Boračka organizacija Republike Srpske / Veterans Organisation of Republic of Srpska
bbr	Brdska brigada / Mountain Brigade
HDZ	Hrvatska demokratska zajednica / Croat Democratic Community
HVO	Hrvatsko vijeće obrane / Croat Defence Council
IZ	Islamska zajednica / Islamic Community
JNA	Jugoslovenska narodna armija / Yugoslav National Army
JP	Javno preduzeće / Public Enterprise
KS	Kanton Sarajevo / Sarajevo Canton
MZ	Mjesna zajednica / Local Community
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NOB	Narodnooslobodilačka borba / People's Liberation Struggle
NOR	Narodnooslobodilački rat / People's Liberation War
OLPBR	Ozrenska laka pješadijska brigada / Ozren Light Infantry Brigade
OS RBiH	Oružane snage Republike Bosne i Hercegovine / Armed Forces of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina
OSA BiH	Oružane snage Armije Bosne i Hercegovine / Armed Forces of the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina
OŠ	Osnovna škola / Primary School
RS	Republika Srpska / Republic of Srpska
RVI	Ratni vojni invalid / Disabled war veterans
Sbbr	Slavna brdska brigada / Distinguished Mountain Brigade
SPC	Srpska pravoslavna crkva / Serb Orthodox Church
SUBNOR	Savez udruženja boraca Narodnooslobodilačkog rata / Federation of People's Liberation War Veterans Associations
UDiVDR	Udruga dragovoljaca i veterana Domovinskog rata / Association of Volunteers and Veterans of the Homeland War
VRS	Vojska Republike Srpske / Army of Republic of Srpska

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Foreword

Before you is a publication developed as part of the project “War Monuments in Bosnia and Herzegovina (since 1991)”. The aim was to research (document and analyse) memorialisation policies and cultures of remembrance in Bosnia and Herzegovina for all three warring sides, viewing it primarily in terms of the potential to bring lasting peace and reconciliation.

The intention of this critical review is to raise awareness about the current models of collective memory, encourage open dialogue on the existing models of memorialisation, and call for new solutions whose primary focus will be the victims of injustice and violence, whatever their origins. By identifying similarities and differences among ethnic models of memory, and their entrenchment in national narratives, we hope to open a space for constructive change towards a more inclusive, non-nationalist and peace-oriented culture of remembrance. We hope that this process will do something to counter the political manipulation of the past, inspire long-term processes of reconciliation and encourage institutional support and the involvement of the wider public in the process of building lasting peace in this region.

During three years of research, we surveyed a large number of monuments and unmarked sites of suffering throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, and we managed to gather basic data on 85 of them. We made the initial selection relying on the data we already had and by working with contacts in the field, such as the victims’ organisations and veterans’ organisations that are often behind the marking of sites of suffering.

We devised a set of criteria to guide our selection. First, it was important to us that the monument referred to suffering from the 1991–1995 war. Next we considered to whom it was dedicated (civilian or military victims), and where it was located (an area where the ethnic group of the victims is a minority or majority). The three previously warring sides (Bosniaks, Croats, Serbs) are represented in the research.

Each monument is accompanied by a fact sheet providing information about to whom, where and when the monument was erected (or not erected, in the case of unmarked sites of atrocity), the dimensions of the monument (whether it is part of a complex or stands independently), a transcript of the inscription on the monument,[1] who initiated its construction, the sources of funding, whether and at whose request any subsequent changes had been made, and how the monument is used today (special dates, commemorations, visits).

We visited all of these monuments personally and in most cases managed to speak with contacts in the field who were either involved in the construction of the monument or view it as an important marker in their community.

Communication with relevant institutions and local authorities showed that competences for the procedures for erecting monuments are usually unclear, and that data about monuments is not gathered systematically (on the municipal or cantonal/entity level). This made gathering official data quite difficult and the process is still unfinished: official data is

1 We recorded the inscriptions, dedications and messages faithfully in an endeavour to accurately represent the message conveyed by each monument. This did not apply to the names of victims, which we did not record individually, but the monument fact sheets include information about any lists of victims, as well as any additional information accompanying their names (name, surname, father’s name, year of birth and year of death).

still lacking for some of the monuments presented in this publication. We therefore endeavoured to gather data in other ways, through interviews and consultations with local partners, relevant individuals and institutions, through newspaper articles, news reports on commemorative practices, court findings and judgements (in order to determine what had happened in an area where a monument was erected – or not erected in the case of unmarked sites of suffering), all of which significantly extended the time needed to complete the research.

The sources for the official data include: municipalities where the monuments are located (competent municipal services, usually for urban planning and veterans), veterans' associations, associations of camp survivors and families of victims, disabled veterans' associations, Islamic Community majlis[2] (for monuments located on mosque premises), cantonal associations for the preservation of monuments (Sarajevo and Una-Sana cantons), and organisations that produced or still possess design documentation for the monuments. All of this data (both official data and data gathered through unofficial channels) and sources is recorded on the monument fact sheets. We also have documentation on all the official requests we made to competent institutions in order to obtain official data.

As far as we know, this kind of research has not been conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is why, apart from photographing and gathering data, we also organised two focus groups to discuss our findings. The first focus group included researchers, historians, scholars in social sciences, and peace and human rights activists professionally interested in issues of memorialisation and culture of remembrance. This discussion was held in December 2012 in Sarajevo. A few months later, we organised another focus group in Doboj where we invited war veterans we had worked with before and who possessed significant experience in peacebuilding. We organised the second focus group primarily because in a large number of cases, veterans' associations were the initiators for the construction of monuments or played an important role in such initiatives. The aim of the focus groups was to reflect and critically review the existing practices of memorialisation and culture of remembrance. All of the findings were incorporated in this publication.

We would like to thank all the participants in the focus groups, as well as persons and institutions that helped us in gathering data.

We would also like to use this opportunity to thank Diakonie Austria for their financial and moral support for putting this idea into practice, for their understanding in extending the deadline, and for believing in us.

We have gathered extensive materials, far broader than initially planned for the monograph publication. While we were gathering materials, we often heard that the monuments were not getting the attention they deserve. Many of them are interesting in and of themselves and faithfully represent the dominant culture of remembrance in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as perceptions of postwar reality, so we did not want to miss the opportunity to record them. We therefore decided to publish all the data we had gathered on a website designed specifically for this purpose (kulturasjecanja.org) in order to make it available to the wider public. The website will continue to be updated with new monuments and un/marked sites of suffering, as well as all other relevant information we manage to obtain.

Davorka Turk

2 Local organisation unit of the Islamic community.

Photographs and monument fact sheets

Available only in hard copies &
online: www.kulturasjecanja.org

Remembrance and Reconciliation

Research on Monuments from the War in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Remembrance and Reconciliation

Research on Monuments from the War in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Ivana Franović

1 Introduction

This text presents an analysis of the culture of remembrance of the 1991-1995 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina through existing monuments related to that period. The culture of remembrance encompasses the ways we remember as a society[1] and the ways we explain the past.[2] It is important to note that the term "monument" does not denote only places of remembrance, memorials materialised in space as material objects, installations and sculptures, but also memorial plaques, memorial rooms, memorial churches, cemeteries, fountains and buildings that were used as detention camps during the war. The research does not include "soft" memorials such as holidays and other important dates in state calendars, publications, names of streets, squares and institutions, nor does it include commemorations, memorial conferences, cultural events and other such modes of expressing collective memory.

For some years the Centre for Nonviolent Action has been working on peacebuilding, establishing dialogue throughout the region of the former Yugoslavia and dealing with the past. One of the reasons we decided to conduct this research was our sense that as peace activists, it is our duty to react to and point out the problems and dangers inherent in the current culture of remembrance, and also to propose ways of dealing with this situation or at least contribute to creating a climate conducive to constructive public dialogue.

We set ambitious **objectives** for the research:

- Documenting the existing culture of remembrance of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1991–1995)
- Analysing the current culture of remembrance
- Examining similarities and differences between ethnic models of remembrance
- Giving incentives for constructive changes of the culture of remembrance

1 Nenad Vukosavljević, "The Culture and the Politics of Memory", in: I. Franović, ed., *Reconciliation?! Training Handbook for Dealing with the Past*, Belgrade-Sarajevo: Centre for Nonviolent Action, 2014, p. 137.

2 Todor Kuljić, *Kultura sećanja: Teorijska objašnjenja upotrebe prošlosti* [Culture of Remembrance: Theoretical Explanations of Usage of the Past], Belgrade: Čigoja štampa, 2006, p. 7.

The questions we wanted to answer were: What are monuments for? What message do they convey? How much do they warn and how much do they threaten? Perhaps the most important questions for us are: how much do they contribute to reconciliation and constructive dealing with the past and what would a desirable model for monuments be?

The implementation of the research started in the autumn of 2012 and lasted until spring 2015.

The data we gathered is extensive and analyses may be conducted from various vantage points. We hope the data will be useful to other researchers addressing different issues. Here we focus on the above questions because they are crucial for our work on peacebuilding.

2 Basic Information on the Research Study

2.1 Methodology

In order to select material for our research, we imposed a set of ***criteria*** for our sample of monuments:

- The three key ethnic groups in BiH are represented
- Monuments in places where the ethnic group of the victims is predominant are represented
- Monuments in places where the ethnic group of the victims is a minority are represented
- Monuments to civilian and military victims are both represented
- The sample includes monuments erected in various periods since the war
- Unmarked sites of atrocity of all three "sides" – Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs – are also included.

It may seem strange at first glance that the research includes *non-existent* monuments, i.e. unmarked sites of atrocity. Of course, not every site of atrocity in Bosnia and Herzegovina has a monument. Given the nature of the war and its numerous victims, this would require the whole country to be paved with monuments. We have, however, noted initiatives to mark certain sites that have not yet been successful. The reasons are usually political: the victims belonged to what is today an ethnic minority in the given region, and the authorities representing the ethnic majority refuse to allow the construction of a monument. Such places of remembrance are particularly important for this research because the culture of remembrance is illustrated as much (if not more) by absences, by what is silenced and denied, and by what is forgotten, as it is by bulky monuments in town squares.

Each of the 85 monuments included in the research is identified by a ***fact sheet*** that contains the following information where available:

- Official name of monument
- Location, entity

- Year of construction/inauguration
- Complete transcript of the inscription on the monument
- Whether the monument honours soldiers or civilians
- The ethnic group of the victims
- The area of origin of the victims
- Dimensions of the monument
- Who erected the monument
- Information on choice of location
- The designer of the monument
- Interpretation of the design concept
- Any changes/interventions carried out to date
- How the monument is used today, known commemorations
- Other relevant information.

We created a ***questionnaire*** that served as a key source of information and we asked competent bodies to fill it out.[3] The competent bodies are the local or cantonal authorities, monument councils, as well as war veterans' associations and associations of families of the victims (these associations are usually the initiators of the monuments). For a number of monuments, we could not obtain official data from the authorities, so we relied on data from associations. Mostly, the difficulty was in finding the department within the municipality responsible for monuments and in their readiness to provide us with the requested information.

For each of the 85 monuments, a series of ***photographs*** was made to accompany the fact sheet. This publication presents only a narrow selection of photographs, but the online database contains photographs of all the investigated monuments: http://kulturasjecanja.org.

At the very beginning of the research, we organised two ***focus groups***. The first consisted primarily of peace and human rights activists, as well as reporters, historians and researchers working on the topic of memory. The second focus group brought together veterans. Both groups were predominantly Bosnian-Herzegovinian, but we also invited a few people from Croatia, Serbia and Macedonia. Both focus groups dealt with the following questions: What is the purpose of monuments? Why do we build them? What do we think monuments should be? Who do we make monuments for? What are our monuments like? How do we perceive them? What sort of perspective of the past do they offer? How much do they contribute to reconciliation and constructive dealing with the past? What would be the desired model: what should and should not be included in a monument? What sort of story should they tell about the past war? Both groups provided us with recommendations and guidance about the things we needed take into account during our research.

In addition, we had a host of individual conversations with people in the field.

3 The questionnaire is enclosed as an annex at the end of this book.

2.2 Basic information about the sample

Relying on the above criteria and knowledge of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian context, we compiled an initial list of sites to include in the research. The list was then expanded during our research based on gathered data and new insights.

Finally, we selected a sample of 85 monuments that we considered relevant and that provided a representative view of the state of the culture of remembrance in Bosnian-Herzegovinian society.[4] They are located in the following towns and villages:

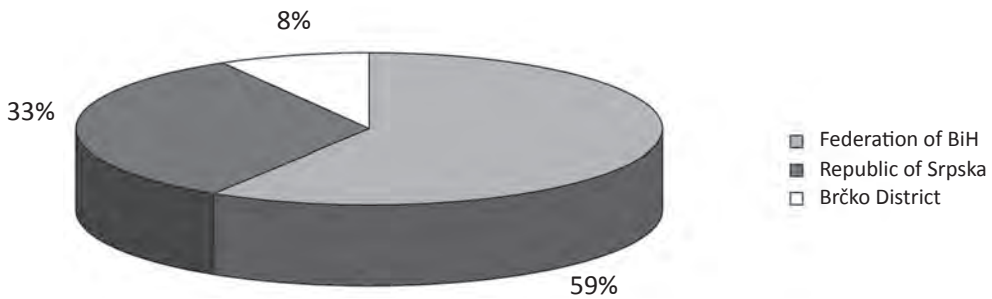
Map 1: Places in BiH where the studied monuments are located

4 The list of monuments included in this study is given in an annex at the end of the book.

- Agići (Derventa)
- Ahmići
- Bihać
- Bosanska Krupa
- Bratunac
- Brčko
- Brod
- Busovača
- Crkvina (Šamac)
- Čuništa (Olovo)
- Derventa
- Došci-Gornji Kamengrad (Sanski Most)
- Grabovica (Mostar)
- Kamičani (Kozarac)
- Kevljani (Prijedor)
- Kozarac
- Kravica (Bratunac)
- Kruščica (Vitez)
- Laništa (Brčko)
- Ledići (Trnovo)
- Livno
- Modran (Derventa)
- Mostar
- Obudovac (Šamac)
- Omarska (Prijedor)
- Pištaline (Bosanska Krupa)
- Pobriježje (Sanski Most)
- Prijedor
- Sanski Most
- Sarajevo
- Sijekovac (Brod)
- Sokolac
- Srebrenica
- Stog (Zavidovići)
- Šamac
- Trnopolje (Prijedor)
- Tuzla
- Velika Kladuša
- Velika Sočanica (Derventa)
- Višegrad
- Vitez, Stari Vitez
- Zavidovići

Fifty of these monuments are situated in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (59%); 28 of the monuments are situated in Republic of Srpska (33%); and 7 monuments are situated in the Brčko District (8%).

Figure 1: Percentage of monuments from the sample per entity



Ethnic representation and majority/minority status

In order to provide a breakdown of ethnic representation, we classified the monuments into four categories (see Table 1).

Table 1: Ethnic representation

Category	Number of monuments	%
Monuments for Bosniaks or predominantly for Bosniaks	45	53%
Monuments for Serbs or predominantly for Serbs	21	25%
Monuments for Croats or predominantly for Croats	12	14%
For all ethnic groups or non-defined	7	8%

Data on the ethnicity of the victims is unreliable given that it is almost impossible to determine how the victims described themselves and whether they were affiliated with any ethnic group, so these are estimates from relevant bodies, but also our own. More about this in the next section.

According to the data of the Research and Documentation Centre (Istraživačko dokumentacioni centar, IDC), Bosniaks account for 64.64% of war victims, Serbs for 26%, and Croats for 8.76%.[5]

It was very important for us to include in our research monuments for ethnic groups that constitute a minority in the area where the monuments are located. Such monuments are harder to build due to opposition or obstruction from the authorities; moreover, they are a good indicator of the struggle between opposing memories.

In 69% of the cases, the ethnic group the monument is dedicated to is the majority ethnic group in the area, while in 22% of the cases it is the minority. Three monuments are dedicated to a minority ethnic group, but one that is in power in the local self-governance unit (from where permits for the construction of monuments are generally issued). This is the case, for example, with the monument in Kozarac. For 9% of the monuments, the majority-minority status is "non-defined", such as in the case of the Brčko District.

It may be interesting to note that the 8% of the monuments dedicated to all ethnic groups or without national affiliation are situated in places with a Bosniak majority.

Monuments to soldiers and civilian victims

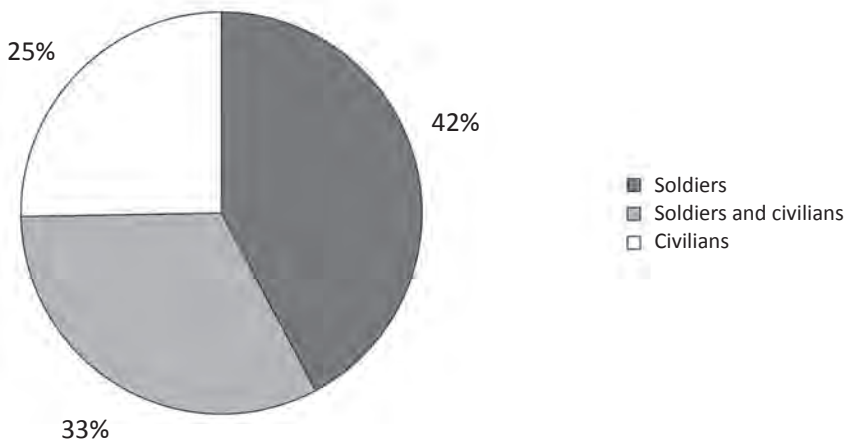
The largest share of monuments pertains to those dedicated to the memory of soldiers – 42%. Then 33% of monuments are dedicated to the memory of soldiers and civilians, and 25% to the memory of civilians.

Given the data of the Research and Documentation Centre, which has conducted the most complete research on human losses in Bosnia and Herzegovina, suggests that 60.14% of war victims were soldiers and 39.86% were civilians, we can say that our sample does not deviate much from the actual situation.[6]

5 Mirsad Tokača, *The Bosnian Book of the Dead: Human Losses in Bosnia and Herzegovina 1991-1995*, Sarajevo: Istraživačko dokumentacioni centar, 2012, p. 125–126.

6 *Ibid*, p. 112.

Figure 2: Monuments dedicated to soldiers and/or civilians



When were the monuments constructed?

One of the criteria for selecting the sample of monuments was that it should contain monuments constructed in various periods since the war. Of the monuments included, two were constructed during the war. Between 13 and 19 monuments were built in each of the subsequent five-year periods (1996–2000, 2001–2005, 2006–2010, and 2011–2015). For ten monuments, it was impossible to determine the year of construction or start of works/inauguration.

Table 2: Year of construction/inauguration or start of construction of monument

Period	Broj spomenika
1991–1995. god.	2
1996–2000. god.	17
2001–2005. god.	19
2006–2010. god.	18
2011–2015. god.	13
Unmarked sites of atrocity	6
No data	10

Nismo uočili bitne razlike među spomenicima izgrađenim u različitim periodima.

3 Culture of Remembrance through Examples

3.1 Hrastova glavica

The Hrastova glavica pit is located in one of those remote areas that seem "at the edge of the world". From Sanski Most, you drive to Donji Kamengrad and the destroyed mosque, then further along dirt roads, tracks and a path through the forest and undergrowth. At the end of this path, which is skirted by blackberry bushes, there is a naturally occurring pit. At the mouth, the pit is narrow as a well, but becomes broader deeper down. In 1998, the remains of 126 human bodies were found there. They had been thrown in so as never to be found.

On 6 August 1992, two buses drove to this site. They were ordinary public transport buses. They were full of people hitherto detained at the Keraterm and Omarska camps. Keraterm and Omarska were being urgently shut down, and camp detainees had to be "disposed of". They were led in threes to the pit, their hands tied with wire, and shot in the head. Their bodies were then thrown into the pit. Some of the executioners sat on chairs while shooting.

Forensic experts say bombs were subsequently detonated in the pit. It is assumed this was to silence the cries of the survivors. The remains of two men from Sanski Most killed in the Second World War were also found in the pit.

One of the camp inmates, Ibrahim Fetahović, managed to escape from this site. Wounded, he managed to reach the home of a Serb who gave him food and water and told him to go, lest they both be killed. He managed to reach the "Bosniak" side, but was later killed in the war. However, since he had told people what he had been through, their accounts of his story helped to find this mass grave.

The perpetrators have not been convicted and are not being prosecuted before any court.

Today, there is a monument at the site. A well was constructed over the mouth of the pit and an iron grate was placed over the opening so that no more people could be thrown into the pit. The inscription reads:

> Jama Hrastova glavica Memorial
>
> Above this pit, on 6 August 1992, members of the Serb army and police killed 124 prisoners from the Prijedor death camps of Keraterm and Omarska. They killed three at a time, tied with wire, and threw them into an abyss more than 20 meters deep. Their skeletal remains were found in 1998 along with the bones of two men from Sanski Most killed in the Second World War.
>
> This memorial is dedicated on the 20th anniversary of the crime in the hope that this pit shall never again see innocent people thrown in.
>
> Association of Prijedor Women "Izvor"
>
> Association of Camp Survivors Sanski Most

An annual commemoration is held on 5 August.

3.2 Non-mounted memorial plaque at Korićanske stijene

A convoy taking Bosniak and Croat civilians from Prijedor to Travnik to be exchanged was ordered to stop on Mount Vlašić on 21 August 1992. Some 200 military-age men were taken off and executed on the spot. A few people managed to survive by jumping into the gorge before the shots were fired. Eight people were convicted for this crime by the Court of BiH.[7]

The "Izvor" Association from Prijedor made a memorial plaque, intending to mount it at the site. However, the local authorities of the Kneževo Municipality in Republic of Srpska withheld approval. According to the activists from the Association, the explanation they received was that the plaque would "disrupt traffic". This led the phenomenon of the mobile memorial plaque.

Every 21 August, a commemoration is held at Korićanske stijene and the memorial plaque is brought and temporarily installed at the site. After the commemoration, the plaque is returned to Prijedor.

The inscription reads:

> At this site on 21 August 1992 members of the Prijedor police killed more than 200 civilians from Prijedor.

3.3 Sijekovac

In the village of Sijekovac in the Brod Municipality on 26 March 1992, civilians were made to stand in front of their houses. Nine were killed and a number of houses were burned down. The man telling us about this crime says he knows one of the perpetrators, who is also from Sijekovac: "I'd been afraid of him since I was a kid. That's how it is in war, the worst ones come up."[8] The best man from his wedding, who had been in a cast, was tied up and set to fire in his bathtub that night.

This was one of the first crimes committed in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina and for the Serb population it is a symbol of atrocity. It occurred before the official start of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina according to the Bosniak narrative: 6 April 1992 is the date marked in the Federation of BiH as the beginning of the war. The crime committed in Sijekovac is very important for the Serb narrative about the war in BiH, so the annual commemoration on 26 March is not local in character, but is instead organised by the Republika Srpska Government Committee for Fostering the Traditions of the Liberation Wars.

A memorial church has been built in the village, at the site of the church destroyed during the war. A memorial plaque inside the church bears the names of soldiers and civilian victims from Sijekovac. The plaque on the exterior wall of the church bears a frightening inscription:

---

7 The convicted perpetrators are: Damir Ivanković, Gordan Đurić, Saša Zečević, Zoran Babić, Milorad Škrbić, Dušan Janković, Željko Stojnić, and Marinko Ljepoja. See: Court of BiH, 2009, Damir Ivanković Judgement, X-KR-08/549-1; Court of BiH, Gordan Đurić Judgement, 2009, X-KR-08/549-2; Court of BiH, 2013, Second Instance Judgement in Saša Zečević case, S1 1 K 013227 13 Krž 2; Court of BiH, 2013, Second Instance Judgement in Zoran Babić, Milorad Škrbić, Dušan Janković, and Željko Stojnić case, S1 1 K 003472 12 Kžk; and Court of BiH, 2013, Second Instance Judgement in Marinko Ljepoja, Petar Čivić and Branko Topola case, S1 1 K 003365 12 Krž 12.

8 Interview with Zdravko Trifunović on 3 April 2014 in Sijekovac, talking about the only indicted perpetrator of this crime, Zemir Kovačević.

> How many times did death howl in frenzy here with killers drunk on hate bellowing for Serb blood?
>
> Sworn enemies of the Serb people drew their swords and the blood of martyrs flowed.
>
> While the flames of a March night dwindled and the black morning of Sijekovac dawned.

One person has been indicted for the murder of two people in a case before the Court of BiH.[9]

3.4 Sarajevo Roses

The Roses, as the citizens of Sarajevo call them, are holes left in the asphalt of Sarajevo streets by shells. After the war, when the city was under reconstruction, many of these roses disappeared, the asphalt was repaired or replaced, and many traces of shelling can now no longer be seen. In order to preserve the memory of the 1425 days of the siege and shelling of the city, the citizens of Sarajevo organised to fill the remaining roses with red resin. They can be seen in multiple locations in the centre of the city. They are inconspicuous, so if you are not looking for them, you may not notice them.

They are a unique way to mark an authentic site of atrocity: discreet, but powerful. There are no signs, symbols, interpretations, ethnic prefixes or marking of territory – only the message that a shell exploded at that site and the space for the passer-by to confront their thoughts and feelings on their own. How many lives did it take?

There are fewer and fewer Sarajevo Roses. They have been relegated to the care of citizens, who also protect them during road reconstruction. As of 2008, they have come under the authority of the Cantonal Institute for the Protection of Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage of Sarajevo, but an adequate budget for their maintenance has not been secured. Some believe that what is lacking is political will to preserve these unique incitements to memory. Amra Čusto notes that those tailoring the memory policy of the city do not recognise the power of the Sarajevo Roses, "since they might take on the role of homogenising the community, because they do not have the exclusive symbolism and content of one nation, tradition or religion, which form the primary basis for today's collective identities."[10]

3.5 Brčko

Brčko is the only city in Bosnia and Herzegovina in whose centre you can see in relative proximity large monuments to soldiers from all three Bosnian-Herzegovinian armies: combatants

9 See Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, S1 1 K 009588 14 KRŽ – Kovačević Zemir, Cases on trial or appeal, www.sudbih.gov.ba (accessed on 4 September 2015).

10 Amra Čusto, *Uloga spomenika u Sarajevu u izgradnji kolektivnog sjećanja na period 1941–1945. i 1992–1995. - Komparativna analiza* [The Role of Monuments in Sarajevo in Constructing Collective Memory of the Period 1941-1945 and 1992-1995 - A Comparative Analysis], Sarajevo: Institut za istoriju *et al*, 2013, p. 116.

of the Republika Srpska Army (VRS), the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ARBiH), and the Croat Defence Council (HVO).

This was not a peaceful region during the war. On the contrary, there were many casualties, mass killings of civilians and terrible torture at the *Luka* camp. Today, Brčko does not belong to either entity in BiH – not to Republic of Srpska and not to the Federation – but has since 2000 been a separate district where the three constitutive groups share power. In 2003, the Brčko District enacted the Law on Monuments and Symbols, whereby:

> In order to achieve full equality of all constitutive peoples in the District, monuments to Bosniaks and Croats shall be erected in the centre of Brčko between the Savska Mosque and the Catholic Church. The locations and dimensions of these monuments shall correspond to those of the monument to the Serb Defenders of Brčko.[11]

A long time after this law entered into force, concrete agreements were made about the construction of monuments to HVO combatants in front of the Town Hall and combatants of the Army of BiH in the nearby town park. The agreement signed by leaders of veterans' organisations from all three sides is very impressive, but it is also simply being human in inhumane times. In it they state that the agreement was signed "in the interest of fostering reconciliation among all the peoples in the District; with a desire to contribute to the multi-ethnic character of the District".[12]

Some residents of Brčko are proud that it is the only town in BiH with monuments to combatants from different armies in its centre.

There is no single monument to all the victims from Brčko. Like elsewhere, monuments are dedicated "each to his own".

4 What Do Monuments Tell Us? Findings and Observations

4.1 Ethnic groups

One of the initial hypotheses for the research was that culture of remembrance was one-sided and ethno-centric, that monuments reflect the ethnic divisions in society.

When filling out the fact sheets for each monument, one of the more difficult tasks was determining the ethnic group of the victims to whom the monument was dedicated. The difficulty resulted from lack of reliable data about how the victims identified themselves during their lives. On the other hand, the religious or national symbols most monuments are adorned with clearly indicate the ethnic group they are honouring. It is rare to find a monument whose appearance does not readily associate it with a single ethnic group. You are welcome to test this statement by browsing the photographs of the monuments in this publication.

It turned out that a generalised assessment was unreliable, because lists of names of victims

11 Assembly of the Brčko District of BiH, *Law on Monuments and Symbols*, Article 15, 15 October 2003.

12 Agreements signed on 10 November 2009 by the Veterans Association of Republika Srpska, the Association for the HVO Monument and the Association *Da se ne zaboravi [Never Forget]* by leaders of veterans organisations.

would include a few names that did not belong to the ethnic group indicated by the symbols on the monument. Or, if there was no list of names, the competent bodies we contacted for information would often provide an unexpected answer: for example, that the monument was dedicated to all ethnic groups or that the ethnic breakdown was mixed, with a predominance of one ethnic group. We thus arrived at a large number of "mixed" monuments: about 53%. Given the degree of division in society and the number of monuments with national and ethnic symbols, we did not consider this information entirely realistic.

We realised that the question of "For which ethnic group was this monument erected?" was ambiguous: it may refer to the dead it commemorates or to the living for whom it was constructed. And it seems that the dead are "more mixed" than some of the living would like to remember. So there are some who may have identified themselves as Bosniaks or Croats, or perhaps even as Yugoslavs or who did not profess any affiliation, who now lie under an Orthodox cross or *ocila* (Serbian cross); some who may have identified themselves as Bosniaks, Serbs or otherwise are lying under a Catholic cross, *šahovnica* (the Croatian coat of arms) or even under the *U* symbol; and some who may have identified as Croats, Serbs or otherwise lie under a fleur-de-lis, crescent and star symbol, or *nišan* (an Islamic grave marker).

Unless we believe the dead have a say over which symbol is put on their monument, we can only assume the living made these decisions. In the case of fallen soldiers, we could say that the symbols these soldiers fought under were the guiding principle. However, since the same symbols are often used for monuments to civilians, we can conclude that these monuments speak not so much of the dead as to the living. We also get the impression that in most cases, the monuments were not erected because of the dead, in honour of their memory, but because of the living.

4.2 Where are monuments located, who erects them and is there public dialogue?

There are three types of location where monuments are most often situated. In order of prevalence, these are:

- Central places in the town/village
- Authentic sites (sites of atrocity, camps, sites where mass graves were discovered)
- Cemeteries or the premises of places of worship.

The choice of location indicates that monuments are important for today's society, and especially for Bosnian-Herzegovinian political elites. Most monuments are erected in the centre of town, in the central square or park, in visible places where people habitually assemble. Only about 20 to 25% of monuments are located at authentic sites. Given the nature of the war and the large number of civilian casualties, it is not surprising that some central urban areas are also authentic sites of atrocity.

Some of the monuments located in places of worship or their premises were erected there to eschew the process of acquiring a permit from the authorities with competences for the construction of monuments in public spaces. As a rule, these are monuments of minority ethnic groups. Monuments are rarely erected on private property.

In most cases local authorities are responsible for issuing construction permits and permits to erect a monument. The exception is the Memorial Centre Srebrenica – Potočari, whose construction was approved by a decision of the High Representative for BiH. Initiatives to erect a monument come from veterans' associations, families of victims, non-governmental organisations, the local community, religious communities, or the local authorities themselves. Monuments are overwhelmingly funded by municipal budgets or by higher levels of government. It seems that monuments honouring soldiers are most often funded from municipal budgets, while those dedicated to civilian victims are often funded by victims' families or from private funds. However, since we did not manage to determine the source of financing for each individual monument, this information should be taken with caution.

Rarely are monument designs chosen through public competition, with the participation of artists or with any serious public debate, so we cannot necessarily say that a lot of thought was put into the appearance of monuments or the symbols and messages they convey. This is also clear from the prevalent style of the monuments. For more than 50% of the monuments, we were unable to find information about the originator or designer. Our guess is that local stonemasons who usually make gravestones produced the monuments, but this impression may be misleading.

It is unusual for a single designer to design monuments erected in different cities. That said, the Belgrade-based sculptor Miodrag Živković designed the central monuments to VRS soldiers in three cities in Republika Srpska – Brčko, Derventa and Prijedor – and assisted in the design of the monument in Brod. He also designed monuments in Bijeljina and Modriča, but they were not included in this study. According to the data gathered, the monuments were erected by the municipalities and BORS municipal committees. We do not know whether the same body hired one sculptor to make all the monuments or if he was individually hired by the municipalities and BORS municipal committees. Perhaps the municipal committees from the other cities saw the first monument erected in Brčko and decided they would like something similar. And something similar is what they got: towering bronze monuments in town centres, with Orthodox symbols and martyrs' silhouettes/figures. However, given the uniformity of these monuments and estimating that the budget was more generous than usual, it is possible that a particular supervisory body was involved. We did not manage to obtain information about this, however.

It is particularly interesting that Živković is an award-winning Yugoslav sculptor who designed the very well-known NOB monuments: the monument to executed pupils in Šumarice, Kragujevac, the monument to the Battle of Sutjeska at Tjentište, and the Kadinjača monument near Užice.

The uniformity is more evident in Sarajevo, indicating a more orderly process of erecting monuments.[13] For example, in multiple sites around the city, there are uniform memorial plaques in places where mass killings of citizens occurred, such as the memorial plaque to citizens killed in the bread queue massacre (included in this study). They all bear the same inscription: "At this site on [date], Serb criminals killed [number] citizens of Sarajevo. Rahmah, peace and silence for the dead. Recite the Al-Fatiha and say a prayer. Remember and warn. Citizens of Sarajevo."

The only monument whose construction we know was subject to public debate was the Memorial to Children Killed in the Siege of Sarajevo. The location, symbol and design were discussed. The saddest part of the discussion concerned which children the monument should

13 This is to be expected given that the Sarajevo Canton has a body responsible for shaping memory: the Sarajevo Canton Fund for the construction and maintenance of cemeteries of shahids and fallen fighters, memorial centres and memorials to victims of genocide.

honour: all children who were killed in Sarajevo during the war or only children killed in parts of Sarajevo that were under siege? Would the monument also commemorate children killed in parts of Sarajevo under the control of Serb forces (Ilidža Grbavica, Vogošća), i.e. Serb children in parts of the city that were not under siege? Would the monument only be for *our* children or is it also for *theirs*? The Chairman of the Caucasus of the Party for Democratic Action (SDA), Idriz Hodžić, explained:

> Children who were victims of those who shot at Sarajevo – it is to those children that Sarajevo owes a monument such as this one. Why? Because in my opinion, a different approach would mean equating the victims and the aggressor.[14]

The politics that marks children as aggressors is the same as the politics that kept Sarajevo under siege, terrorising and killing its citizens. That same type of politics won again. The monument was just for *our* children.

The dialogue surrounding the monument was difficult and its outcome disappointing. But at least there was dialogue. Different opinions and opposition to nationalist politics could be heard in public. This is a step forward compared to monuments that bear frightening messages but were erected without clamour or opposition.

4.3 Changes on monuments

Changes on monuments can indicate changes in social memory, so it was important for us to investigate whether and how monuments were changed.

It was quite difficult to obtain information about any changes. Changes appear to be very rare and are mostly concerned with the reconstruction of or additions to an existing monument, rather than changing its message and contents. The changes we observed and/or obtained information about were:

- Reconstruction of the monument and adding elements to it
- Changing information in the inscription or removing contentious words from the inscription
- Relocating the monument
- Destroying the monument.

For example, the monument to shahids at the stadium in Džebe near Zavidovići was fenced in with metal railing a few years after it was built. A number of monuments in Sarajevo were later augmented with inscriptions listing the names of victims.[15]

14 Dž. Halimović, "Spomenici kao oružje za etničke rasprave" [Monuments as Weapons for Ethnic Discussion], *Radio Free Europe*, 10 June 2009, www.slobodnaevropa.org/content/article/687065.html (accessed on 9 August 2015).

15 The memorial plaque to citizens killed in the marketplace massacre was augmented by the names of the victims on the façade of the market hall during reconstruction, and perspex was placed over the shell impact mark on the ground. A year after it was constructed, the Memorial to Children Killed in the Siege of Sarajevo was augmented by plinths bearing the names of the children.

An example of changed information is the memorial plaque to citizens killed in the bread queue massacre located in Sarajevo in Ferhadija Street. Part of the inscription reads: "At this site, on 27 May 1993, Serb criminals killed 26 citizens of Sarajevo." It is noticeable that the number 26 was changed. It used to say 17, and the change was made to include those who died in hospital following the massacre. However, a study on mass civilian losses during the siege of Sarajevo published last year claims that 22 people were killed in the massacre.[16]

There are monuments where words deemed contentious by the authorities have been removed. Part of the inscription on the memorial to killed and missing Bosniaks in Višegrad, at the Stražište cemetery, reads: "Memorial to all killed and missing Bosniaks, children, women and men, victims in Višegrad." The monument was erected by citizens' associations, the Islamic community and the Federal Ministry for Displaced Persons and Refugees. The inscription's original reference to "genocide" was removed from the memorial because the authorities argued that there was no court judgement where the crime committed in Višegrad was qualified as genocide. A decision to remove the monument was passed, but only the decision to remove the word "genocide" was ultimately enforced. The word was removed by workers of the utility services company from Višegrad and representatives of the Inspection Affairs Department of the Višegrad Municipality in January 2014. The change is visible on the monument, and a visitor might well be able to guess what had been there before. Once, that part of the inscription read: "Memorial to all killed and missing Bosniaks, children, women and men, victims of *genocide* in Višegrad."

The word *crime* was removed from the monument to the civilian victims in Ledići, Trnovo Municipality. The monument was erected by a citizens' association and when they applied for a construction permit for the monument, the municipal mayor suggested they remove the word "crime" because otherwise the monument might be removed. The word "crime" was replaced by the word "events", but the construction permit was not issued. However, the monument was not removed either. Now this part of the inscription reads: "In memory of 24 civilian victims of war *events* from the past war in BiH." The original version was: "In memory of 24 civilian victims of war *crimes* from the past war in BiH."[17]

Some monuments or parts of monuments have been relocated. For example, the cross that is now part of the Čardak Memorial, marking where a mass grave of civilians was discovered, was located in the Čardak settlement (Derventa Municipality) before the decision to construct the memorial.

The monument to Draža Mihailović had a much more exciting fate. This statue of the Chetnik General Mihailović (from the Second World War) was made in Belgrade in 1991 during the peak of "national awakening", and was subsequently transported to Vukovar, where it was

16 Merisa Karović Babić, *Masovna ubistva civila u Sarajevu za vrijeme opsade 1992–1995 [Mass Killings of Civilians in the Siege of Sarajevo 1992–1995]*, Sarajevo: Institut za istraživanje zločina protiv čovječnosti i međunarodnog prava Univerziteta u Sarajevu, 2014: p. 62.

17 Another interesting observation regarding this monument is that it is the only monument – among the 85 covered in the study – dedicated to the Serb ethnic group that is solely for civilians. There are monuments for soldiers and those for soldiers and civilians, but it seems those just for civilians are very rare. It is similar with the Croat ethnic group: monuments solely commemorating civilian deaths are rare. In its research on human losses, the IDC gives the following data: of the civilian casualties 81% were Bosniak, 11% were Serb, 7% were Croat, and 1% were others. As for killed soldiers: 54% were Bosniaks, 36% were Serbs and 10% were Croats. Tokača, p. 112–117.

inaugurated in 1992. Although no one is prepared to say so officially, this is a classic example of marking off territory. When, a few years later, Vukovar passed from "Serb" to "Croat" hands, the monument was returned to Belgrade. Then in 1998, it was installed in Brčko. Given the effort put into transportation back and forth, it might appear that this was a magnificent artwork. Since installing this monument in a multi-ethnic community was a clear provocation, it is no surprise that it was damaged on a number of occasions, and even toppled. In 2003, the Brčko District enacted a Law on Monuments and Symbols which stipulated that only those monuments "based on the equality of all constitutive peoples" may be erected in public places – i.e. only those agreed among the three constitutive peoples.[18] Since a monument to a Chetnik leader did not meet this criterion, it had to be removed. It is probably now located in a village near Višegrad, if newspaper reports are anything to go by.[19] It has travelled more than the average inhabitant of this region, excluding those who sought refuge in far-off lands to save themselves from nationalist policies of extermination. The plinth of the monument still stands in the centre of Brčko.

But the passing of the law was not quite the end of the story. In 2004, a new monument to the Chetnik leader appeared in Brčko, at the Orthodox cemetery. The cemetery is not a public space, but is owned by the Serbian Orthodox Church. The monument was erected by the Ravna Gora Chetnik Movement of Republika Srpska, and the Church contributed the land.

One monument in the divided city of Mostar was destroyed. This was the monument to fallen fighters of the Army of BiH. It was shaped like a fleur-de-lis and was inscribed: "In memory of all the members of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina who were killed in the war 1992-1995 defending Mostar and BiH." It was inaugurated in April 2012, and dynamited at the beginning of 2013. Its remains testify to the times we live in.

The changes on monuments to date do not tell us much about how memory changes, and one of the reasons is that all these monuments are relatively recent. The oldest monument included in this study was constructed only 19 years ago. Other reasons include the lack of change in the ideologies prevalent when they were constructed and the lack of distance from the war, because we are still living it in some ways.

We can gain better insight into changes in memory by observing how the Second World War was commemorated in these monuments.

4.4 Relation to monuments dedicated to the People's Liberation Struggle (NOB)

In order to construct new identities for their communities, the new nationalist regimes endeavoured to distance themselves from the previous regimes in various ways. In order to lend legitimacy to the new regime, it was necessary to delegitimise the previous regime, one

18 Assembly of the Brčko District of BiH, *Law on Monuments and Symbols*, Article 4, 15 October 2003, http://skupstinabd.ba (accessed on 9 August 2015).

19 See e.g. M. Kusmuk, "Spomenik Draži Mihailoviću kod Višegrada" [Monument to Draža Mihailović near Višegrad], *Večernje novosti*, 18 August 2013, www.novosti.rs/vesti/planeta.300.html:449566-Spomenik-Drazi-Mihailovicu-kod-Visegrada (accessed on 10 November 2015).

of its key ideological elements being the supra-ethnic nature of the Partisans' struggle and the Yugoslav community embodied in the phrase "brotherhood and unity". So, new interpretations and narratives of the communist and Yugoslav past cropped up. Since memories, and therefore monuments, are means to legitimise a regime, this process was also reflected in both the construction of new monuments and the relationship with old ones. The old monuments dedicated to the NOB were neglected, removed, or even destroyed.

Although this study did not include monuments dedicated to NOB and the Second World War, it is impossible to completely leave out this period, because some of the monuments of the 1991–1995 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina are also related to the Second World War, or even to other wars, while others exist in an interesting symbiosis with monuments dedicated to NOB.

It would probably take a whole separate study to examine the reasons why some of the new monuments also mark the NOB period. We are particularly interested in the following two reasons:

- Honouring unpopular victims from the Second World War period, and
- Adapting memories of NOB to nationalist worldviews.

The NOB period had its "unpopular" victims – victims of the Partisans, and of the communist regime. These victims had been forgotten and were not mentioned in Yugoslav narratives. Of course, the numerous grand monuments of NOB were not dedicated to these victims. In order to right this wrong and honour the victims, the new monuments dedicated to the recent war also refer to these victims. For example, the Central Memorial in Kozarac mentions victims from the Second World War killed by Partisans:

> Time should not erase the memory of all those faces dear to us that the evil nineties cruelly took away.
>
> We will remember them and remember our 94 fellow Kozarac people who were killed in a cruel and cowardly way here in 1944.
>
> Our dear ones, may you all rest in peace.

The monument to the victims from the village of Modran and the surrounding area, located in the Catholic cemetery, has a central part dedicated to fallen HVO soldiers from the recent war, while the seven plaques in the arches on the side are dedicated to the 1941–1947 period. Each plaque bears the name of a nearby village (Dažnica, Gradina, Zelenik, etc.) and the number of victims. For example: "The fallen and the dead 1941 – 1947 from Zelenika: 60." These plaques are arranged to form a horseshoe or the letter U.

However, even victims recognised on monuments to the NOB period appeared again on monuments pertaining to the 1991–1995 war. This provides both continuity and sheds new light on the NOB period, because the victims are subsumed under an identity different from that of the communist Yugoslavia.

The monument in Velika Sočanica near Derventa mentions fallen "Serb heroes from the region 1992–1995" on one side and fallen fighters of NOB and "victims of the fascist terror 1941–1945". There is a cross on top, with the Serb cross and five-point star on the sides. Thus, the symbols of different politics and opposed regimes found themselves together on one monument. Agići near Derventa also has a monument with Orthodox symbols that mentions "Serb soldiers fallen in 1942–1945". What is interesting is that just behind this monument, maybe a metre and half away, there is a rather neglected monument of the NOB period, which had been damaged and repaired.

Part of the Orthodox monument mentioning the soldiers from the 1942–1945 period had not been damaged. The monument in Bratunac is also dedicated to victims from the Second World War: "From 1992 to 1995 – 3267 Serb victims, from 1941 to 1945 – 6469 Serb victims."

In line with nationalist politics, the new monuments only commemorate *our* victims from the Second World War, even though many of *ours* and many of *theirs* fought in that war together. That fact, however, does not fit into the nationalist narratives, and is therefore forgotten or transformed. So instead, by ascribing ethnicity to victims from that period, a narrative of historical continuity of suffering of one's own ethnic group is created.

In Bosanska Krupa, there is a monument to Amra Sedić, a shahid who was killed in 1994 when she was 24 years old and fighting to defend her town. The monument is also dedicated to the other shahids of the *511th Glorious Brigade*. What is interesting about this monument is the fact that right behind it, there is an NOB monument dedicated to Lepa Radić, a national hero who was hanged by SS troops on that site. She was only 17 at the time and became a symbol of NOB. That monument has not been removed, but is obscured by the monument to Amra Sedić. The sight gives the impression that these two young lives cut short are competing for victim status. It also testifies to the confusion that accompanies the attempt to establish continuity with the past, which relied on completely different ideological premises, within new social circumstances.

Apart from reflecting the dominant narratives about the war in BiH, these monuments aim to reaffirm the victimisation and thereby the homogeneity of a given group, keeping us in constant fear of *the other*. Their message is: if it happened in 1942 and 1947, and then again in 1992, it will keep happening.

In Brčko, at the entrance to the building of the former Luka camp, is a plaque to commemorate civilian victims from 1992, and right next to it is another plaque with an older date, which reads: "In December 1941, at this waterside, the evil Ustasha murdered the patriots and the innocent people of the Brčko town and county."

The monument in Obudovac is a unique example. It commemorates a sequence of wars, citing the number of victims from the First World War, the Second World War, and the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina 1991–1995. As its name says, it is dedicated to the fallen people of Obudovac in the past wars from Prota's Uprising (1858) to present day. A number of the victims were probably on different warring sides, but their names are included on the same monument. The inscription on the monument notes who the people were killed by: "Killed by the Ustashas," followed by a list of names, "Killed by the Chetniks," followed by a list of names, "Killed by the Partisans," followed by a list of names, etc. In this region, it is uncommon for a single monument to be dedicated to those who used to be enemies. However, these are ideological enemies from a past time, who must now be reconciled because there are new enemies – ethnic enemies. And these new enemies, from the recent war, are not honoured by this monument. This is a monument to Serbs killed in a sequence of wars and it is entirely aligned with the nationalist ideology. One of the participants of a focus group discussion organised as part of this research discussed this monument in the following terms: "We Serbs are coming to terms with what has happened to us, what is happening to us and what will happen to us."[20] It might seem like this monument arose from a straightforward human need to honour all the people from the village who lost their lives in senseless wars, whichever side they were on. Unfortunately, that kind of development is something we still have to wait for.

20 Participant of focus group discussion held on 15 December 2012.

4.5 Images of the enemy

Numerous monuments seek to remind us about who the enemies are. Even when they are not explicitly named, they are implied. The overall impression is that it is more important to remember who the enemy is than who the victims were. The following inscriptions illustrate this: "Mosque destroyed by Serb neighbours," "...the Serb fascist aggressor launched a shell that put an end to 71 young lives," "arrested just because they were Serb... treacherously murdered at the hands of the enemy," "HVO extremists with the aim of destroying and expelling Bosniaks," "...killers drunk on hate, bellowing for Serb blood." These reproduce fear of the other.

Perhaps these messages can be explained given the gruesome suffering of people during the war. However, our societies set perceptions of the enemy in stone, leaving them for future generations. The enemies are shapeless, uniform, frightening masses. They are whole ethnic groups. The diversity within ethnic groups, primarily political, is completely ignored. Those who warned about and opposed warmongering politics are ignored and categorised within the same shapeless and frightening mass as all those who got swept up in the war out of fear. Nationalist bodies cannot condemn the nationalist politics that brought about the war, because this would force them to face their own culpability. Instead, persisting with nationalist politics, they condemn entire ethnic groups.

4.6 What the monuments do not address

It is quite evident that the monuments do not address the suffering of others.[21] Others are mentioned only as enemies. They do not mention crimes committed by some of *ours*, either. That is forgotten, and as Renan claims, forgetting is of crucial importance to the process of nation-building.[22] What is easily remembered is another's blame and responsibility, while one's own is more difficult to face.[23]

In Trnopolje, a small village near Prijedor, there is a "textbook" example of denial. A rather large monument was erected there in honour of fallen fighters. The inscription on the monument reads: "To soldiers who built their lives into the foundations of Republic of Srpska." It is accompanied by patriotic verses by Petar Kočić and Taras Shevchenko, the latter in Ukrainian.[24] The monument is the shape of an eagle or some similar winged creature made out of concrete. It is unsightly, but that is not the problem. The fact that it is dedicated to fallen soldiers is not the problem, either. The problem is its location: it is situated precisely at the site of what used to be a camp for non-Serbs at the beginning of the war, where women and children and the elderly were interned, where some 23,000 people had been imprisoned in total, and where abuse and rape

21 Except in cases where there was a third common enemy.

22 Ernest Renan, "What is a nation?", translated by Martin Thom, reprinted in: Homi Bhabha, ed., *Nation and Narration*, London: Routledge, 1990, p. 11.

23 Aleida Assmann, *Duga senka prošlosti. Kultura sećanja i politika povesti* [Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit. Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik], translation: Drinka Gojković, Belgrade: Biblioteka XX vek, 2011, p. 140.

24 There is a Ukrainian minority in Trnopolje. They had also been mobilised during the war.

were commonplace.[25] The building of the former camp still stands, some ten metres away from the monument. There is no sign to indicate that it used to be a camp. Serb officials still deny that it was a camp, claiming that it was a "collection centre" for refugees.

The glorification of soldiers in a place where others were killed by the very same army can be understood only as the glorification of their crimes. Either that, or it is a complete absence of empathy for others. The enemy is so dehumanised as to make empathy impossible.

Trnopolje is not the only such case. Brčanska Malta is the site of an attack against a JNA convoy as it was retreating from the barracks in Tuzla on 15 May 1992. Some 50 soldiers from the convoy were killed. Their suffering on this site is not marked: instead a memorial fountain to the defenders of Tuzla was built, and 15 May is marked as the day of the defence of Tuzla. We understand that many would object to this comparison between the cases of Trnopolje and Brčanska Malta because in the former the victims were mostly civilian, and in the latter they were armed soldiers. However, it is the same *culture* of glorifying only *one's own* in a place where others were the victims – a case of deleting an opposing memory.

A somewhat different example is to be found in the small village of Ledići near Trnovo where there is a monument to shahids and fallen fighters of the Army of BiH with the following inscription: "Dear God, One and Only, help us never to forget, the foe never to forgive and may it never happen again." The monument is located by the side of a gravel road. Across the road, on private property, there is a monument to civilian Serb victims from the village.[26] These two opposing memories face each other across the road, each excluding the other. It is as if they are challenging each other in an almost deserted village with its gravel road: whose sacrifice was greater? But at least they both exist; one has not deleted the other.

The monument to fallen fighters and civilian victims of the city of Šamac mentions a number of Bosniak names among the civilians killed. However, it would appear that at least some of them were killed while on work duty (during the war this was mostly assigned to minorities and undesirables). It is believed they were used as a living shield, but no verdict confirms this. It is interesting to note that the list of civilian victims of the war, judging by the names, contains more Bosniaks than Serbs.

Monuments here, as throughout this militarised world, rarely or never speak of conscientious objectors, about *our people* who saved *their people*, about neighbours who helped each other, about soldiers who refused to fire or deserted, about those who refused to participate in the killing and got away on time, thereby saving their own lives and those of other people, or about those who fought against the war itself. Monuments never speak about the atrocities that *our side* committed against *theirs*; they do not talk about our remorse over what happened. Such a monument would completely change the paradigm. It would lay the foundations for rebuilding destroyed trust.

25 See: International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, *Judgement, Prosecutor v. Stakić*, IT-97-24-T, www.icty.org (accessed on 10 November 2015). See also: Edin Ramulić, *Ni krivi ni dužni: Knjiga nestalih Opštine Prijedor [The Innocent: Book of Missing Persons from the Prijedor Municipality]*, Prijedor: Udruženje Prijedorčanki Izvor, 2012, pp. 399-400.

26 The monument was mentioned in Section 4 under the heading "Changes on Monuments".

5 Conclusions: Culture of Remembrance in BiH

One of the functions of monuments is the construction of identities. National identities. "They tell us who we are."[27] Remembrance, or commemoration, as Winter observes, is an act of belonging – to remember means to affirm community.[28]

Monuments speak primarily about how much *we* suffered. Renan claims that common suffering unifies more than joy: for national memory, grief has a greater value than victory, because it imposes obligations and requires joint efforts.[29] Judging by the monuments, there is a competition over who suffered more. This mythically exaggerated role of the victim makes us insensitive to the suffering of others. Identity politics based on victimhood is part of the problem; as Assmann claims, it is part of post-traumatic syndrome, and not the beginning of overcoming it.[30] Insensitivity to the suffering of others and failure to accept and recognise their suffering deepens the conflict and stands as one of the main obstacles to renewing destroyed trust. As McDowell and Braniff's international study shows, competing for the title of the ultimate victim is a key factor in legitimating violence and its outcomes.[31] And as long as we are endeavouring to legitimise senseless violence, we cannot build trust or sustainable peace.

The monuments of BiH reveal the country's cultures of remembrance as opposing, one-sided, ethno-centric; they indicate the divisions in BiH society; they reflect collective victimisation; and if they do not outright deny, they at least ignore the suffering of others. There is no great variance in this depending on who erected the monument. Monuments generally serve to remind us of how much we suffered. The *us* can also be taken to mean the living: if we have not suffered yet, we will – because the monuments, and especially the narratives that inspire them, remind us of the enemies that are always around us.

Official commemorative events of great national importance, which are willingly used for display by politicians, are loaded with self-victimisation and hate speech. There, one is liable to hear things like: "They slaughtered us," "We will never forgive," but also: "Never again." However, in the context of everything else that is said, this implicitly seems to mean "may it never happen again *to us*", and "*they* will certainly have their just punishment", where *us* and *them* are of course national/ethnic determinants.

It is important to mention that criticising nationalist politics does not mean it is wrong to love your own nation. Loving your nation can be based on the feeling of belonging to the place where you live, belonging to a community, love of its culture. Such a feeling of community helps some people feel secure through belonging. However, if nation-building is based on creating enemies out of others, on negating others and negating their right to identity, on denying or being insensitive towards their suffering, then it will be perceived as threatening. This makes fertile ground for maintaining conflict by other means and then it becomes only a question of when irresponsible politicians will lead us into the next war.

27 Focus group participant, 15 December 2012.

28 Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European cultural history*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005 (first published 1995), p. 80.

29 Renan, p. 19.

30 Assmann, p. 97.

31 Sara McDowell and Máire Braniff, *Commemoration as Conflict: Space, Memory and Identity in Peace Processes*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, p. 173.

Kuljić is right in claiming that there are numerous images of the past in everyday life, but that "one homogeneous image" imposed by the government is dominant. This is "official memory".[32] However, as one of the participants in the focus group within this research put it: "It's that the narrative has been launched from above and now it's growing from bottom up."[33] Most monuments are erected by the local community, perhaps with the participation or at the initiative of the local authorities, but rarely are higher levels of government involved.

The statistic that 72% of citizens of BiH believe that the monuments and memorials constructed to date are useful for dealing with the past[34] actually speaks to how problematic monuments are for the process of constructively dealing with the past, i.e. how much they align with the entrenched war narratives. The past is viewed through the eyes of identity, so that it is not historical fact but myth, what Assmann would call the *affective adoption* of history. And as such, "the past becomes a constant presence in the present of a society."[35] Monuments from the last war that refer back to the period of the Second World War in particular reinforce this claim. They are a warning that serves as a threat: if it happened then, and now, it will happen again. This feeds the myth of centuries-old hatred between nations, and feeding that myth means no less than preparing for the next war. As the inscription on the monument in Potočari near Srebrenica ambiguously says: "May revenge become justice".

One war veteran described the monuments in the following terms: "The monuments are drowning in religious and national symbols and appear as warnings: *this here is mine*. And they do not represent the place where violence occurred: the victims are invisible."[36]

McDowell and Braniff claim that the dynamics of memory-work and its processes and practices provide resources that can allow once-warring parties to engage in a surrogate form of conflict, or to reactivate conflict since transition towards peace is not guaranteed by political circumstances.[37] Indeed, we already have a war of memories. Or rather, as Assmann says: "As long as there is the painful asymmetry of memory, there is war."[38] But what is needed in order for memory-work to lead us to reconciliation?

6 Towards a Culture of Remembrance that Contributes to Reconciliation

For a time now, we have been hearing from political circles in BiH that they are committed to reconciliation. However, it seems that their understanding of what reconciliation should entail is, firstly, conditioned by a change in conduct of the other or third side, and secondly, difficult to

32 Kuljić, 2006, p. 9.

33 Participant of focus group discussion held on 15 December 2012.

34 *Suočavanje s prošlošću i pristup pravdi iz perspektive javnosti – Specijalni izvještaj [Facing the Past and Access to Justice from a Public Perspective – Special Report]*. Sarajevo: United Nations Development Programme in BiH (UNDP BiH), 2010: p. 27.

35 Assmann, p. 44.

36 Participant in focus group discussion with war veterans held on 26 May 2013.

37 McDowell and Braniff, p. 37.

38 Assmann, p. 84–85.

implement. It is either an expectation that *"they"* admit their guilt or an expectation that everyone finally forgets everything and we all turn to the future. Both are highly unlikely, and have nothing to do with reconciliation but rather with shifting responsibility and pointing out what the others should do.

Reconciliation is often equated with forgiveness and this makes it very unpopular. Reconciliation, dealing constructively with the past, or the process of "overcoming the past" as Kuljić calls it, cannot be considered a process that will lead to forgiveness or to being reconciled to crimes. Nothing can "reconcile" us to the terrible atrocities that were committed. This is, on the one hand, a process of learning "how to live with the memory that crimes are also part of our history and our group identity."[39] On the other hand, it is the process of liberation from narratives we were exposed to, not by replacing them with new, equally rigid narratives, but by re-examining and understanding the processes and mechanisms of their creation and reproduction in order to re-assemble them so that the defined collective identities will no longer present a threat to anyone, or serve to justify or incite violence. In that sense, the process of reconciliation is also directed towards ourselves, our own purification from the injustice we had condoned or ignored; it aims to make our societies better, freer, safer and happier, thereby improving our quality of life. The process of reconciliation starts with us and the contribution we can make to the betterment of the society we perceive as our own by ensuring a fair approach to the past prevails, and personal and collective responsibility for it.

We, the activists of the Centre for Nonviolent Action, understand reconciliation to mean giving up on hate and seeking ways to achieve justice without inflicting injustice on others on this path. We understand it as an opportunity to build a more certain, safer and freer future for all and we believe this is something we all desperately need.

Our almost two-decade-long experience of peacebuilding tells us that we will not be able to achieve more stable peace until we work on dealing with the past and the ways we remember. It is impossible to forget the atrocities, and ghosts of the past will keep haunting us. As Buruma says: "[W]hen society has become sufficiently open and free to look back, from the point of view neither of the victim nor of the criminal, but of the critic, only then will the ghosts be laid to rest."[40]

A good step in that process would be to become aware of the suffering of others, and less preoccupied with the suffering of the ethnic group with which we identify. Recognising and acknowledging the suffering of others is difficult because it entails recognising and acknowledging our own responsibility. Assmann, having in mind the experience of Germany, claims that this often requires powerful external pressure.[41] In our case, external pressure has been applied over 20 years with very poor results. We need pressure from the inside. We need the active engagement of conscientious citizens who understand that winning your own liberty is necessarily linked to rebuilding the eroded trust between groups or even neighbours: we need them to exert pressure on their political structures to recognise the suffering of others. This rebuilding of trust necessarily should have social visibility, of recognition of the suffering of others, and expressions of mourning for all the victims of the war and post-war violence.

39 Kuljić, 2006, p. 279.

40 Jan Buruma, *Plata za krivicu: Uspomene na rat u Nemačkoj i Japanu [Wages of Guilt: Memories of War in Germany and Japan]*, translation: Gordana Vučićević, Belgrade: Samizdat FreeB92, 2002, p. 237.

41 Assmann, p. 140.

If one community were to erect a monument to those killed by criminals from that same community, this would be a step towards reconciliation. We do not know when that step will happen, but the time will come. Until then, we have monuments that mostly do not contribute to reconciliation, but instead to the disintegration of a fragile peace. But, of course, they were not built for reconciliation. During one of the dialogues between veterans who had fought on different sides, we talked about monuments and the messages they convey, and the veterans from "the other" side characterised one monument as inappropriate and threatening. One of the other veterans then said he had been on the committee for the construction of that monument and added: "When we were making that monument, we could not even imagine that the time would come when you from the other side would come here. I now see that it was not all right."

The monuments are as they are, but simply removing or destroying them is not necessarily the best solution.

These monuments bear witness to the society and the time they were constructed in. The self-image we constructed as a society is one of injury, of unprocessed loss, of insensitivity to the pain of others. It is an ugly picture, but it can stand as a warning, and this is why interpretations of monuments will change over time, transitioning from an imagined glorification of one's own victimhood to standing as testament to a time of hatred and insensitivity about the suffering of others. When we feel the suffering of others, they cease being others and we restore dignity to them by giving them a human face. They are usually our fellow citizens, our neighbours. That is why we do not need to remember the suffering of *others*, but in fact ourselves, diverse as we are in many ways, not just in terms of ethnicity, religion or some other criterion.

If the opinion that the existing monuments are inappropriate ever gains traction, it would be important to change how we interpret them and learn from the past. The monuments that insult others should become warning signs to all of us not to repeat something like this in the future. We should ask ourselves what it is we celebrate and how, and we should first decide whether we want our children to continue the wars of the past or to overcome these animosities. It will all depend on that.

Our experience working with war veterans demonstrates that change is possible, that large steps can be made, and that it does not take much. For example, some veterans who fought on opposing sides courageously attend official commemorations together and honour the victims, and this makes an impact. The presence of the "enemy" who has come to pay his respects to "our" victims often affects the atmosphere, sometimes even the rhetoric at a commemoration. Hate speech is decreased. People are probably embarrassed to use hate speech in the presence of those to whom it pertains.[42]

An erroneous theory we have often come across is that the key to reconciliation lies in constructing a new national identity, as if people need to stop being what they feel they are in order to live in peace with others. This notion is almost insulting. People do not like to have an identity imposed on them; they choose their identities themselves or inherit them from their families and communities. The construction of rigid identities was never beneficial in this region; it was always a matter of suppressing and negating other identities or qualifying them as undesirable. The key

42 For more about the work of the Centre for Nonviolent Action with war veterans, see http://nenasilje.org or in I. Franović, *War Veterans in the Process of Constructive Dealing with the Past*, Sarajevo-Belgrade: Centre for Nonviolent Action, 2015, available at: http://nenasilje.org/2015/clanak-ratni-veterani-u-procesu-konstruktivnog-suocavanja-s-prosloscu.

to reconciliation is taking care of yourself and your neighbours, empathy with the suffering of all sides, a genuine desire and effort to make sure it never happens again to anyone. This requires ways of memorialisation that include different perspectives, enabling the marking of suffering and the recognition of the pain of victims whatever group they belonged to, and encouraging dialogue about the cultural models, ideologies, social mechanisms and structures that brought about violence and suffering. Their aim is to establish a culture of remembrance where suffering is not relativised and where violence is not justified, where there is room for memories about the injustices suffered by all people, but also room to remember acts of resistance against violence and war, acts of dissent and civic courage. This kind of culture of remembrance would create the conditions for mutual understanding, empathy and solidarity.

Why shouldn't Bosnia and Herzegovina be a place where people manage to overcome the hostilities and suffering of the past? Why shouldn't this whole region, where we share a history and to a large extent a culture, be such a place, so that we may be proud that the guarantee of our peace is the trust we have in the people with whom we live? We are convinced that this is possible, that it is within reach. It all depends on us.

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Assembly of the Brčko District of BiH, http://skupstinabd.ba

Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, www.sudbih.gov.ba.

8 Appendices

8.1 Questionnaire filled out by competent authorities and/or organisations

1. Official name of monument
2. Location of monument/site of atrocity (if possible, give exact address)
3. Does the location mark a concrete site of atrocity of victims (massacre, battle, camp, etc.) or was the location selected for other reasons (park, cemetery, yard of place of worship, school, etc.)? How was the location selected and who selected it?
4. When was the monument constructed?
5. Who initiated the construction of the monument?
6. Who constructed the monument (local community, municipality, religious community, veterans association, civil initiative, etc.)? How were the funds for the monument raised? (From the budget, donations, contributions, etc.)
7. Who designed the monument and how was the design selected? (Was there a design competition/more than one design on offer?)
8. Is the interpretation of the designer known (what does the monument represent/symbolise)?
9. Were there comments/public debates about the construction of the monument? If yes, please describe.
10. Who is the monument dedicated to? (civilian victims, soldiers, both)?
11. Which ethnic group is it dedicated to (B/C/S, mixed)? If mixed, which group is dominant (in numbers)?
12. Does it refer to victims from the local community or wider region?
13. Are there any requests/ideas to remove or relocate the monument, or change elements of the monument (symbols, inscriptions)?
14. Have there been any changes to the monument? When, what changes, why?
15. Monument dimensions
16. How is the monument used today?
17. Source of data

8.2 Monuments included in the research

Ahmići, Ahmići Memorial

Bihać, Memorial, Luke local community

Bihać, *Humci* Memorial

Bihać, Žegar, Memorial to Victims from the Homeland War

Bosanska Krupa, Pištaline, Memorial Room for Shahids and Fallen Fighters in Pištaline

Bosanska Krupa, Pištaline, Shahid Cemetery Ometaljka

Bosanska Krupa, Memorial to Victims of the 1992–95 Liberation War from Bosanska Krupa Municipality

Bosanska Krupa, Amra Sedić Monument

Bratunac, Kravica, Memorial to Serb Victims from Birač and Srednje Podrinje

Brčko, Serb Defenders of Brčko

Brčko, 108th HVO Infantry Brigade

Brčko, Monument to Shahids and Fallen Fighters of ARBiH

Brčko, *Luka* Camp, Memorial Room – Museum of Camp Survivors in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Brčko, Monument to Draža Mihailović

Brčko, Memorial Cemetery for the Missing of Brčko

Brčko, Laništa, Monument to Victims of the 8 May 1992 Chetnik Massacre

Brod, Central Memorial to Fallen Soldiers of the RS Defensive Patriotic War 1991-1996 from the Brod Municipality

Brod, Sijekovac, Memorial Church for the Victims from Sijekovac

Busovača, Croat Victims from the Homeland War in Busovača Municipality

Busovača, Memorial Room of the HVO Brigade *Nikola Šubić Zrinski*

Busovača, Silos Camp

Derventa, Central Memorial

Derventa, Velika Sočanica Memorial

Derventa, Čardak Memorial Complex

Derventa, Monument to Killed Soldiers of the 103rd HVO Brigade in Derventa

Derventa, Agići, Agići Memorial

Derventa, Memorial to the fallen of Modran village and surrounding places

Kozarac, Central Memorial to Victims of the Kozarca Region from 1992–95

Kozarac, Memorial Complex at Kamičani Shahid Cemetery

Livno, Memorial to those who fell for the freedom of the Croat people

Livno, Rujani Memorial Centre, Church of St. George the Martyr

Mostar, Monument for Fallen Fighters of ARBiH

Mostar, Grabovica, Monument to Civilian Victims of the War in Grabovica

Olovo, Čuništa, Shahid Fountain

Prijedor, *For the Holy Cross*

Prijedor, Omarska Camp

Prijedor, Keraterm Camp Memorial Plaque

Prijedor, Memorial to Fallen Fighters from Trnopolje

Prijedor, Camp Trnopolje

Prijedor, Memorial Kevljani 2005

Prijedor, Memorial plaque - mass grave in Stari Kevljani

Prijedor, Memorial plaque for victims at Korićanske stijene

Sanski Most, Memorial complex Sanski Most

Sanski Most, Memorial plaque for camp prisoners in the park

Sanski Most, Memorial plaque to camp prisoners (in front of Hotel Zlatna dolina)

Sanski Most, Memorial plaque to those killed in the Sanakeram camp

Sanski Most, Memorial at Jama Hrastova glavica

Sanski Most, Došci-Gornji Kamengrad – Destroyed Mosque

Sanski Most, Shahid Memorial of the Došci-G.Kamengrad Jamaat

Sanski Most, Pobriježje, Memorial Pobriježje

Sarajevo, Memorial to Children Killed in the Siege of Sarajevo 1992–1995

Sarajevo, Memorial plaque to citizens of Sarajevo killed in the massacre on 5 February 1994 at the Markale outdoor market

Sarajevo, Trg Heroja Memorial

Sarajevo, Monument to shahids and fallen fighters, Dolac Malta, Sarajevo

Sarajevo, Koševo, Memorial at the Shahid Cemetery, Koševo auxiliary stadium

Sarajevo, Memorial plaque on the Vijećnica (Town Hall) building

Sarajevo, Memorial plaque to citizens of Sarajevo killed in the massacre on 27 May 1992

Sarajevo, Sarajevo Roses

Sarajevo, Dobrovoljačka

Sokolac, Military Memorial Cemetery *Mali Zejtinlik*

Srebrenica, Memorial Centre Srebrenica - Potočari, Memorial and cemetery for victims of the 1995 genocide

Šamac, Central Monument to Fallen Fighters for Freedom 1992–95

Šamac, Monument to fallen fighters and civilian victims of the town of Šamac

Šamac, Memorial room dedicated to fallen fighters of the 2nd Posavina Brigade

Šamac, Crkvina, Monument to fallen fighters and civilian victims of Crkvina

Šamac, detention camp in Crkvina

Šamac, Obudovac, Monument to fallen people of Obudovac from the past wars (from Prota's Uprising to present day)

Trnovo, Ledići, Monument to civilian victims of the 1992-1995 war in Ledići

Trnovo, Ledići, Monument to shahids and fallen fighters of the Dobrinja Brigade killed in the village of Ledići-Bjelašnica

Tuzla, Memorial plaque at the Kapija

Tuzla, Aleja mladosti - Memorial Cemetery for victims killed at the Kapija on 25 May 1995

Tuzla, Memorial to killed defenders of Tuzla

Tuzla, Memorial to decorated soldiers killed from 1992 to 1995

Tuzla, Monument to fighters and shahids at Brčanska Malta

Tuzla, Memorial fountain at Brčanska Malta

Tuzla, Brčanska Malta

Velika Kladuša, Shahid turbeh, dedicated to fighters of Army of RBiH killed in the liberation war of 1992-1995.

Velika Kladuša, Memorial to killed members of the National Defence – Cemetery *Dubrave*

Višegrad, Memorial to all killed and missing Bosniaks, children, women and men, victims in Višegrad

Vitez, Kruščica, Shahid Memorial Room Kruščica

Vitez, Stari Vitez, Memorial to the shahids of Stari Vitez

Zavidovići, Memorial to shahids and fallen fighters and civilian victims from the war of 1992–95

Zavidovići, Memorial room of the 328th Glorious Mountain Brigade

Zavidovići, Monument to shahids Džeba-Ridžala 1992-1995

Zavidovići, Stog, Orthodox Church

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