The background image shows a large outdoor chess set on a checkered floor. The chess pieces are made of stone or concrete and are arranged on a blue and white checkered surface. In the background, there is a large, multi-story building with a classical architectural style, featuring a prominent archway and a large stone sculpture. The scene is set in an open square or plaza, with a clear blue sky and some greenery visible in the distance.

**ASN World Convention
Columbia University, 23-25 April 2015**

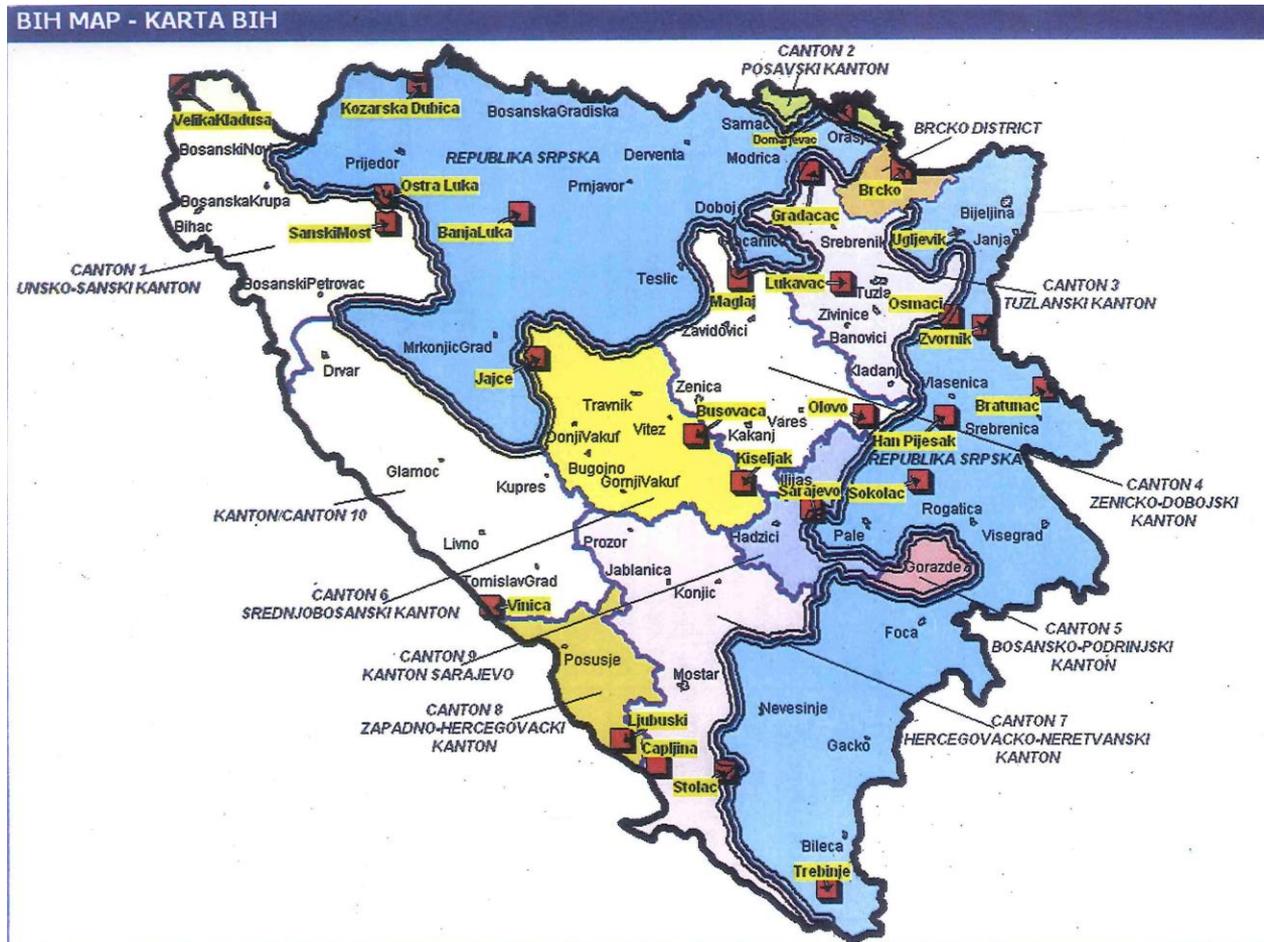
Edgár Dobos
Institute for Minority Studies, Budapest

**Contested self-determination claims and
the ethnic translation of social issues
in Bosnia-Herzegovina**

2. The transformative power of war

- ‘Ethnic unmixing’ (Lord Curzon, R. Brubaker): territorialization of ethnic belonging, ethnic homogenization by strategic violence and administrative means
- War as ‘the biggest cultural event’ (U. Vlaisavljević): ranking loyalties, ethnic boundary dynamics (intra-ethnic homogenization and inter-ethnic differentiation: Barth → Herder), ethnic fragmentation of space, time, language and everyday life, eliminating ‘mixed’ situations and categories
 - Everyday ethnicity: ‘marked’ and ‘unmarked’; talking, choosing, performing and consuming ‘the nation’ (R. Brubaker, J. Fox, M. Billig)
- Ethno-territorial governmentality: combination of ethnic *and* territorial principle with governance structures
- Political economy: (ethnic) parties’ concentration of power, patronage and control of resources and jobs, hijacked privatization (‘accumulation through dispossession’)
- (Ethnic) parties as real sites of power – sub-state administrative units as real sites of decision-making

The administrative fragmentation of Bosnia-Herzegovina



Source: OSCE 2007, p. 36.

3. Competing SD claims, ethnopolitical aims and statebuilding visions

- István Bibó (*Misery of the small states of Eastern Europe, 1946*)
 - Existential fears (ethnic survival or disappearance)
 - Territorio-centric approach
 - ‘Why should I be a minority in your state when you can be a minority in my state?’ (Kiro Gligorov)
 - ‘Who owns the state?’ (Andreas Wimmer)
 - Robert Donia’s book!



- Rethinking the ‘triadic nexus’ in the case of BiH
- Double standards depending on minority-majority position
 - E.g. administration of Mostar; RS v. BiH; education in FBiH v. RS
 - Which administrative territorial unit do we talk about (controlled by whom)?
- Examples: ‘minority’ refugee return (promotion v. obstruction); 2013 census (ethnicity, religion, language); 2014 protests (attack on state institutions (B) – RS entity (S) – cantons (C); foreign patrons: Turkey, Serbia, Croatia)



←	Bosniak:	Croat:	Serb:	→
STATE	unitary state	ethnic federalism (Croat entity?)	de facto state-building (territorial autonomy → secession?)	
NATION	civic & ethnic (titular nation?)	ethnic	ethnic	
MAJORITY	state-level	cantonal level (sub-sub-state level)	entity level (sub-state level)	
DISCOURSE (source of legitimacy)				
	civic equality, ethno-cultural neutrality (e.g. France)	federalism (e.g. Belgium, Switzerland)	self-determination (e.g. Montenegro, Kosovo, Crimea, Scotland)	

	Nation-state logic	Ethnopolitical aims
Bosniak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Civic nation concept - Ethnic 'blindness', ethno-cultural neutrality (1 man/1 vote) - Titular nation ambition? - Appropriation of BiH? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unitary state, centralization; strengthen state-level competences - Abolish RS entity, de-activate entity veto (vote at pre-war place of residence), decrease and/or reorganize cantons - Support Bosniak 'minority return'
Serb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ethnic nation concept - Ethnic-based autonomy - Ethnic quota and representation, group-sensitive rules - 2 'homelands'? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Territorial autonomy; secession? ('self-determination') - RS ethnic homogenization - Protect entity-veto; strengthen RS competences; RS centralization – state decentralization - Concentrate Bosnian Serbs territorially within RS, block non-Serb return
Croat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ethnic nation concept - Ethnic-based autonomy - Ethnic quota and representation, group-sensitive rules - 2 'homelands'? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ethnic-based cantonization; own entity? ('federalism') - Strengthen cantons with Croat majority and their competences; support state-level decision-making (parity); weaken Federation level with Bosniak majority - Preserve constituent people status - Ensure legitimate Croat representation

4. Ethnic translation and securitization of social issues: mechanisms and tools

- Ethnopolitical transformation of issues within an ethnically fractured polity:
 - evaluated through the lense of their potential effect on existing power relations (RCT?)
 - used as a resource for ethnic mobilization (opportunity structures; repertoire of action)
- Entity → state competence-transfer's opposition
 - Min. of Agriculture (2,5m euro IPA), Erasmus+ v. Elektroprenos (50m KM)
 - Tools: entity veto: 14/5 RS representatives needed to neutralize (non-Serb refugee return; voting at pre-war place of residence; opposition coalition); budget (entity > state)
- Legitimate political representation
 - 'ethnic' v. 'political' Croat (descriptive v. substantive representation)



- Divert attention from individual responsibility
 - Reference to collective ‘threat’ or ‘attack’ (on ethnic community or the administrative unit with own majority)
 - Corruption; war crimes; ‘enemies of the RS’ (book published by SNSD)
- Focusing on unsolvable ‘big issues’
 - Constitutional reform; RS referendum; Sejdić-Finci case
- Focusing on symbolic issues and the past
 - Monuments; memory politics; national holidays; defence reform and NATO integration (sacrifice: dying for whom?)
- External sources of legitimacy
 - Foreign patrons and kin-states (e.g. Croatia’s MEPs: hierarchy of pluralisms = refocus on ‘Croat question’)
 - International discourses and practices as reference points (e.g. RS self-determination: Montenegro, Kosovo, Crimea)





Author's photos (2009, 2013)

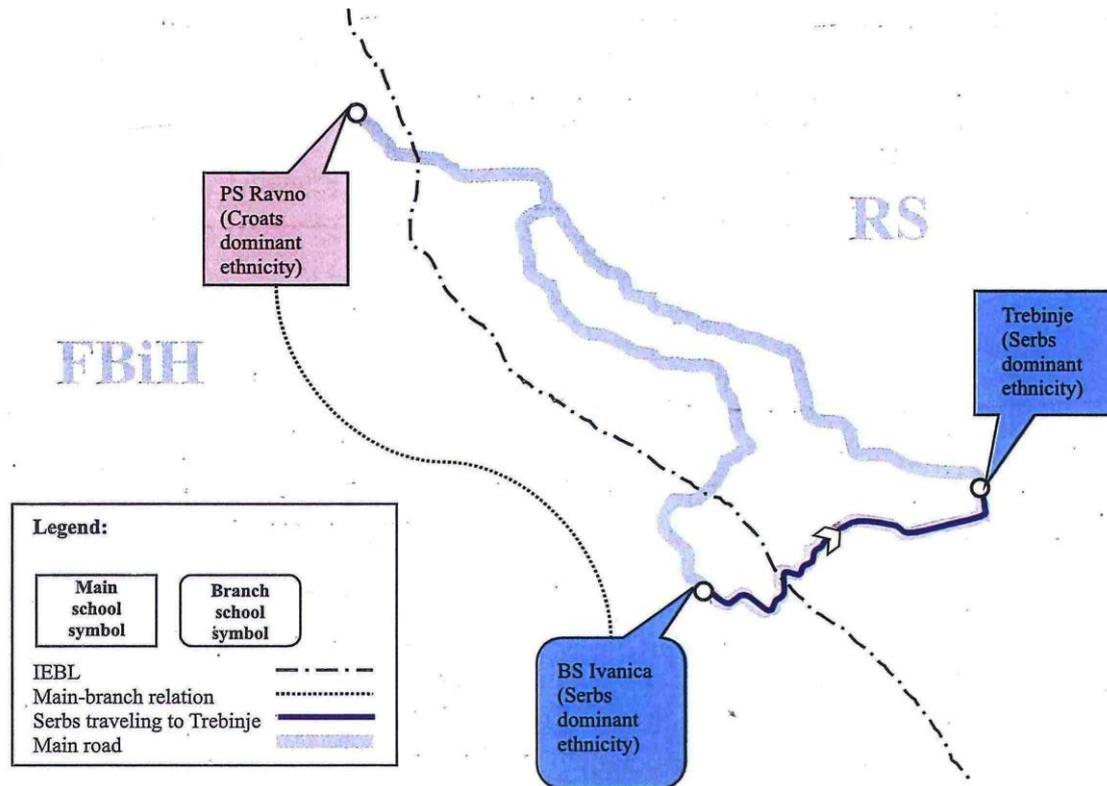
5. Constituent minorities & ethnopolitical no man's land

'Displaced in our own town' (Mostar)



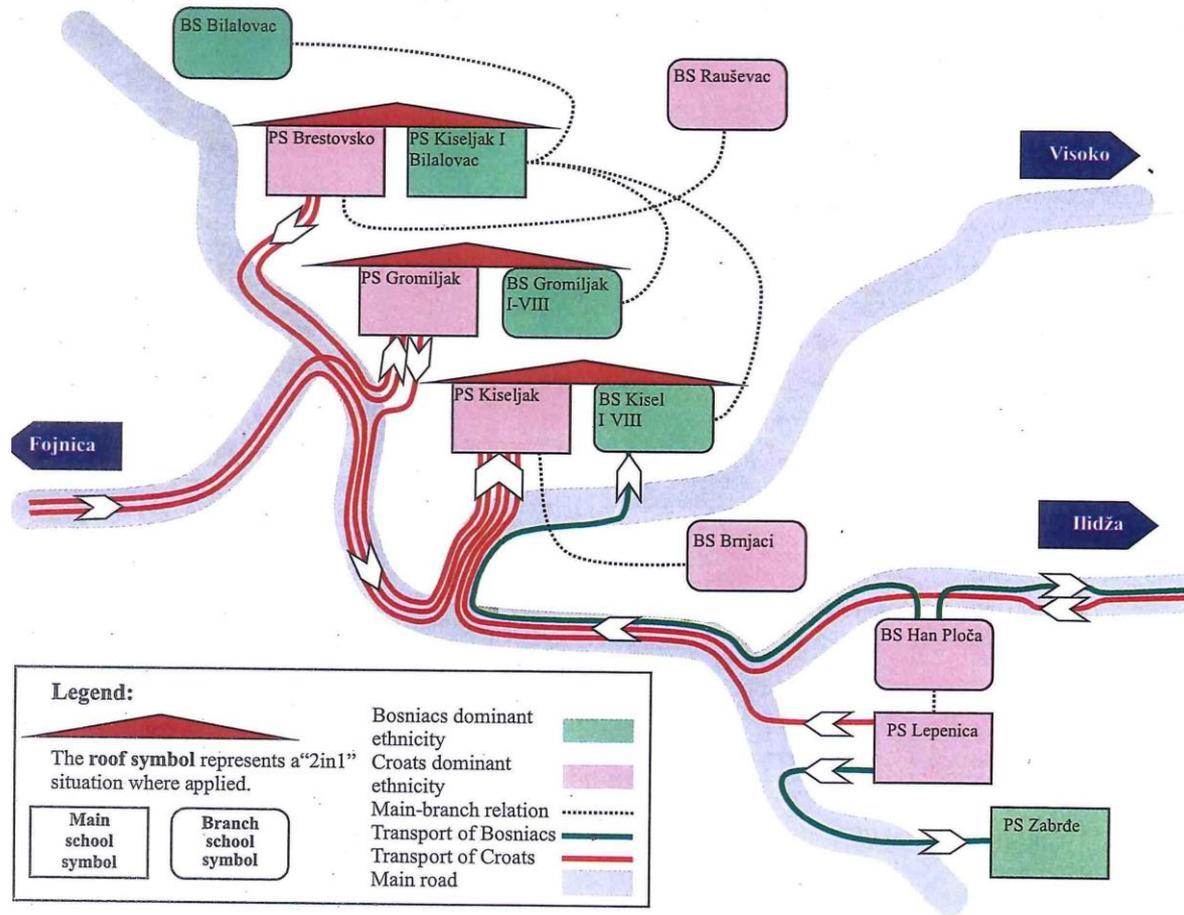
EU PROGRAM OF RECONSTRUCTION		EU PROGRAM REKONSTRUKCIJE	
Reconstruction of residential building Šantića street no.24 Mostar n. RE:BIH/06/1799		Rekonstrukcija stambene zgrade A.Šantića 24 Mostar n. RE:BIH/06/1799	
IMPLEMENTING PARTNER: DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL Mostar		IMPLEMENTATOR: DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL Mostar	
BENEFICIARY: Mostar Town		KORISNIK: GRAD MOSTAR	

Disregard for the school catchment area in Ravno



Source: OSCE 2007, p. 16.

Getting around catchment areas in Kiseljak



Source: OSCE 2007, p. 24.

