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Facing the Past in Prijedor: A Case Study
of Local Transitional Justice Initiatives

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University of Sarajevo
European Regional Master's Degree In Democracy
And Human Rights In South East Europe



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**EUROPEAN REGIONAL MASTER'S DEGREE IN DEMOCRACY
AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE**

University of Sarajevo – University of Bologna

**FACING THE PAST IN PRIJEDOR: A CASE STUDY OF LOCAL
TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE INITIATIVES**

MASTER THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL MASTER'S DEGREE IN DEMOCRACY
AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTH-EAST EUROPE

BY
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SARAJEVO, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

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I dedicate this modest work to the Prijedor’s Concentration Camp victims, survivors, and all those who were forced to flee because of violence and terror. *Prijedorians* passionate activism throughout the globe is an inspiration. I also dedicate this work to my mother, Abby Dowling, who has spent many a Skype call encouraging me in my studies and research.

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List of Abbreviations

| | |
|-------|---|
| BiH | Bosnia-Herzegovina |
| ICC | International Criminal Court |
| ICTJ | International Center for Transitional Justice |
| ICTY | International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia |
| IDP/s | Internally Displaced Person/s |
| NGO/s | Non-Governmental Organization/s |
| OSCE | Organization for the Security and Cooperation of Europe |
| PTSD | Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder |
| RECOM | The Regional Commission Tasked with Establishing the Facts about All Victims of War Crimes and Other Serious Human Rights Violations Committed on the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia in the period from 1991-2001 |
| RS | Republika Srpska |
| SDA | Social Democratic Alliance |
| SDP | Social Democratic Party |
| SDS | Serb Democratic Party |
| TJ | Transitional Justice |
| TRC | [South African] Truth and Reconciliation Commission |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| UNHCR | United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees |
| USIP | United States Institute of Peace |

Introduction

More than 100,000 individuals were killed between 1992 and 1995 in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH). An estimated 2 million more were displaced.¹ The country's inhabitants experienced long-lasting sieges, a policy termed "ethnic cleansing," systematic rape, genocide, and concentration camps – the first in Europe since World War II. At war's end, the international community set forth to rebuild and reconcile the country and the region as a whole with the Dayton Peace Agreement and countless projects aimed at *facing the past* or promoting *Transitional Justice*. Despite skepticism over the efficacy of these initiatives, efforts to address BiH's recent history remain a priority for the international community. A 2011 United Nations Development Program (UNDP) report summarizing the results of a country-wide survey affirmed the desire of Bosnian-Herzegovinians to find truth and engage in public dialogue about war-time events. It states, "The recent war continues to represent an inseparable part of the present for most citizens of BIH."²

Despite vast amounts of time, money, and energy spent on Transitional Justice (TJ) – a process meant to come to terms with a difficult past – in the former Yugoslavia, many local communities remain untouched by or distanced from regional or international reconciliation and TJ efforts. The municipality of Prijedor, located in the Republika Srpska (RS) territory of the Bosanska Krajina region, is one such case. The UN Commission of Experts tasked in 1994 with investigating the war in BiH reported that 52,811 non-Serb individuals were either killed or deported from Prijedor between 1992 and 1994, the majority of crimes occurring in 1992.³ An additional 31,000 individuals were forcibly detained in concentration camps, most notoriously Omarska, Trnopolje, and Keraterm.⁴ *Time* magazine's cover photo of Fikret Alic behind

¹ Cutts, Mark. "The Humanitarian Operation in Bosnia, 1992-1995: Dilemmas of Negotiating Humanitarian Access." *UNHCR Working Paper 8*: (1999). www.unhcr.org/3ae6a0c58.pdf.

² United Nations Development Programme in BiH. *Facing the Past and Access to Justice from a Public Perspective*. Sarajevo, 2011. 9.

³ U.N. Security Council – Letter from the Secretary General. Final Report of the Commission of Experts Established Pursuant to the Security Council Resolution 780 (1992) (S/1994/674). 27 May 1994.

⁴ Subasic, Haris. "The culture of denial in Prijedor." *TransConflict*. January 29, 2013. Accessed May 13, 2013. <<http://www.transconflict.com/2013/01/the-culture-of-denial-in-prijedor-291/>>.

Trnopolje's barbed wire made Prijedor infamous. The region's concentration camps became a symbol for the Bosnian Serb government's goal of "the homogenization of the country."⁵

Yet, human and financial resources for *facing the past* continue to be disproportionately focused on the country's urban centers, regardless of the trauma inflicted on Prijedor and equally humble towns dotting the countryside.⁶ As a site of the war's largest massacre, deemed genocide, Srebrenica remains the one non-urban center to receive significant foreign aid and support. Yet while areas like Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Mostar, and Srebrenica deserve reconstruction, development aid, and TJ, smaller and lesser-known communities continue to be ignored academically⁷ and in policymaking.

Even with the third highest number of casualties in any municipality after Sarajevo and Srebrenica,⁸ the horror of the camps, and the mass exodus of the area's non-Serb population, little has been done to rebuild or reconcile Prijedor's community. Redress for survivors of torture, illegal detainment, homicide, genocide, and other offenses is prescribed under international conventions ratified by BiH and within the national law, yet there is no official recognition of crimes by local authorities.⁹ Compensation for survivors and victims' families remains inconsistently delivered, over one thousand Prijedor citizens are still missing, court justice has fostered impunity for perpetrators,¹⁰ genocide denial is rampant, and memorial construction for non-Serb victims is actively hindered by the local Republika Srpska (RS) government.¹¹ Without signs of positive change, the atmosphere in Prijedor today is bleak.

In response to dissatisfaction with official TJ efforts, victims' families and concentration camp survivors in Prijedor have, in recent times, developed local initiatives to "fill the gap" left by national, regional, and international projects. Prijedor is thus an important case in

⁵ Dennis Gratz, interview with Julia Dowling, Sarajevo, BiH, August 26, 2013.

⁶ United Nations Development Programme in BiH. *Facing the Past and Access to Justice*. 58-59.

⁷ David Backer argues that the majority of empirical research undertaken on Transitional Justice sidelines civil society efforts in favor of more official channels like those of the UN, international NGOs, or national governments. He states "Civil society takes a backseat in most scholarly investigations of this realm, as well as many official undertakings." Backer, David. "Civil Society and Transitional Justice: Possibilities, Patterns and Prospects." *Journal of Human Rights* 2. (2003): 297.

⁸ Nalepa, Monika. "Reconciliation, Refugee Returns, and the Impact of International Criminal Justice: The Case of Bosnia and Herzegovina." *Transitional Justice*. New York: New York University Press, 2012. 336.

⁹ U.N. General Assembly, 60th Session. Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law (A/Res/60/147). 21 March 2006.

¹⁰ United Nations Development Programme in BiH. *Facing the Past and Access to Justice*.

¹¹ Subasic, Haris. "The culture of denial in Prijedor." TransConflict.

understanding how ordinary citizens are creating local efforts to *deal with the past* in BiH. In what follows, I explore the transformation of TJ from a state-based, judicially focused subfield into a rapidly evolving discipline that continues to become more diverse in both its actors and implementation mechanisms. Prijedor's activists have benefited from the global trend in which civil society takes center stage in *facing the past* efforts. However, as this new stage of TJ develops and matures, new challenges also arise. The unsuccessful monument-building process for Omarska camp illustrates that local non-state actors can actively contribute to problems unique in the so-called "fourth" or "global" phase of TJ that have yet to be explored by academic literature.

Research Aims, Questions, and Framework

This research aims to contribute to a modest but growing collection of literature affirming civil society's new and paramount role in TJ efforts. The growth of grassroots work, in what some academics term the "fourth" or "global" phase of TJ, brings with it new dynamics between civil society, the state, and the international community.¹² Because TJ efforts at a localized, grassroots level are relatively young, little research has been done on the positive or negative consequences of broadening the scope of *what* and *how* TJ mechanisms are utilized, and *who* implements them. The case study of local TJ in Prijedor, a community that has also been academically neglected, will reveal intricacies and nuances of TJ's fourth phase that may inform future grassroots efforts in BiH, the region, and globally.

It should be noted that though there are conceptual differences between *Transitional Justice* and *facing the past/dealing with the past* in some academic or practitioner literature, I will be using these terms interchangeably. TJ was, in part, created to move forward by *dealing with the past*.

¹² For the remainder of this work, I will utilize the *fourth* or *global* phase terms interchangeably. In some cases, in respect for the authors who developed said notions (Teitel and Rangelov, and Sharp respectively), I combine the terms into the *fourth, global phase* or *global, fourth phase*.

Local communities I've worked with are sometimes unfamiliar with the overly technical term *Transitional Justice*. Therefore, it was fitting to also utilize the concept of *facing the past* during this case study.¹³

The research questions in this paper attempt to uncover a deeper understanding of how a local community affected by violence can or cannot, through its own efforts, begin to face their past. Throughout the research I posed questions for myself and research subjects that addressed:

1. *What* local initiatives are occurring within the community?
2. *Why* are initiatives being undertaken?
3. *Who* is undertaking Transitional Justice projects and *what sort* of internal dynamics drive said projects?
4. *How* are local initiatives successfully or unsuccessfully addressing the issues of justice and *facing the past*?

Through primary and secondary research, I address the Prijedor case as unique in the specific context but sharing characteristics typical of many other initiatives classified as part of this newest stage of TJ. After reviewing relevant TJ literature, I will situate the case within the theoretical framework of the global, fourth phase. Next, I provide an overview of the recent war in Prijedor and the town's post-conflict recovery. Because the international, regional, and national TJ context shapes the reasons why and ways in which Prijedor activists *face the past*, I describe the successes and shortcomings of justice in BiH. The final two chapters address the situation in Prijedor in 2013; chapter four explains the difficult local context and the consequent reaction of grassroots actors. Chapter five explores nuanced challenges to localized, grassroots initiatives that, if TJ is to succeed in Prijedor, need to be critically addressed in the future.

In short, this research will propose that *facing the past* initiatives in Prijedor have become the realm of local grassroots actors in lieu of municipal, entity, or national-level programs designed to implement TJ. Civil society initiatives combine judicial and non-judicial mechanisms in an attempt to heal individuals and provide justice for the community. Despite realities on the ground, there are few holistic academic analyses of *TJ within the domain of civil*

¹³ This decision has been made over a number of conversations with interview subjects about what terminology best communicates the nature of the research subject. For example, Adis Hukanovic, one of *Izvor's* Psychologists stated, "It's easier to use *facing your experiences from the last war* [than using *Transitional Justice*] when you're speaking with regular people. It's more real, not as abstract when you face the experiences of the war." Adis Hukanovic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 5, 2013.

society. This research affirms the theoretical underpinnings of the emergence of the fourth, global phase of TJ. Civil society actors, particularly on a local level, have increased their endeavors to *face the past* because of shortcomings of more orthodox TJ efforts. Yet, the present state of TJ in Prijedor furthers the current fourth, global phase theory. This case study suggests that civil society's increasingly powerful role in TJ has the potential to cause internal divisions, intragroup conflict, and tension over resource allocation. If mishandled, the opportunities provided to civil society may ultimately hamper efforts at *facing the past*.

Methodology: Research Methods, Constraints, Potential for Future Work

The research for the Prijedor case study was conducted over the course of four months and includes a mixed-methodological approach. A number of secondary resources were consulted, but as there is a lack of substantial academic literature on the nexus between TJ and civil society, particularly within the Balkans, the majority of data for the project was gathered in the field.

The sensitive nature of this case study required significant preparation to ensure research would “do no harm.”¹⁴ I referred to anthropological and sociological ethnographic approaches because of their strict ethical guidelines. There were a number of challenges in researching a post-conflict community; the most cited being the risk of re-traumatization in vulnerable populations. A related risk was the potential for interview subjects to feel their hardships and trauma exploited by my research. I witnessed this phenomenon between interviewers and interview subjects during previous work in Sanski Most and Srebrenica. These concerns factored greatly into my selection of Prijedor as a case study and my approach to field research. I previously visited and lived in Prijedor's neighboring town, Sanski Most. Therefore, I already had a number of contacts in Prijedor, a grasp of the context, and a working knowledge of the language. These factors provided me with relatively easy buy-in by the local community and greater assurance that I could conduct ethical research.

¹⁴ Wood, Elisabeth Jean. "The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones." *Qualitative Sociology* 29, no. 3 (2006): 373-386.

I conducted my field research through a mix of semi-structured interviews and participant observation¹⁵ at key events such as memorials and conferences.¹⁶ All interview subjects were fully informed about the research topic and provided oral consent. I reiterated that, should they wish, their identity would be kept anonymous. I conducted a total of seventeen semi-structured interviews the majority of which were in-person though a select few were through email or Skype communication. I also used email communication with two individuals, one of whom also provided an in-person interview. If interviews were conducted in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian (BCS), a translator was used during the session itself. Information gleaned from interviews will be used primarily to *measure behaviors, perceptions, and attitudes* related to *facing the past* in Prijedor.

The interview subjects consist of local, national, and international experts, and key local figures from the Prijedor Municipal government and grassroots activists. I also spoke with two individuals who were raised in Prijedor and survived concentration camps but no longer reside in the town. The limitations of the study primarily relate to interviews; because of time, I was unable to fulfill the original goal of thirty interviews. Furthermore, I initially aimed to collect quantitative data through close-ended surveys administered to one hundred survivors. Again, time was the major limitation obstructing the fulfillment of this goal.

Due to the sensitive nature of some topics covered in my research analysis, I use real identities of interview subjects strategically. Chapter five specifically addresses challenges arising from internal struggles and infighting within Prijedor's civil society. While this is a critical issue to explore it is also one that, if handled improperly, could negatively contribute to the already difficult local context. Therefore, despite interview subjects not requesting anonymity, I do not refer to specific individuals or name organizations in chapter five that are used throughout the rest of the research.

In the future, this case study would be well served by further interviews with key Prijedor stakeholders, such as Mayor Marko Pavic, as well as with a larger sample of concentration camp

¹⁵ Kawulich, Barbara B. "Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method." *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 6.2 (2005). <<http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0502430>>

¹⁶ During 2012 and 2013, I attended memorials for the Keraterm, Trnopolje, and Omarska concentration camps accompanied survivors' associations on visits to Trnopolje and Omarska for educational purposes, participated in the 2012 August 5 Prijedor "Genocide" protest, and the 2013 May 31 White Armband Day Protest. I also attended the *Srcem do Mira* jubilee conference in May 2013 and the Atlantic Initiative roundtable discussion on returnee security in August 2013.

survivors. Future consideration might also be given to a comparative analysis of current TJ initiatives with other regions of BiH to gain a broader understanding of the state of justice in the country as a whole.

1. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

When societies emerge from violent conflict or repressive regimes, individuals, communities, and governments rely on a set of mechanisms, collectively known as Transitional Justice (TJ). Today, TJ's goal and means of achieving redress for human rights violations have become an international norm. TJ as a concept predates the term itself, which was purportedly coined by Ruti Teitel during the "third wave of democracy"¹⁷ in the 1980s and 1990s.¹⁸ Its ambitious purpose is to assist transitioning societies come to terms with repressive and violent pasts while building new societal foundations based on democratic governance and human rights.¹⁹ It does this through a number of "mechanisms;" the four most commonly agreed upon include criminal trials, truth-finding, institutional reform, and reparations.²⁰

According to Teitel's seminal "Genealogy of Transitional Justice," TJ developed in three distinct phases shaped by equally distinct global contexts.²¹ The post-war Nuremberg trials constitute the first phase, the second phase occurred towards the end of the Cold War, and the third phase emerged when the conflicts of the 1990s erupted, resulting in mass violations of human rights and civilian deaths.

The first modern notion of TJ appeared upon the establishment of the Nuremberg Trials to address atrocities committed by Nazi Germany. At the time, TJ was narrowly understood through international criminal law and court proceedings.²² TJ's second phase addressed the need for states surfacing from cold war dictatorships to process oppressive pasts in order to fully transition to new democratic systems.²³ Rangelov and Teitel point out that TJ, until more recent years when conflict resolution and peacebuilding became *in vogue*, was inextricably linked to

¹⁷ Huntington describes this transitional period of accelerated democratization as the "third wave" of democracy: Huntington, Samuel. "Democracy's Third Wave." *Journal of Democracy* 2.2 (1991): 12-34.

¹⁸ Teitel, Ruti. "Transitional Justice Genealogy." *Harvard Human Rights Journal* 16 (2003): 69-94.

¹⁹ Andrieu, Kora. "Transitional Justice: A New Discipline in Human Rights." *Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence*. 1 ed. 2010. Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence: 2.

²⁰ "What is Transitional Justice?" *International Center for Transitional Justice*. Accessed 3 Apr. 2013. <<http://ictj.org/about/transitional-justice>>.

²¹ Teitel, Ruti. "Transitional Justice Genealogy." 69-94.

²² *Ibid.* 70.

²³ *Ibid.* 71.

post-authoritarian statebuilding.²⁴ As more democratic governments replaced authoritarian ones, Paige Arthur claims that human rights advocates fighting state oppression lost their previous *raison d'être*.²⁵ Advocates' shift away from traditional "naming and shaming" techniques created an empty space that *facing the past*, as a means of ensuring respect for human rights, would come to occupy.

Second phase initiatives were funded and implemented by democratic, transition governments through criminal trials, rewriting constitutions to enshrine liberal values and human rights²⁶ and, to a lesser extent, truth commissions.²⁷ A major debate arose in this phase due to perceived tensions between justice and stability, later coined the "Truth vs. Justice" debate.²⁸ Criminal proceedings aimed at halting impunity for human rights violations were believed to put transitioning states at risk; prosecution of figures from the transitioning authoritarian government could become "spoilers," who might compromise or collapse fragile war-peace or authoritarian-democracy shifts. To avoid forgoing justice altogether, truth commissions became the softer mechanism *du jour* in lieu of trials.²⁹ The efforts of post-authoritarian governments in Latin and South America are prime examples typical of the second phase of TJ. Instead of trying those responsible for crimes against civilians like torture and forced disappearance, the new governments of Chile³⁰ and Argentina³¹ undertook state-sponsored truth commissions to establish the truth – but not punish the perpetrators – about past gross violations of human rights.

Between the second and third phases, TJ saw an expansion of its mechanisms, as well as its broader application to new, emerging contexts. In reaction to violent conflicts during the 1990s and early 2000s, TJ became increasingly normalized.³² Policies and strategies aimed at non-military targets and civilian populations spurred the international community to action: the

²⁴ Rangelov, Ivaor, and Ruti Teitel. "Global Civil Society and Transitional Justice." In *Global Civil Society 2011: Globality and the Absence of Justice*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. 59.

²⁵ Arthur, Paige "How 'Transitions' Reshaped Human Rights: A Conceptual History of Transitional Justice." *Human Rights Quarterly* 31.2 (2009): 334-335.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Lundy, Patricia, and Mark McGovern. "Whose Justice? Rethinking Transitional Justice from the Bottom Up." *Journal of Law and Society* 35.2 (2008): 270.

²⁸ Sharp, Dustin. "Interrogating the Peripheries: The Preoccupations of Fourth Generation Transitional Justice." *Harvard Human Rights Journal* 26 (2013): 155.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Backer, David. "Civil Society and Transitional Justice: Possibilities, Patterns and Prospects." 302.

³¹ Lundy, Patricia, and Mark McGovern. "Whose Justice? Rethinking Transitional Justice from the Bottom Up." 270.

³² Teitel, Ruti. "Transitional Justice Genealogy." 71.

creation of two ad-hoc tribunals in 1993 and 1994³³ became the foundation, for better or worse, of our modern conception of justice for atrocities.³⁴ In both cases, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) were meant to end impunity of those guilty of planning and committing wartime atrocities and genocide. Furthermore the judgments of these courts, and later of the International Criminal Court (ICC), set important legal precedents for humanitarian and international criminal law that aimed to deter future crimes of the same nature from being committed.³⁵

Other mechanisms were developed during the second phase, such as truth-seeking, institutional reform, and amnesty, but it was in the third phase that such mechanisms were more often creatively implemented *in tandem*.³⁶ For example, criminal proceedings and truth finding/telling came to be viewed as complementary processes, addressing issues related to both victims and perpetrators. Other mechanisms too, such as institutional reform, amnesty, and reparations, were coupled together “in a single multifaceted process.”³⁷ Additionally, scholars Teitel, Andrieu, and Sharp agree that TJ shifted away from solely retributive justice to include victim-centered, often locally administered restorative justice attributes.³⁸ Perhaps the best-known example of integration of TJ mechanisms – particularly those focused on restorative justice – is South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).³⁹ In addition to fact-finding investigations to uncover and report Apartheid-era violations of human rights, the TRC provided victims a space to tell their stories to the public, including to perpetrators. The process aimed to play a cathartic role for both individuals and communities deeply affected by the policy

³³ Snyder, Jack and Leslie Vinjamuri. “Trials and Errors: Principle and Pragmatism in Strategies of International Justice.” *International Security* 2.3 (2003/2004): 20-25.

³⁴ Andrieu, Kora. "Transitional Justice: A New Discipline in Human Rights." 4.

³⁵ Recent research puts in question the efficacy of international trials as a deterrence of future atrocities. Snyder and Vinjamuri found that trials were only effective in curbing violence when specific conditions existed – including a lack of “spoilers” unrealistic to most protracted violent conflicts. Furthermore, their research purports that trials do not, in fact, deter future atrocities. See: Snyder, Jack and Leslie Vinjamuri. “Trials and Errors: Principle and Pragmatism in Strategies of International Justice.”

³⁶ Roht-Arriaza, Naomi, and Javier Mariezcurrena. *Transitional Justice in the Twenty-First Century: Beyond Truth Versus Justice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 9.

³⁷ Roht-Arriaza, Naomi, and Javier Mariezcurrena. *Transitional Justice in the Twenty-First Century: Beyond Truth Versus Justice*. 9.

³⁸ Andrieu, Kora. "Transitional Justice: A New Discipline in Human Rights." 9, and Sharp, Dustin. "Interrogating the Peripheries: The Preoccupations of Fourth Generation Transitional Justice." 155, and Teitel, "Transitional Justice Genealogy." 78.

³⁹ Andrieu, Kora. "Transitional Justice: A New Discipline in Human Rights." 10.

of racial oppression and segregation.⁴⁰ Amnesties and reparations for victims were also a part of the TRC strategy, although the success of these strategies continues to be debated.⁴¹

During the third phase a new debate emerged. Some worried that measures designed to punish perpetrators still in power—particularly through criminal trials—might prevent the same individuals from negotiating peace, choosing instead to “fight it out” until they won the conflict therefore avoiding future prosecution.⁴² In policy and academic circles, this “Peace vs. Justice” debate led wary critics to propose a return to amnesties in the place of trials.⁴³ The tension between peace and justice was eventually dismissed as a false dichotomy; instead, a careful “sequencing” of justice and peace measures emerged as the standard approach that could be tailored to a specific context.⁴⁴

1.1 Transitional Justice as a Product of the Liberal Paradigm

In the second half of the twentieth century, the TJ field solidified its standing in study and practice, alongside Rule of Law, Democratization, and other related disciplines.⁴⁵ However, the major weakness of the field is its foundations in the liberal democratic paradigm. Arthur states that “‘Transition’—and, more specifically, ‘transition to democracy’— was the dominant normative lens through which political change was viewed at this time, and thus attending to its distinctive contents should shed some light on the emergence of the field.”⁴⁶ The initial TJ goals were to foster state security and stability in transition.⁴⁷ Because of this, first and second phase mechanism implementation was not focused on healing communities or building positive peace but instead on asserting the rule of law and human rights as the foundation of governance.

⁴⁰ The long-term effects of victim testimonies during the TRC remains hotly debated. Many claim the process re-traumatized victims and created a hierarchy of victims within communities. Others believe the opportunity was an important opportunity to work through past crimes. See: Lundy, Patricia, and Mark McGovern. "Whose Justice? Rethinking Transitional Justice from the Bottom Up." 270.

⁴¹ Mamdani, Mahmood. "Amnesty or Impunity? A Preliminary Critique of the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa (TRC)." *Diacritics*, 32.3 (2002): 32-59.

⁴² "The Effects of Transitional Justice Mechanisms: A Summary of Empirical Research Findings and Implications for Analysts and Practitioners." CIPS Working Paper, University of Ottawa, April 2008. 155.

⁴³ Sharp, Dustin. "Interrogating the Peripheries: The Preoccupations of Fourth Generation Transitional Justice." 155.

⁴⁴ Andrieu, Kora. "Civilizing Peacebuilding: Transitional Justice, Civil Society And The Liberal Paradigm." *Security Dialogue* 41.5 (2010): 545.

⁴⁵ Iavor Rangelov, interview with Julia Dowling, Sarajevo, BiH, April 29, 2013.

⁴⁶ Arthur, Paige "How 'Transitions' Reshaped Human Rights: A Conceptual History of Transitional Justice." 325-326.

⁴⁷ Iavor Rangelov, interview with Julia Dowling, Sarajevo, BiH, April 29, 2013.

The liberal lens through which TJ was conceptualized and realized proved insufficient in addressing the deeply complex realities facing post-oppression and post-conflict societies.⁴⁸ The over-emphasis on court justice and top-down processes in place of holistic, inclusive solutions involving broad strata of society were particular weaknesses of TJ's liberal framework.⁴⁹ Moreover, the overly legalistic approach of TJ in the first, second, and third phases has been criticized as too narrow by practitioners and academics alike.⁵⁰ Even with the shift towards restorative justice mechanisms alongside court proceedings, TJ remained a predominantly legal project until recently. The ICTY and ICTR, as well as a number of internationally supported hybrid courts like in Sierra Leone, manifest the ideological emphasis the international community has placed on law proceedings.⁵¹ There are a number of significant contributions the ICTY has made to TJ in BiH, particularly relating to establishing an official truth through thorough investigations. Its relevance to Prijedor will be explored in more detail later on. Legal responses to mass atrocities however, can transform crimes that devastate communities into technical and, ideally, impartial proceedings dependent on high-level experts.⁵² This often means that victims participate little, local specificities are sidelined in favor of due process, and funding is channeled to cities like The Hague – reinforcing victims' sense of "distant justice."⁵³ Dozens of academics have criticized the international community's overzealous support for tribunals while simultaneously neglecting TJ processes at the national and local levels.⁵⁴ Lundy and McGovern highlight the criticisms in their own study on *justice from the bottom up*:

There is a growing debate about the appropriate model and level... at which transitional justice measures should be adopted... The tendency to exclude local communities [in international justice and rule of law initiatives] as active participants in transitional justice measures is a primary flaw, raising fundamental questions of legitimacy, local ownership, and participation. Simply involving local people at the implementation stage of these initiatives is not enough.⁵⁵

⁴⁸ Sharp, Dustin. "Interrogating the Peripheries: The Preoccupations of Fourth Generation Transitional Justice." 157.

⁴⁹ Andrieu, Kora. "Civilizing Peacebuilding: Transitional Justice, Civil Society And The Liberal Paradigm." 554.

⁵⁰ Sharp, Dustin. "Interrogating the Peripheries: The Preoccupations of Fourth Generation Transitional Justice." 150.

⁵¹ Rangelov, Ivaor, and Ruti Teitel. "Global Civil Society and Transitional Justice." 164.

⁵² Andrieu, Kora. "Transitional Justice: A New Discipline in Human Rights." 21.

⁵³ Andrieu, Kora. "Civilizing Peacebuilding: Transitional Justice, Civil Society And The Liberal Paradigm." 554.

⁵⁴ Akhavan, Payam. "Justice in the Hague, Peace in the Former Yugoslavia? A Commentary on the United Nations War Crimes Tribunal." *Human Rights Quarterly*, 20.4 (1998), 742, and Lundy, Patricia, and Mark McGovern. "Whose Justice? Rethinking Transitional Justice from the Bottom Up." 278.

⁵⁵ Lundy, Patricia, and Mark McGovern. "Whose Justice? Rethinking Transitional Justice from the Bottom Up." 266.

Despite today's rapid evolution away from one-size-fits-all policy prescriptions based on officially sanctioned trials, Dustin Sharp argues that earlier phases remained entrenched in liberal, state-based solutions that came into tension with the involvement of more diverse actors like civil society.⁵⁶ And though there has been some movement past the "Truth vs. Justice" and "Justice vs. Peace" debate, TJ experts in the 1990s and early 2000s still viewed the role of the state and the role of civil society as competitive rather than complimentary; local initiatives spearheaded by communities were only "alternatives" to justice at a national or international level.⁵⁷

Recent literature recognizes TJ's historical shortcomings and academics including Andrieu,⁵⁸ McGovern and Lundy,⁵⁹ Rangelov and Teitel,⁶⁰ and Sharp⁶¹ encourage fuller development of the "fourth generation" or "global phase" of TJ, described in detail below.

1.2 The Global, Fourth Phase of Transitional Justice

Although previous TJ phases reflected a liberal bias, the recent shift towards a broader set of actors, mechanisms, and implementation strategies suggests the realization that individual political and civil rights are simply not enough for a society recovering from mass violence. Sharp observes "small but increasing signs at the level of both theory and practice that transitional justice is diversifying some of its approaches" in what he terms the "fourth generation" of TJ.⁶² Teitel and Rangelov describe this phenomenon as the "global phase" of TJ.⁶³ Despite differing terminology, the content of this new era of TJ remains the same; TJ has moved away from its legalistic beginnings towards more holistic solutions that incorporate locally appropriate, non-legal mechanisms that are implemented by the affected community. This phase also addresses a broader range of rights. "Justice vs. Peace" and "Truth vs. Justice" debates have

⁵⁶ Sharp, Dustin. "Interrogating the Peripheries: The Preoccupations of Fourth Generation Transitional Justice." 155.

⁵⁷ Andrieu, Kora. "Transitional Justice: A New Discipline in Human Rights." 7.

⁵⁸ Andrieu, Kora. "Civilizing Peacebuilding: Transitional Justice, Civil Society And The Liberal Paradigm." 544.

⁵⁹ Lundy, Patricia, and Mark McGovern. "Whose Justice? Rethinking Transitional Justice from the Bottom Up." 265.

⁶⁰ Rangelov, Ivaor, and Ruti Teitel. "Global Civil Society and Transitional Justice." 162, and Teitel, "Transitional Justice Genealogy." 89-90.

⁶¹ Sharp, Dustin. "Interrogating the Peripheries: The Preoccupations of Fourth Generation Transitional Justice." 152.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Rangelov, Ivaor, and Ruti Teitel. "Global Civil Society and Transitional Justice." 162-177.

been recognized as misguided in theory and practice – both justice and peace must be satisfied, and without truth there will be no justice.⁶⁴

The state-centric, donor-driven, and technocratic processes of earlier phases created what Lundy and McGovern term a “democratic deficit” in TJ.⁶⁵ However, because the contexts in which TJ is needed the most “go to the heart of questions of identity and politics,” *facing the past* is an inherently contested process that demands public discourse and involvement.⁶⁶ Therefore, a democratization of sorts in the fourth phase has resulted in an increase in how, what, and who is involved in the process.

Rangelov admits that previously, academics and policymakers incorrectly assumed that mechanisms were “zero-sum.”⁶⁷ In reality, mechanisms are interconnected and support the same goal of *facing the past* – tools can and should be used in coordination to create holistic TJ strategies.⁶⁸ While this theory and practice began during the third phase, it fully matured in the fourth phase. Today, for example, it is recognized that retributive criminal trials, for example, are stronger when paired with a restorative justice mechanism focused on victims’ healing. Only intentional harmonization of TJ mechanisms will start constructively grappling with the complex nature of post-conflict and post-repression societies.⁶⁹ Another paradigm shift seen in the fourth phase relates to what violations might be addressed through a TJ strategy. Andrieu argues that, similar to the earlier shift in favor of restorative justice and victim-centered healing, TJ is starting to encompass a fuller range of human rights, including social and economic rights.⁷⁰ TJ’s earlier liberal approach restricted which human rights violations were deemed legitimate enough to address through trials, truth commission, reparations, or other mechanisms. The narrow focus on violations of first generation civil and political rights excluded economic and social violence from the dialogue. This was especially problematic for individuals and communities suffering

⁶⁴ Lutz, Ellen. “Chapter 13: Transitional Justice: Lessons Learned and the Road Ahead.” *Transitional Justice in the Twenty-First Century: Beyond Truth Versus Justice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 327.

⁶⁵ Lundy, Patricia, and Mark McGovern. “Whose Justice? Rethinking Transitional Justice from the Bottom Up.” *Journal of Law and Society* 35.2 (2008): 275.

⁶⁶ Iavor Rangelov, interview with Julia Dowling, Sarajevo, BiH, April 29, 2013.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ “What is Transitional Justice?” *International Center for Transitional Justice*.

⁷⁰ Andrieu, Kora. “Transitional Justice: A New Discipline in Human Rights.” 3.

from poverty purposefully created and used by oppressors to exclude them from society.”⁷¹ Roger Duthie of the ICTJ suggests for expanding the list of violations that merit redress through TJ because “the objectives of TJ should include protection and redress for gross violations of all human rights... Also economic, social and cultural rights... The harms caused by such crimes to individuals and society can be just as serious as those caused by any other crimes.”⁷² In the fourth phase, violations *other than* political and civil abuses are perceived as equally important for *facing the past*, resulting in a more inclusive TJ framework.

The most relevant shift in the TJ paradigm to the Prijedor case study is the fourth phase’s conceptualization of *who* participates in justice processes. From local victims associations, to international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), to multilateral institutions, the number of actors allowed and actively encouraged to shape TJ initiatives has broadened significantly.⁷³ Not only do more actors play a part, but we see an inverse relationship between the state and civil society’s importance in TJ processes. In this global phase, the justice infrastructure has grown and through its increasing complexity, civil society has more ability to appeal directly to, or even go around the state apparatus.⁷⁴ This is a result of what some scholars describe as “justice from below”⁷⁵ or “justice from the bottom up,”⁷⁶ in which grassroots actors assist or replace the state as the main force behind *facing the past*. Grassroots actors, indigenous perspectives, and community-based initiatives provide an alternative viewpoint of TJ that can augment that of the official, state narrative. It also allows projects to occur despite a government’s inability or unwillingness to undertake necessary measures to *deal with the past*.⁷⁷ Lundy and McGovern advocate for increased local engagement and ownership on all levels of TJ initiatives: “Community members should not only ‘advise’ on the shape and direction of the research but must have the opportunity to ‘at least’ collaboratively control. It relies on a conception of human rights promotion that understands control over decision-making as itself a key to the

⁷¹ Lundy, Patricia, and Mark McGovern. “Whose Justice? Rethinking Transitional Justice from the Bottom Up.” 273.

⁷² Duthie, Roger. “Toward a Development-sensitive Approach to Transitional Justice.” *The International Journal of Transitional Justice* 2.3 (2008): 292-309.

⁷³ Rangelov, Ivaor, and Ruti Teitel. “Global Civil Society and Transitional Justice”: 60.

⁷⁴ Iavor Rangelov, interview with Julia Dowling, Sarajevo, BiH, April 29, 2013.

⁷⁵ Dudai, Ron. “Deviant Commemorations: Civil Society and Dealing with the Past in Active Conflicts,” Paper for The Potential Role of Transitional Justice in Active Conflicts conference, Queens University Belfast, November 2011.

⁷⁶ Lundy, Patricia, and Mark McGovern. “Whose Justice? Rethinking Transitional Justice from the Bottom Up.”

⁷⁷ Dudai, Ron. “Deviant Commemorations: Civil Society and Dealing with the Past in Active Conflicts,” 1.

achievement of those rights.”⁷⁸ From Guatemala’s Project to Recover the Historical Memory⁷⁹ to Rwanda’s Gacaca,⁸⁰ fourth phase TJ is significantly more open to less westernized, state-centric interpretations of justice and *facing the past*. The Prijedor case study demonstrates the arrival and flourishing of fourth phase priorities.

These elements contribute to what Sharp⁸¹ as well as Rangelov and Teitel⁸² call the “normalization” of Transitional Justice. TJ no longer sits on the periphery of international justice nor is viewed as a mere sub-field of human rights. The United Nations (UN) has embraced TJ in its most significant and widely accepted documents; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Convention on the Rights of the Child all contain articles on the “right to a remedy for victims of violations of international human rights.”⁸³ In addition, the Hague Conventions and the Rome Statute also contain provisions affording these rights to victims.⁸⁴

The current prioritization of local communities as critical actors in TJ presents new dynamics and challenges. David Backer’s research explores the changing relationship between civil society and governments within this latest context. He argues that engagement between the two is critical in and of itself, but also a “salient indicator” of the TJ process.⁸⁵ The main roles undertaken by civil society in fourth phase TJ are typically “parallel” or “substitute” to the state.⁸⁶ In particular, non-state actors have been successful in evidence or fact collection, advocacy, and local consultation.⁸⁷ His article presents six scenarios of civil society-government relations, each illustrating circumstances in which the two sectors exist, how they interact, and

⁷⁸ Lundy, Patricia, and Mark McGovern. "Whose Justice? Rethinking Transitional Justice from the Bottom Up." 281.

⁷⁹ Backer, David. "Civil society and transitional justice: possibilities, patterns and prospects." 304-305.

⁸⁰ Lundy, Patricia, and Mark McGovern. "Whose Justice? Rethinking Transitional Justice from the Bottom Up." 272.

⁸¹ Sharp, Dustin. "Interrogating the Peripheries: The Preoccupations of Fourth Generation Transitional Justice." 152.

⁸² Rangelov, Ivaor, and Ruti Teitel. "Global Civil Society and Transitional Justice." 162.

⁸³ U.N. General Assembly, 60th Session. Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Backer, David. "Civil society and transitional justice: possibilities, patterns and prospects." 300.

⁸⁶ Ibid. 304.

⁸⁷ Ibid. 302-304.

the implications on political collaboration, particularly coordination (or lack thereof) of TJ.⁸⁸ Two scenarios are especially salient to the BiH case.

Backer's theoretical third and six schemes, "At Arm's Length" and "Hands Off the Wheel" describe contexts in which civil society and government are at odds and, because of this, overall TJ's suffer from the lack of a coordinated implementation strategy. In scenario three, he points out that TJ processes can widen the gap between civil society and government, a trend particularly common in Eastern Europe.⁸⁹ Government remains inactive and, in some cases, hostile to civil society in scenario six as well; because of political deadlock, local communities take on formal or informal TJ processes in place of official government efforts. Initiatives spearheaded by civil society in this scenario though, lack the financial and social capital required to make significant change.⁹⁰

1.3 Infighting and Victim Hierarchies: Complications of the Fourth Phase

Emerging literature on the new phase of TJ is important, but little has addressed the nuances of *how* civil society operates in its more important role in *facing the past*. Backer recognizes the gap in the literature, "What is rare are studies of transitional justice that highlight civil society, or vice versa. Most of the relevant material offers fragmentary detail, with little or no theoretical reflection... [However] one can raise questions about the practices, accountability, partisanship and dependency of NGOs and civic groups."⁹¹ Backer's own research also fails to fully explore the consequences of the increasing emphasis on civil society. However, complex realities on the ground deserve greater attention. Civil society, particularly in post-conflict societies, is not a homogenous unit and does not always operate in favor of the most vulnerable citizens. Even when civil society has effectively addressed local justice needs through TJ projects, significant hurdles remain from local or national governments who may view *facing the past* as a threat. Despite the lack of academic literature on the subject, the fourth phase's spotlight on non-state initiatives has undoubtedly altered the dynamics between all those involved, the impact on local communities, and efficacy of project implementation.

⁸⁸ Ibid. 306.

⁸⁹ Ibid. 308.

⁹⁰ Ibid. 310-311.

⁹¹ Ibid. 298-301.

Because of this lack of relevant academic literature, the Prijedor case study draws on more general political psychology and political sociology. Bakke and colleagues' work on opposition-movement infighting in civil wars is particularly relevant to Prijedor's divided civil sector. In short, the authors address the splintering of opposition movements and propose a number of key elements that may predict the degree of future infighting.⁹² As chapter five in this thesis will demonstrate, civil society in Prijedor shares many elements highlighted by Bakke et al. with civil war opposition movements, such as lack of coordination, disagreements over personal and professional power, resource conflicts, and contention on decision-making processes.⁹³

Coupled with the work of Bakke et al., this research draws on the victim-centered theory developed by a number of practitioner-academics in conflict or post-conflict settings. Many survivors of conflict cannot view themselves as victims without "the other" on which to focus their frustration, anger, or trauma, argues Robert Meister.⁹⁴ This does not necessarily mean individuals perceive themselves as victims only in the presence of those who committed the crimes, but that an individual wanting or needing to be a victim can *project* perpetrator status onto any other individual.⁹⁵ Andrighetto et al highlight the challenges victimization poses to reconciliation and *dealing with the past* in Kosovo.⁹⁶ They discuss the need of identity groups to compete with one another for bigger-victim status. According to their research, antagonism over recognition of suffering more than "the other" is similar to competition over material resources.⁹⁷ This suggests that the need for victimhood is an equally important and contested resource to political power, money, or territory. Such research primarily explores the effect of victimhood competition on intergroup conflict, however the Prijedor case study will prove that more research needs to be done on the effect of victim status' on intragroup conflict, and consequently community and societal reconciliation, as well.

⁹² Bakke, Kristin, Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, and Lee Seymour. "A Plague of Initials: Fragmentation, Cohesion, and Infighting in Civil Wars." *Perspectives on Politics* 10.2 (2012): 265-283.

⁹³ Ibid. 265-283.

⁹⁴ Meister, Robert. 2002. "Human Rights and the Politics of Victimhood." *Ethics & International Affairs* 16, no. 2: 91-108.

⁹⁵ Ibid. 102.

⁹⁶ Andrighetto, Luca, Silvia Mari, Chiara Volpato, and Burim Behluli. "Reducing Competitive Victimhood in Kosovo: The Role of Extended Contact and Common Ingroup Identity." *Political Psychology* 33.4 (2012): 513-529.

⁹⁷ Ibid. 514.

Despite the limited literature on the complicated inner workings of civil society in their new, ascendant role in TJ, this combination of theory serves well for a basis of a few cautious assumptions. Firstly, intragroup conflict is a common phenomenon, though under-researched, that occurs within political parties, opposition movements, and therefore logically also within portions of civil society. Actors and groups within civil society fight over resources and decision-making, which may hinder their efficacy to achieve a unified goal. Secondly, in settings of conflict – particularly identity-based conflict – victim status is a critical resource that can be equally important to more concrete or material resources. Because victimhood is a non-material resource in conflict and post-conflict settings, it can contribute to and escalate infighting amongst members of the same identity group under particular circumstances.

TJ on the ground is progressing far more quickly than the academic field. Therefore, the case study of localized TJ in Prijedor helps to bridge the gap between practice and theory and bring a deeper understanding of the intricacies of this new phase of TJ. Shortcomings of earlier TJ mechanisms, particularly the international community's over-emphasis on court justice, triggered the emergence of grassroots initiatives that rely on non-judicial, non-foreign methods. The country's vibrant civil society has undertaken dozens of *facing the past* initiatives to compensate for the ICTY's overly legalistic approach and the deadlocked national government. Yet despite shared goals and, in many cases, shared ethno-national identity, local civil society groups are at odds with each other, just as their role in TJ becomes more important. Resources, unresolved trauma, and seemingly insurmountable challenges from the local government's denialist policies in Prijedor have led to severe infighting and have hindered grassroots TJ. Therefore, the successes and failures in *dealing with the past* in this local community reveal elements – some yet to be fully explored – unique to the fourth, global phase of TJ.

2. Prijedor Past and Present: The War and Civil Society's Emergence

The war in Prijedor continues to shape the lives of the city's inhabitants, regardless of ethnicity and despite official and unofficial attempts to forget the past. The municipality was an especially brutal site of killings, torture, rape, and detainment. Because of this, *facing the past* is a critical element of shaping a positive present and hopeful future. An entire book could be, and indeed has been, written about Prijedor's wartime narrative.⁹⁸ The scope of this thesis however restricts the war to one chapter that creates a backdrop to explain why localized TJ initiatives become increasingly prevalent in today's Prijedor.

2.1 The War and Terror

Approximately 1,500 individuals were killed in Prijedor municipality in 1992.⁹⁹ Local civil society groups claim that up to 3,777 individuals were killed and disappeared, the majority of whom were non-Serbs and, in particular, Bosniaks.¹⁰⁰ Despite differences in figures, it is agreed upon that over one thousand Prijedor's citizens were killed, around 30,000 detained in camps, and approximately 50,000 ethnically cleansed from the town in the spring and summer of 1992.¹⁰¹

Before the war, Prijedor was a modestly-sized city that had social and economic ties to cities as diverse as Zagreb, Banja Luka, and Bihac.¹⁰² The population of Prijedor was highly educated, urbanized, and economically prosperous. Ethnically, the municipality was almost evenly split, with Bosniaks a slight majority at 44%, Serbs following at 42.5%, and Croats with

⁹⁸ Wesselingh, Isabelle, and Arnaud Vaulerin. *Raw Memory: Prijedor, Laboratory of Ethnic Cleansing*. London: Saqi in association with the Bosnian Institute, 2005.

⁹⁹ "Bridging the Gap in Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina." ICTY Outreach. International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Accessed August 21, 2013. <<http://www.icty.org/sid/10169>>.

¹⁰⁰ *Uzdruzenje Prijedocanki Izvor* (Association of Women from Prijedor "Izvor") provides the number 3,777 killed and missing, including 1,099 still missing. See: Subasic, Haris. "The culture of denial in Prijedor."

¹⁰¹ In his article, Subasic uses *Izvor's* figures of 31,000 individuals detained in concentration camps and 53,000 deported. Subasic, Haris. "The culture of denial in Prijedor." *TransConflict*.

¹⁰² Dennis Gratz, interview with Julia Dowling, Sarajevo, BiH, August 26, 2013.

5.7%.¹⁰³ It was a highly integrated city that embodied the concept of *suzivot*.¹⁰⁴ Therefore, it was difficult to convince local Serbs they were in danger from their non-Serb neighbors with whom they had peacefully lived for decades.¹⁰⁵ However, Slobodan Milosevic's political aims and propaganda for a Greater Serbia through cleansing, imprisonment, and mass executions extended far beyond Belgrade.¹⁰⁶ In March and April 1992, the first tensions arose between Prijedor's ethnic groups as roadblocks were set up and Mount Kozara's Television transmitter was taken over by Serbs.

Plans for Prijedor's ethnic cleansing began months before the official outbreak of war; the *Krizni Stab* ("Crisis Staff" or "Crisis Headquarters") was established in February 1992 to create local parallel institutions that excluded all Bosniaks, Croats, or other non-Serbs.¹⁰⁷ On April 30, 1992, the takeover of Prijedor town was signified by posters from the Crisis Staff announcing the replacement of the Social Democratic Alliance (SDA) with the Serb Democratic Party (SDS). SDS alleged that the majority-Bosniak party was leading the town to economic disaster.¹⁰⁸ Overtly planned months in advanced, the ICTY described this takeover by SDS as an illegal coup d'état in its case against Dr. Milomir Stakic, President of the Prijedor's Crisis Staff.¹⁰⁹ Non-Serbs were immediately dismissed from their jobs, children and youth were barred from attending school, and non-Serb individuals were forced to wear white armbands to mark them as Bosniaks or Croats.¹¹⁰

Yet, a new political system excluding non-Serbs in Prijedor was not enough to force Bosniaks and Croats away from the homes they had lived in for generations. In 1991 and early 1992, Serbia released many criminals from its jails in preparation for war, and these criminal elements started a campaign of terror that was fuelled and sustained by instrumentalizing ethno-

¹⁰³ U.N. Security Council – Letter from the Secretary General. *Final Report of the Commission of Experts Established Pursuant to the Security Council Resolution 780 (1992) (S/1994/674)*. 27 May 1994.

¹⁰⁴ *Suzivot* is the Yugoslav and Bosnian concept of living together in harmony, interconnectedness and tolerance. It embraces diversity and multiethnic existence. Sarajevo is often used as an example of true *suzivot* before the war began in 1992.

¹⁰⁵ Dennis Gratz, interview with Julia Dowling, Sarajevo, BiH, August 26, 2013.

¹⁰⁶ Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic (Opinion and Judgment), IT-94-I-T, International Criminal Tribunal for the Former (ICTY), May 7, 1997. <http://www.icty.org/x/cases/tadic/tjug/en/tad-ts70507JT2-e.pdf>. (Paragraph 130).

¹⁰⁷ Wesselingh, Isabelle, and Arnaud Vaulerin. *Raw Memory: Prijedor, Laboratory of Ethnic Cleansing*. 222.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 41.

¹⁰⁹ Prosecutor v. Milomir Stakic (Trial Judgment), IT-97-24-T, International Criminal Tribunal for the Former (ICTY), July 31, 2003. <http://www.icty.org/x/cases/stakic/tjug/en/stak-tj030731e.pdf>. (Paragraph 128).

¹¹⁰ Askin, Kelly. "Omarska Camp, Bosnia: Broken Promises of 'Never Again'." *Human Rights* 30.1 (Winter) (2003): 12.

nationalism. Gratz argues that paramilitary units utilizing Serbian criminals were needed “to cross the line” and start the violence. According to one ICTY witness, notorious paramilitary groups led by Arkan and Seselj were part of the 5,000 soldier-strong force that attacked the town of Kozarac on May 23-24.¹¹¹ Following initial incidences, many Serbs in the local community were easily convinced of the necessity of removing Bosniaks and Croats by force.¹¹²

One of Prijedor’s “Left Bank” communities, Hambarine, was also heavily shelled on May 23-24. During this period too, the deportation/concentration camps of Trnopolje, Omarska, and Keraterm began operating.¹¹³ Non-Serb communities such as Hambarine, Ljubija, Carakovo, Biscani, and Rizanovici were fully cleansed by late summer.¹¹⁴ Bob Reid, Deputy Chief of Investigations with the Office of the Prosecutor at the ICTY, described his experience in the area of Brdo: “There was nothing left in Brdo, every single house had been totally destroyed.”¹¹⁵ Similarly, Kozarac was completely leveled with machinery after the assault.¹¹⁶

Residents who survived the initial assault immediately left the Prijedor region or were rounded up and brought to detainment centers, most of whom spent at least one night in one of Prijedor’s three major concentration camps. According to ICTY Outreach, men and women detained in camps experienced severe mistreatment and torture, including rape and sexual assault, physical and psychological humiliation, beatings and executions.¹¹⁷ This was part of the policy of discrimination and violence aimed at expelling or eliminating non-Serbs from the municipality.¹¹⁸ What’s more, the systematic use of terror and torture on both individuals and infrastructure was meant to make return to Prijedor physically and psychologically impossible for any surviving Bosniaks or Croats.¹¹⁹ In addition to terrorizing the general non-Serb population, camps were a means of eliminating Bosniak and Croat elites; without these leaders to

¹¹¹ Prosecutor v. Milomir Stakic (Trial Judgment). Paragraph 142.

¹¹² Dennis Gratz, interview with Julia Dowling, Sarajevo, BiH, August 26, 2013.

¹¹³ Wesselingh, Isabelle, and Arnaud Vaulerin. *Raw Memory: Prijedor, Laboratory of Ethnic Cleansing*: 222-223.

¹¹⁴ Wesselingh, Isabelle, and Arnaud Vaulerin. *Raw Memory: Prijedor, Laboratory of Ethnic Cleansing*, and *Bridging the Gap: Between the ICTY and Communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Conference Series: Prijedor)*, 25 June 2005. The Hague, Netherlands: The Communications Service, Registry, ICTY.

¹¹⁵ *Bridging the Gap: Between the ICTY and Communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Conference Series: Prijedor)*. 11.

¹¹⁶ Prosecutor v. Milomir Stakic (Trial Judgment). Paragraph 145.

¹¹⁷ “Bridging the Gap in Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina.” ICTY Outreach.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Dennis Gratz, interview with Julia Dowling, Sarajevo, BiH, August 26, 2013.

rally survivors, preserve social and cultural values, and organize a return, the non-Serb population would be permanently cleansed.¹²⁰

Omarska Concentration Camp, a former mine located in the Ljubija mine complex, was recognized by the ICTY as the cruelest camp established during the entire course of the war in BiH.¹²¹ Between May 25 and August 6, 1992, Omarska held over 3,000 individuals – mainly Bosniak and Croat men, though 36 or 38 women were also detained and systematically raped during this time period.¹²² Camp prisoners were subjected to inhumane conditions including insufficient food and shelter, regular beatings, torture, and executions. The worst events arguably occurred in the “White House,” where Prijedor’s non-Serb elites, a group of intellectuals and prominent society members, were targeted for particularly brutal torture and killings.¹²³ It’s widely known that if you went into the White House, you were extremely unlikely to emerge alive.¹²⁴ The decimation of community leaders has created present-day challenges in the civil society sector. Namely, the elitocide negatively impacted effective governance of local organizations and associations working on TJ, the state of which will be covered in depth in chapter five.

Keraterm Camp held a smaller number of individuals who experienced the same brutality as seen in Omarska. Sexual assault on the mostly-male detainees, as well as forcing inmates to perform degrading sexual acts on each other, was a common form of torture in Keraterm.¹²⁵ The height of violence at Keraterm Camp occurred on July 24, 1992, when more than 200 individuals were killed by a machinegun set up outside of Room Three within the camp.¹²⁶

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ *Bridging the Gap: Between the ICTY and Communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Conference Series: Prijedor)*. 13.

¹²² The exact number of inmates interned at Omarska remains debated. According to the ICTY’s findings in the Kvočka et al. case the Bosnian Serb authorities recorded 3,334; inmates and guards working there claim a minimum of 2,000 individuals. Witnesses for the case confirm an estimated 3,000 detainees were held during Omarska’s operation. See: Paragraph 21 of Prosecutor v. Miroslav Kvočka, Mlado Radic, Zoran Zigic, Dragoljub Prcać (Trial Judgment), IT-98-30/1-A, International Criminal Tribunal for the Former (ICTY), November 2, 2001.

<http://www.icty.org/x/cases/kvocka/tjug/en/kvo-tj011002e.pdf>.

¹²³ Prosecutor v. Miroslav Kvočka, Mlado Radic, Zoran Zigic, Dragoljub Prcać. Paragraph 14.

¹²⁴ Dennis Gratz, interview with Julia Dowling, Sarajevo, BiH, August 26, 2013.

¹²⁵ *Bridging the Gap: Between the ICTY and Communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Conference Series: Prijedor)*. 14-15.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

The third camp in Prijedor municipality, Trnopolje, is occasionally referred to as an internment or deportation camp instead of a concentration camp.¹²⁷ While Trnopolje had more porous borders than the other camps, a former Trnopolje detainee stated, “even if there had been just a line on the ground, nobody would have dared to cross it.”¹²⁸ Leaving the camp for any reason meant a treacherous walk past heavily armed Serb guards and machine-gun nests. The camp held women, children, and the elderly, as well as adult men in transit from other camps and central Bosnia.¹²⁹ While beatings and executions did occur, they were somewhat less frequent than at Omarska or Keraterm.¹³⁰ However, Trnopolje is notorious for the widespread, systematic, and repetitive sexual assaults and rapes of the girls and women imprisoned there. Young girls and teenagers,¹³¹ as young as thirteen years of age,¹³² were especially at risk.

In August 1992, the world was introduced to Prijedor. It “became famous as a paradigm of suffering of non-Serbs”¹³³ thanks to reporting by *Newsday*’s Roy Gutman and the discovery and documentation of the three camps by British Reporters from ITN, the *Guardian*, and the *Observer*.¹³⁴ The media coverage and subsequent international outcry led to the closings of Omarska and Keraterm in mid-August; remaining detainees were transferred to Trnopolje or Manjaca, a fourth camp near Banja Luka.¹³⁵ By December 1992, the major camps in Bosnian Krajina were shut down and survivors relocated as refugees through the Red Cross.¹³⁶

¹²⁷ Omarska and Keraterm also, have been subject to debates on terminology – the most famous of which was between Ed Vulliamy of ITN TV and *Living Marxism* when the former won a libel suit against the latter for claiming the news station had falsified reports about the existence of Trnopolje and the other camps. For a brief overview about the discussion, see pages 62 – 65 in Wesselingh, Isabelle, and Arnaud Vaulerin. *Raw Memory: Prijedor, Laboratory of Ethnic Cleansing*. For the remainder of the thesis, I will refer to these three places as “sites of detention,” “concentration camps,” or simply “camps.”

¹²⁸ Prosecutor v. Milomir Stakic (Trial Judgment). Paragraph 187.

¹²⁹ Wesselingh, Isabelle, and Arnaud Vaulerin. *Raw Memory: Prijedor, Laboratory of Ethnic Cleansing*. 56-57.

¹³⁰ *Bridging the Gap: Between the ICTY and Communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Conference Series: Prijedor)* 15.

¹³¹ Wesselingh, Isabelle, and Arnaud Vaulerin. *Raw Memory: Prijedor, Laboratory of Ethnic Cleansing*. 57.

¹³² Prosecutor v. Milomir Stakic (Trial Judgment). Paragraph 244.

¹³³ Sudbin Music, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 26, 2013.

¹³⁴ Wesselingh, Isabelle, and Arnaud Vaulerin. *Raw Memory: Prijedor, Laboratory of Ethnic Cleansing*. 51

¹³⁵ *Ibid.* 95-96, 223.

¹³⁶ Other, smaller places of detention existed until the end of the war throughout BiH. Wesselingh, Isabelle, and Arnaud Vaulerin. *Raw Memory: Prijedor, Laboratory of Ethnic Cleansing*. 223.

2.2 Return and Rebuilding

The policy of ethnic cleansing of Prijedor succeeded in part; with the leveling of entire communities, concentration camps, and massacres throughout 1992, the ethnic make-up of the municipality drastically shifted to a large Serb majority. This process was supported by the Dayton Peace Agreement's territorial divisions of BiH, which created two entities and one district within the territory.¹³⁷ The Republika Srpska (RS) has a majority Serb population while Bosniaks and Croats make up a majority of residents in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Prijedor, though located in the RS, sits extremely near the entity border. In October 1995, the Army of BiH came close to capturing Prijedor and driving the Serb army back, but Dayton stopped the mission in Sanski Most – only 40 kilometers short of Prijedor. This makes Prijedor *just out of reach* for many non-Serbs who lived there before the war, as residing in a Serb-majority city within the RS would be too difficult. Despite these factors and recent government efforts to dissuade non-Serbs from residing there, Prijedor has seen a remarkable rate of return. By 2005, only ten years after war's end, over 13,000 individuals returned to Prijedor.¹³⁸ Since then the total has risen – approximately 15,000 citizens have returned, about 10% of the prewar population – which represents the largest amount of any Bosniak returnee community in BiH.¹³⁹ Return and its related challenges have precipitated the emergence of a large number of civil society projects, initiatives, and organizations in the city. While Prijedor civil society is diverse, organizations focused on TJ are of particular interest because of the town's violent historical context.

Prijedor's civil society includes a variety of subcategories that reflect the organization of non-state actors in BiH more generally. NGOs in BiH total 12,000 and Prijedor has its fair share.¹⁴⁰ The organizations with the greatest social capital in Prijedor are inarguably the *Uzdruzenje* ("Associations") of citizens or camp survivors, most of which are located in Prijedor city or in nearby Kozarac. *Uzdruzenja Zena BiH Inicijative "Srcem do Mira"* (Association of

¹³⁷ Ibid. 10.

¹³⁸ Nalepa, Monika. "Reconciliation, Refugee Returns, and the Impact of International Criminal Justice: The Case of Bosnia and Herzegovina." 327.

¹³⁹ Edina Becirevic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 9, 2013.

¹⁴⁰ US Agency for International Development, Bureau for Europe and Eurasia, Office of Democracy, Governance and Social Transition, *The 2011 CSO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern European and Eurasia*, 2011. 44. <http://transition.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/dem_gov/ngoindex/reports/2011/2011CSOSI_Index_complete.pdf>

Bosnian Women's Initiative "Heart Through Peace") was created to protect human rights and empower women and children in returning to Kozarac. The organization was unofficially founded in 1993 in a Croatian refugee camp and played a critical part of the return process in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Through workshops, lectures, training, and education, Director Emsuda Mujagic and her staff prepared women to face devastated Prijedor, come to terms with missing loved ones and began to rebuild the community.¹⁴¹

The *Uzdruzenja Logorasa Kozara* (Association of Kozarac Concentration Camp Detainees) is another example of the blossoming civil society in Kozarac. The Association, similar to other camp inmate organizations, aims to realize the rights of survivors who, in Kozarac, comprise 80% of the town's population.¹⁴² Yet another effort is the *Uzdruzenja Optimisti Kozarac* (Citizens Association "Optimists Kozarac"). Also located in Kozarac, it aims to help rebuild the town through humanitarian projects like basketball courts and camp memorials.¹⁴³ These organizations are a physical manifestation of the determination and will of survivors to overcome their suffering and restart their lives.

In Prijedor city itself, two associations have become known nation-wide because of their deep engagement in *facing the past*. Staff members of both groups have even provided input to the BiH Transitional Justice Strategy. *Uzdruzenja Prijedorcanki "Izvor"* (Association of Women Citizens of Prijedor "Izvor") and *Uzdruzenja Logorasa "Prijedor '92"* (Association of Concentration Camp Detainees "Prijedor '92") work on critical human rights and TJ issues at both individual and communal levels. According to *Prijedor '92* Secretary, Subdin Music, *Prijedor '92*'s mission is to "keep memories of what happened in the concentration camps."¹⁴⁴ To do so, *Prijedor '92* works with its members – more than 2,000 camp survivors – to ensure they receive the compensation due to them, assist them in obtaining official documents from the local government, and provide a link to other survivors living throughout the world. Collectively, they organize commemorations for the concentration camps and other events from the war.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ Emsuda Mujagic, interview with Julia Dowling, Kozarac (Prijedor), BiH, July 7, 2013.

¹⁴² According to Trnopolje survivor Elmina Kulasic, the majority of Kozarac citizens – 80% or more - spent at least one night in one of the camps. Elmina Kulasic, written (email) communication with Julia Dowling, September 27, 2013.

¹⁴³ Satko Mujagic, interview with Julia Dowling, Kozarac (Prijedor), BiH, July 23, 2013.

¹⁴⁴ Subdin Music, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 26, 2013.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

Izvor addresses similar problems through projects for a broader group of Prijedor citizens, including camp detainees but also families of missing persons, widows and children of those killed, and victims of ethnic cleansing. The President of *Izvor*, Edin Ramulic, emphasized *Izvor's* role in providing psychological support for traumatized people – which it does through employing two trained psychologists and facilitating psycho-social support groups led by a psychiatrist.¹⁴⁶ Additionally, *Izvor* advocates for better treatment of witnesses testifying in war crimes trials and helps individuals obtain state services.¹⁴⁷

The other civil society actors engaged in local TJ efforts are less formally or officially organized but perhaps more widely known because of their strong online presence and use of social media. Groups, individuals, campaigns, and projects not linked or registered NGOs or Associations are a new but interesting phenomenon in advocacy and social change, including the struggle for justice in Prijedor. The *Stop Genocide Denial* group, which orchestrated the *White Armband Day Campaign*, uses media and communications to educate people and combat denial of war-time crimes in Prijedor. *Jer me se Tice* (“Because I care”) was co-founded by Emir Hodzic, also the co-founder of *Stop Genocide Denial*, who believes advocacy through media attention is one of the ways to both bridge the gap between regular individuals regardless of ethnicity and create systemic change.¹⁴⁸ Similarly, the *Guardians of Omarska* is an informal activists’ network based on social media, particularly Facebook. Its founder, Satko Mujagic of Kozarac, also founded the *Uzdruzenja Optimisti* but decided to focus on advocacy towards constructing a memorial at the Omarska camp through *Guardians*. With over 7,000 Facebook followers, *Guardians* disseminates information about the concentration camps in Prijedor and throughout BiH, promotes memorialization for victims, and engages on critical issues relating to camp survivors.¹⁴⁹

Online activism through social media is a new facet to civil society’s work and has not been properly researched through the lens of global TJ. It is clear in the case of Prijedor though, that there are strengths and weaknesses. The potential number of people reached through Facebook, Twitter, and activist blogs is significantly larger than through traditional advocacy methods. Social networks and online media have helped increase knowledge about and interest

¹⁴⁶ Edin Ramulic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 22, 2013.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Emir Hodzic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 1, 2013.

¹⁴⁹ Satko Mujagic, interview with Julia Dowling, Kozarac (Prijedor), BiH, July 23, 2013.

in Prijedor's case, particularly engagement on the issue of the camps.¹⁵⁰ In BiH, social media activism is a particularly interesting development because of the opportunities it affords to diaspora who want to stay connected with their home communities and contribute to pressing issues of peace and justice. On the other hand, local actors have criticized online activism or *activism from abroad* of weakening in-person advocacy. Prijedor '92's Sudbin Music posed the question, "How many of them [online activists] are voting? They have the opportunity to vote from abroad. We have 26,000 Bosniaks abroad with personal ID cards from Prijedor, with the possibility to vote, and only 5,000 who are voting."¹⁵¹ He argued that the overemphasis on virtual life, such as "liking" a Facebook post about building a memorial in Omarska, makes people feel as if they are making a difference when in reality, they are contributing very little.

In short, Prijedor's recent past is a troubled one that has radically transformed the community. The physical and psychological scars imposed on the city through a systematic, well-coordinated policy of terror created a lingering atmosphere of fear and distrust. As in much of BiH, the violence inflicted on the population demands active measures to confront and work through the past. A diverse set of mechanisms have been created over the last two decades to *face the past*, some international and some local, but most with both significant contributions and significant shortcomings. In reaction to disappointment over high-level TJ efforts in BiH highlighted below, Prijedor's non-Serbs have gone on to create alternative local solutions to *deal with the past*.

¹⁵⁰ Emir Hodzic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 1, 2013.

¹⁵¹ Sudbin Music, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 26, 2013.

3. Transitional Justice in Bosnia-Herzegovina

According to activist Goran Zoric, “*Facing the past* seems like one of the viable ways of solving the nationalist deadlock and changing the overall situation in our society.”¹⁵² TJ’s third phase developed alongside the conflict in BiH and its post-war recovery, making the country and region an experiment for testing ways to face a violent past for a peaceful future. There are a number of high-profile TJ endeavors that directly affect or, in many cases, inspire alternatives at the local level. These efforts and, more critically, their perceived shortcomings are one reason why Prijedor’s seen a flourishing of grassroots projects. Many activists view their own work as a means of “filling the gap” when national, regional, and international TJ is inadequate in addressing problems confronting their community.

3.1 Court Justice: How Judicial Mechanisms Remain Insufficient

Justice in the Balkans is often characterized by the work of the ICTY in The Hague. In many ways The Hague Tribunal has contributed to physical and social reconstruction in BiH, while also setting an international precedent in combating impunity for the worst crimes known to man. Extensive investigations and lengthy trials have created a huge resource of factually reliable and impartial findings regarding the events that occurred during the conflicts in the Former Yugoslavia.¹⁵³ Through the ICTY’s verdicts, genocide in Srebrenica has become an indisputable fact to all but the most hardline nationalists looking to revise history. The tribunal has established the existence of Prijedor’s concentration camps and assaults on its surrounding communities. In fact, the ICTY has seen the greatest number of accused stand trial for crimes committed in Prijedor – twenty-four individuals in fourteen cases have been tried at The Hague

¹⁵² Goran Zoric, written (email) interview with Julia Dowling, submitted August 28, 2013.

¹⁵³ "Outreach Activities 2012: Audience left speechless by ICTY documentary." *ICTY Outreach*. International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, May 23, 2012. Accessed August 21, 2013. <<http://www.icty.org/sid/11078>>.

or, in some circumstances, transferred to the National Court of BiH.¹⁵⁴ In Prijedor itself, activists have mixed sentiments about The Hague and its role in justice. However, many agree that the ICTY is the only source at present that provides facts supporting an official truth about the events in the municipality.¹⁵⁵ “If [the ICTY] hadn't been involved, then nothing would have happened [in Prijedor] in the sense of justice and recognizing these crimes. Otherwise there would have been a black hole.”¹⁵⁶

In addition to simply establishing detailed, factual accounts of crimes committed throughout the former Yugoslavia, the ICTY's judgment on the Dusko Tadic case set a critical legal precedent recognizing rape as a crime against humanity.¹⁵⁷ The importance of the judgment – that rape can be used as a means of persecution (a crime against humanity) instead of simply a *side effect* of war – should not be underemphasized.¹⁵⁸ In these ways, the ICTY has been an important means of truth-finding and truth-telling. The rulings continue to be used to combat denial and demand rightful reparations for victims throughout communities in BiH, including Prijedor. Yet, the fourth, global phase of TJ recognizes the shortcomings of over-reliance on legalistic approaches created and implemented by the international community. Many grassroots initiatives have emerged in Prijedor municipality and around the country because criminal trials are not an holistic solution to *facing the past* in the Balkans.

One of the most prevalent criticisms of the ICTY is that its approach is not victim-centered enough. From its engagement with victims-as-witnesses to the overdue development of the local outreach program in 1999, six years after the tribunal was founded,¹⁵⁹ the ICTY's primary goal was not recognition of victimhood but establishing facts and criminal liability based on a fair procedure respecting civil liberties.¹⁶⁰ Bosnian TJ expert Goran Simic emphasizes

¹⁵⁴ The following cases are related to Prijedor municipality: 1. Predrag Banovic, 2. Radoslav Brdanin, 3. Momcilo Krajisnik, 4. Kvočka et al (charged a total of five people), 5. Mejakic et al. (charged a total of four people, and transferred to the Court of BiH), 6. Darko Mrda, 7. Sikirica et al. (charged a total of three people), 8. Milomir Stakic, 9. Dusko Tadic. The following cases relate to the broader geographic area (including Prijedor) of Krajina, BiH, or the whole of former Yugoslavia: 10. Radovan Karadzic, 11. Ratko Mladic, 12. Slobodan Milosevic, 13. Biljana Plavsic, 14. Stanistic and Zupljanin (charged a total of two people). See: "Interactive Map." *International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia*. September 26, 2013. <<http://www.icty.org/sections/TheCases/InteractiveMap>>

¹⁵⁵ Emir Hodzic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 1, 2013.

¹⁵⁶ Edin Ramulic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 22, 2013.

¹⁵⁷ Prosecutor v. Dusko Tadic (Opinion and Judgment).

¹⁵⁸ Askin, Kelly. "Omarska Camp, Bosnia: Broken Promises of 'Never Again'." 12.

¹⁵⁹ "Outreach Program." ICTY Outreach. International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Accessed September 11, 2013. <<http://www.icty.org/sections/Outreach/OutreachProgramme>>.

¹⁶⁰ Eduardo Gonzalez-Cueva, online phone (Skype) interview with Julia Dowling, conducted August 1, 2013.

that court justice is insufficient for the challenges facing BiH and for victims, because trials are not meant to promote memorialization or create reparation schemes, which serve the victim more than the rule of law.¹⁶¹ Eduardo Gonzalez-Cueva, Director of Truth and Memory at the ICTJ, questions the relevance of the ICTY and trials in Prijedor's context. Victims in Prijedor who suffered incredibly egregious human rights violations have a difficult time comprehending the use of the tribunal, according to Gonzalez-Cueva, because local individuals and communities prioritize *substantial justice* over *procedural justice*. In other words, Prijedor citizens "want to ensure that the bad guys are punished" while The Hague's priority is criminal liability through strict due process.¹⁶²

As previously mentioned, ICTY outreach efforts began late in the game and remain weak. Prijedor native and emerging academic Haris Subasic expressed frustration with ICTY Outreach activities after their second film on crimes in Bosnia was released. The film featured investigations and trials for war crimes committed in Prijedor municipality.¹⁶³ Despite the film's subject, ICTY Outreach did not hold a screening in Prijedor but instead in Sarajevo, Belgrade, and Novi Grad, Serbia.¹⁶⁴ The belated nature of local engagement factors into activists' skepticism and distrust, of the ICTY's work. Regardless of exactly how much one or another of these aspects contributes to overall dissatisfaction, it is unquestionable that many communities in BiH and throughout the region see the Tribunal as a manipulative political tool. Instead of individualizing criminal liability and diminishing collective guilt, the court is viewed as a means of scoring points for one ethnic group or another.¹⁶⁵ Recent decisions have only reinforced the belief that the court is not impartial but instead an ad hoc tool used by politicians in the Balkans and internationally. Satko Mujagic expressed deep disappointment with the ICTY, particularly under the guidance of President Meron, and suggested he leave his position because of allegations about external influences from actors like the United States and Israel.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶¹ Simic, Goran. "Searching for Reparation: Has the ICTY Brought Real Justice for the Victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina?" *Insight on Conflict*. July 20, 2013. Accessed August 2, 2013.

<<http://www.insightonconflict.org/2013/07/ict-bosnia-and-herzegovina/>><<http://www.insightonconflict.org/2013/07/ict-bosnia-and-herzegovina/>>

¹⁶² Eduardo Gonzalez-Cueva, online phone (Skype) interview with Julia Dowling, conducted August 1, 2013.

¹⁶³ Haris Subasic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 2, 2013.

¹⁶⁴ "Outreach Programme documentary on crimes in Prijedor premieres in Novi Sad, Belgrade and Sarajevo."

¹⁶⁵ Eduardo Gonzalez-Cueva, online phone (Skype) interview with Julia Dowling, conducted August 1, 2013.

¹⁶⁶ Satko Mujagic, interview with Julia Dowling, Kozarac (Prijedor), BiH, July 23, 2013.

Court proceedings at the Bosnian state and entity levels have encountered similar challenges in delivering justice to local communities and individuals. The Court of Bosnia-Herzegovina's war crimes chamber has been deeply criticized as neglecting the role of victims in the process.¹⁶⁷ What's more, witness protection laws in entity-level and municipal courts remain improperly implemented.¹⁶⁸ Physical protection, non-disclosure of identity, privacy measures, and psychological support are not fully applied. To make matters worse, the criminal codes in BiH's two entities remain unreconciled. The Federation's municipal courts currently use an updated code, while municipalities in the Republika Srpska (RS) rely on the Yugoslav Criminal Code which, to many victims' dismay, is more favorable towards the defendant.¹⁶⁹ A maximum sentence of 15 years¹⁷⁰ in the RS means that many war criminals who were found guilty and sentenced, have since served their time and are returning to their home communities where they committed the crime. Furthermore, Prijedor returnees who find the courage to testify as witnesses against accused war criminals have been disappointed and even re-traumatized by the court proceedings in both Sarajevo and RS capital Banja Luka. One of *Izvor's* psychologists expressed deep concern for the survivors she works with during court cases: [concentration camp survivors] say it's hard for them to see those perpetrators walking in Prijedor freely. Some of the perpetrators are on trial in Sarajevo - at the national court - but they are free to walk here [in Prijedor].¹⁷¹

Relying exclusively on judicial efforts to serve justice in BiH is inadequate and ill-suited to the nature of the conflict, which took an especially hard toll on non-combatants. TJ must take an holistic approach that, if necessary, overemphasizes the role of the victim. Mirsad Duratovic, the President of *Prijedor '92* holds a sober opinion of

¹⁶⁷ According to Goran Simic, "90 percent of the 400 articles of the Criminal Procedure Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina refer to the perpetrator and their rights instead of those of the victim. The perpetrator has the right to the presumption of innocence, to a fair trial, to defence, to communication." See: "Searching for Reparation: Has the ICTY Brought Real Justice for the Victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina?" *Insight on Conflict*.

¹⁶⁸ United Nations Development Programme in BiH. *Transitional Justice Guidebook for Bosnia and Herzegovina: Executive Summary*. Sarajevo, 2009: 23.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid. 23.

¹⁷⁰ Kamber, Ajdin. "One War Crime, Two Lawbooks in Bosnia: Application of different legal frameworks results in disparate sentencing for similar offences." *Institute for War and Peace Reporting: International Justice – ICTY TRI729* (February 15, 2012). <<http://iwpr.net/report-news/one-war-crime-two-lawbooks-bosnia>> Accessed September 27, 2013.

¹⁷¹ Azra Karabasic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 3, 2013.

the ICTY and other internationally-encouraged initiatives, “We've lost hope in international justice. We still believe in local justice, in comparison.”¹⁷² Because of this, other initiatives from regional and national actors have developed that also influence the emergence of grassroots, local efforts in Prijedor.

3.2 Regional and National Efforts: Inertia and Skepticism

The Regional Commission Tasked with Establishing the Facts about All Victims of War Crimes and Other Serious Human Rights Violations Committed on the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia in the period from 1991-2001 (RECOM) is an ambitious effort that advocates for national and regional solutions to *dealing with the past* within the Western Balkans.¹⁷³ RECOM has involved civil society actors from each Yugoslav successor state, including a number of activists from the Prijedor region. Despite involvement in the initiative, Prijedor actors and many others in BiH have lost faith in RECOM as a mechanism for *facing the past*. A number of reasons contribute to this conclusion. RECOM has had an increasingly challenging time in reaching BiH's communities outside of Sarajevo.¹⁷⁴ One activist for TJ shared the feeling that RECOM was irrelevant to the local context:

In Sanski Most [a town nearby Prijedor] people that were collecting signatures for RECOM told me "please write a letter to the president of Serbia, Macedonia, of Croatia." Those citizens of Sanski Most thought "why should I write a letter to the President of Macedonia? How can Macedonia as a country help reconciliation in Sanski Most? We have problems with our neighbors... Who is in charge of the neighbors? Macedonia as a country is not in charge of them."¹⁷⁵

Each town in BiH has its own unique wartime narrative – from the genocide in Srebrenica, to the siege of Sarajevo, or the concentration camps in Prijedor.¹⁷⁶ While RECOM's goal of *facing the past* through a regional process is completely valid, the mandate does not as easily translate to the lives of individuals in small, divided communities like those in Bosnian Krajina. Regional

¹⁷² Mirsad Duratovic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 9, 2013.

¹⁷³ "Proposed RECOM Statute." *Inicijativa za REKOM*. September 27, 2013.
<<http://www.zarekom.org/documents/Proposed-RECOM-Statute.en.html>>.

¹⁷⁴ Goran Zoric, written (email) interview with Julia Dowling, submitted August 28, 2013.

¹⁷⁵ Adis Hukanovic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 5, 2013.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

actors started and sustained the war, but to many, their own experience of violence was perpetrated by neighbors, and therefore requires local solutions.

Six of the seven interview subjects who were asked about their opinion of RECOM suggested that its beginnings were promising, but at present the initiative lacks the capacity to spur the political and social progress needed to address the past.¹⁷⁷ RECOM's meetings and conferences are perceived as seemingly endless, repetitive, stagnant, and resulting in few concrete actions outside of the hotel lecture halls in which they occur. The inefficiency of these meetings and conferences is symbolic of RECOM's broader and deeper flaws that cripple their attempts to work through the region's history. Mevludin Rahmanovic, a peacebuilder originating from Prijedor who lives and works in Sanski Most, noted, "RECOM broke down, they became politically corrupted... I haven't heard about them in the last year."¹⁷⁸ Tragically, RECOM is viewed as a mechanism of manipulation for BiH politicians, which disheartens but does not shock Prijedor activists. TJ activists' widely-held criticisms of RECOM reflect deep disappointment and discouragement about a process they viewed with initial optimism. The major weakness of RECOM was its insistence that national governments play an instrumental role in its proposed scheme for *facing the past*. For the deadlocked politics of BiH, a regional TJ process establishing truth and justice is too radical and progressive to gain governmental support.

The Bosnian government has, in theory, identified a need to undertake appropriate, state-sponsored efforts to face the past—although it has not addressed RECOM specifically. As a result, a National Strategy on Transitional Justice was drafted in 2007 by the BiH Ministry of Justice and Human Rights and the BiH Ministry of Refugees, with assistance from the UNDP. Yet, the draft remains controversial and at an impasse in Parliament.¹⁷⁹ Among the most contentious issues are material reparations, particularly for civil victims of war, as well as memorial and monument building guidelines.¹⁸⁰ As with anything regarding the national state of

¹⁷⁷ This sentiment was expressed by six interview subjects from Prijedor during my field work. Each individual is an activist on peace and justice in Bosnian Krajina and expressed the shared belief that RECOM started strong but has since lost its way. This was also a comment in the University of Goldsmith's Prijedor Focus Group for the "Bosnian Bones, Spanish Ghosts" Project.

¹⁷⁸ Mevludin Rahmanovic, interview with Julia Dowling, Sanski Most, BiH, July 18, 2013.

¹⁷⁹ United Nations Development Programme in BiH. *Transitional Justice Guidebook for Bosnia and Herzegovina: Executive Summary*. 4.

¹⁸⁰ Dzidic, Denis. "Bosnia's Transitional Justice Strategy Requires Political Support." *TransConflict*. October 9, 2012. Accessed July 7, 2013. <http://www.transconflict.com/2012/10/bosnias-transitional-justice-strategy-requires-political-support-090/>

BiH, the TJ legislation suffers from political deadlock between politicians from the Federation and the RS, whose representatives feel the strategy favors Bosniaks and Croats as victims while Serbs are portrayed as aggressors.¹⁸¹ Civil society also remains skeptical because some view its drafting process as exclusionary and too costly.¹⁸² This assumption is made, in part, because of the UNDP's role as facilitator. The extensive technical and administrative components of the drafting project and the utilization of an expert group and numerous working groups caused many to ask "how much [does] their strategy cost?"¹⁸³ Sudbin Music, of *Prijedor '92*, referred to the expert group as "UNDP babies" who go "hotel to hotel, having conferences with the same people."¹⁸⁴ The elite group of individuals involved, the high-level and high-cost meetings, combined with few tangible outcomes seen on the ground in places like Prijedor, leads locals to beg the question – what now?

Without movement on the National TJ Strategy for the foreseeable future, Bosnians have been forced to *face the past* on their own. As Backer's sixth scenario "Hands off the Wheel," theorizes, BiH civil society has intervened to replace an inefficient and paralyzed government. The situation is far from ideal, and yet it remains the reality in Bosnia. Prijedor civil society's active role in *dealing with the past* is enabled, in part, by the increasing diversity of actors working on TJ which, as a new global phenomenon, has come to be understood as the fourth phase in the maturation of TJ's genealogy. According to the UNDP in Sarajevo, "There is general public agreement in BiH that without [civil society], the process of documenting violations of human rights and war crimes would not even exist."¹⁸⁵ Emir Hodzic's *White Armband Day Campaign* is a direct reaction to the inertia of TJ in BiH – because "nothing has worked to this point"¹⁸⁶ he and his fellow activists created a project to push leaders at local and national levels towards justice. Of course, the unique challenges facing Prijedor today and consequent community-based efforts are deeply localized. Yet, BiH's frozen political scene and stymied TJ attempts have undoubtedly inspired a broad range of actors throughout the country to take action in one way or another. Only today, well into the fourth, global phase of TJ is it

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Sudbin Music, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 26, 2013.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ United Nations Development Programme in BiH. *Transitional Justice Guidebook for Bosnia and Herzegovina: Executive Summary*. 58.

¹⁸⁶ Emir Hodzic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 1, 2013.

possible that the *White Armband Day Campaign* and similar initiatives can make more significant inroads in *facing the past* than their political counterparts.

4. Today's Prijedor: Denial and Discrimination

Today, Prijedor appears to have fared better than many other BiH towns, as it lacks the countless deserted and decrepit buildings sitting unoccupied from heavy artillery fire and fighting twenty years ago. The pedestrian walkway has bakeries, bookshops, and cafes that give the appearance that everything is and *has been* normal for a very long time. This is the local government's goal. Without admitting that crimes were committed against the non-Serb population during the war, politicians have been able to adopt a narrative affirming that indeed, *nothing violent against non-Serbs took place*, consequently making TJ efforts unnecessary. *Facing the past* could incriminate certain political parties and individuals currently in power for war crimes, while recognition of crimes might create uncomfortable guilt for regular Serb citizens living in Prijedor. There is a systematic, institutionalized policy of denial and discrimination that hinders any attempts to *deal with the past* and, after coming to terms with the past, movement towards reconciliation.

Prijedor's political and social reality contributes to the mushrooming of local initiatives as a means of responding to the past's repression and the present's oppression. As previously mentioned, the sense that national, regional, and international justice has fallen short has spurred on grassroots initiatives. However, the specific local conditions created by actors within the municipal government are also a catalyst for grassroots TJ initiatives.

The major perpetrators of this strategic policy are local and entity-level politicians who fear for their jobs should their political parties come under fire. The typical ethno-national rhetoric used before, during and, still, after the war of "us" vs. "them" – in the case of Prijedor, "Serbs" vs. "non-Serbs" – is use by Mayor Marko Pavic and other representatives in the local assembly.¹⁸⁷ The official response from the local government to such criticisms, though, is contradictory. Dorde Jez, the municipal government's contact point with local communities,¹⁸⁸ identified politicians at the entity and state levels as the main problem regarding discriminatory laws or policies of denial. He reaffirmed that if a law was agreed upon to halt these practices at a

¹⁸⁷ Goran Zoric, written (email) interview with Julia Dowling, submitted August 28, 2013.

¹⁸⁸ Dorde Jez's position was created in 2006 by the municipal government. Currently, he works under Mayor Marko Pavic as a representative for the local government to Prijedor's many *mjesnih zajednica* ("local communities," "neighborhoods," or "suburbs"). In this way, he works as a sort of public relations/communications specialist who goes between the government and neighborhoods that are often made up of non-Serb returnees. His interview and any other public statements are representative of the government and, in particular, Mayor Pavic's policies.

federal level then the town would implement it.¹⁸⁹ In the same interview though, Mr. Jez denied any influence Banja Luka might have over Prijedor's TJ and reconciliation policies, stating "Banja Luka has no control over the reconciliation process in Prijedor, because each city has its own specific story. It's always up to local municipalities to deal with these issues."¹⁹⁰ The conflicting statements that Pavic's government bureaucrats provide about the situation in Prijedor demonstrate a larger trend of officials toeing the line between outright discrimination and quiet denial.

Azra Pasalic, a non-Serb Social Democratic Party (SDP) member who worked for two terms in the local Prijedor assembly claimed that Serb representatives remain adamant in denying the events of 1992.¹⁹¹ Upon sharing her personal war story – how her parents were killed in their Prijedor house - her fellow assembly members, including those from the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD, Milorad Dodik's Party), ignored her. This experience shaped her opinion that many politicians use denial of crimes against non-Serbs in the war as a political strategy.¹⁹² Furthermore, the reinterpretation of the past by local politicians influences regular Serbs living in the city, leading many to buy into a denialist narrative.¹⁹³ As local Serb and non-Serb civilians have different understandings of the crimes that unfolded during the war, efforts to *face the past* collectively are likely to be in vain.

4.1 "Uncommonly Profound Forms of Denial"¹⁹⁴

Prijedor's Municipal government uses tools to repudiate the occurrence of systematic violence against non-Serbs in 1992 while also creating a new history that favors Serbs as victims. They do this by denying atrocities, prohibiting freedom of speech and assembly of TJ activists, hijacking memorials and commemorations, and manipulating the educational curriculum. Though typically outspoken critics of the ICTY, Serb politicians in the RS paradoxically use The

¹⁸⁹ Dorde Jez, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 15, 2013.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Azra Pasalic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 20, 2013.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Both Emsuda Mujagic and Sudbin Music expressed concern over a portion of the local Serb population to ignore the facts of what occurred in Prijedor during the war in their interviews.

¹⁹⁴ Haris Subasic on Prijedor's strategies of denial through memorial culture. "The culture of denial in Prijedor." TransConflict.

Hague's verdicts stating that crimes in Prijedor did not constitute genocide to their advantage.¹⁹⁵ President Dodik and Mayor Pavic continue to "deny the capacity of the victims to call their [own] experience in the way they see fit," namely to use the word *genocide* in reference to the ethnic cleansing campaign and concentration camps.¹⁹⁶

Denial of the events in 1992 invalidates survivors' experiences, particularly when it coincides with active governmental manipulation and remaking of truth and memory. Non-judicial memory and truth efforts have long been seen as critical to the psycho-social recovery of traumatized communities because they focus on the victim and acknowledge their suffering.¹⁹⁷ Furthermore, individual and collective memory and truth projects assist people to process and address trauma, and integrate it into their perceived life story.¹⁹⁸ Without opportunities to ritualize mourning the loss of those killed, houses burned, or a previous way of life, survivors sometimes feel stuck in the past. In short, memorials, truth-telling forums, and commemorations help people to make sense of what happened and move on. These opportunities are denied to the non-Serb population of Prijedor in multiple ways.

Firstly, construction of memorials for concentration camps around Prijedor remains forbidden.¹⁹⁹ Trnopolje lies in ruins, a vacant building overgrown with weeds and strewn with trash, without any indication that almost 7,000 non-Serbs²⁰⁰ were detained, tortured, raped, and killed there. Omarska, perhaps even more distressing to survivors, was bought by British steel company ArcelorMittal in 2004 and has resumed operations as an iron ore mine.²⁰¹ The company initially agreed to preserve part of Omarska for a future memorial. "On December 1st, you can see Mittal speaking about building a memorial for us.... But the moment they announced that, maybe a week later, Marko Pavic showed up on the local media and said 'no way.'"²⁰² Mittal currently owns 51% of the mine, but the RS government controls the remaining 49%.²⁰³ It is not

¹⁹⁵ Eduardo Gonzalez-Cueva, online phone (Skype) interview with Julia Dowling, conducted August 1, 2013.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Adis Hukanovic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 5, 2013.

¹⁹⁹ Subasic, Haris. "The culture of denial in Prijedor." *TransConflict*.

²⁰⁰ Wesselingh, Isabelle, and Arnaud Vaulerin. *Raw Memory: Prijedor, Laboratory of Ethnic Cleansing*: 56.

²⁰¹ "News and Media (2012): ArcelorMittal Prijedor announces additional dates for access at Omarska mine – ArcelorMittal." ArcelorMittal. Accessed September 29, 2013. <<http://corporate.arcelormittal.com/news-and-media/news/2012/may/15-05-2012>>.

²⁰² Satko Mujagic, interview with Julia Dowling, Kozarac (Prijedor), BiH, July 23, 2013.

²⁰³ "News and Media (2012): ArcelorMittal Prijedor announces additional dates for access at Omarska mine – ArcelorMittal." ArcelorMittal.

in the political or economic interest of Mittal nor Mayor Pavic to allow preservation and construction of a memorial. What's more, while his public statements may be ambiguous, Mayor Pavic's actions communicate his opposition to efforts providing permanent reminders of the past. He simultaneously attends mass burials of identified missing persons while also preventing memorialization based on claims that the local government has neither the funds nor legal framework to allow the building of new monuments.²⁰⁴

Commemorations and advocacy actions are another point of contention in Prijedor. Public mourning and remembrance of the dead helps survivors to move forward and allows society to channel trauma in a structured but cathartic way. According to the President of *Izvor*, Edin Ramulic, the local police purposefully create complications making organizing public commemorations difficult.²⁰⁵ A high-profile example of interference was the arrest of Sabahudin Garibovic during a public event on August 5, 2012 meant to both commemorate those who died and to advocate for official recognition of crimes in Prijedor.²⁰⁶ Garibovic, the President of the *Uzdruzenja Logorasa Kozarac*, was arrested because he supposedly did not arrange for an ambulance to be present at the protest. Other Prijedor activists claim it was retaliation against spelling the word "genocide" with children's backpacks displaying the names of children killed in the cleansing campaign after Mayor Pavic had specifically forbidden the word to be spoken out loud.²⁰⁷

The suppression of rights to assembly and expression, such as spoken word, holding protests and commemorations, or building victims' memorials, is only part of the denialist policy in Prijedor. The authorities also actively promote a narrative that refutes non-Serbs' experience, replacing it with the "Serbian Defensive Liberation War." Memory, particularly collective memory, is an especially contested resource in post-conflict communities where reconstruction is actively underway. Through memorials, monuments, and history curriculum, officials can construct shared myths and beliefs that shape political and social life. Brito et al. state, "Control over the narrative of the past means control over the construction of narratives for an imagined

²⁰⁴ Azra Pasalic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 20, 2013.

²⁰⁵ Edin Ramulic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 22, 2013.

²⁰⁶ US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. *2012 Human Rights Reports: Bosnia and Herzegovina*. 2012 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices Report, April 19, 2013.

²⁰⁷ US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. *2012 Human Rights Reports: Bosnia and Herzegovina*.

future.”²⁰⁸ The RS entity and municipal-level politicians actively recreate a history that relativizes past wrongdoings, glosses over the worst atrocities committed in establishing the territory, and justifies present and future socio-political policies discriminatory towards non-Serbs.

Serb authorities have instrumentalized memorials as a particularly virulent means of revising Prijedor’s past. Presently, the municipality has sixty monuments dedicated to Serb soldiers who gave their lives for the unification of the Serb homeland.²⁰⁹ The large orthodox cross standing across the street from the municipal government building sends a clear and intimidating sign that the town belongs to Serbs and that non-Serbs are unwelcome.²¹⁰ At Trnopolje another Orthodox cross was erected by the local government and is inscribed with a dedication to “All Serb Soldiers who were killed.”²¹¹ In his article about denialism through memorialization, Subasic describes the atmosphere in Prijedor as one of “uncommonly profound forms of political and cultural strategies of denial” in which “the mass production of monuments for Serb victims is disproportionate in relation to the marginalized representation of non-Serb victims in Prijedor.”²¹²

Coopting memorials is common during circumstances of protracted identity conflict, as the United States Institute of Peace (USIP)’s report on TJ and memorialization points out. Authorities use memorials to promote an in-group’s political agenda, satisfy the need for victimhood status, and marginalize the out-group as the “other” or “enemy.”²¹³ The monopoly over memorials by Serbs in Prijedor is a physical manifestation of the new narrative asserting that TJ is unnecessary because non-Serbs’ claims about war crimes are false. Local activists continue to be outraged by the process of memorial building, which is funded by the municipality through citizens’ taxes, and its nationalistic results.²¹⁴ Consequently, grassroots initiatives have emerged to combat denial and to demand the commencement of projects and policies that actively *deal with the past*.

²⁰⁸ Brito, Alexandra Barahona de, Carmen Enríquez, and Paloma Fernández. *The Politics of Memory: Transitional Justice in Democratizing Societies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. 38.

²⁰⁹ Subasic, Haris. "The culture of denial in Prijedor." TransConflict.

²¹⁰ Satko Mujagic, interview with Julia Dowling, Kozarac (Prijedor), BiH, July 23, 2013.

²¹¹ Subasic, Haris. "The culture of denial in Prijedor." TransConflict.

²¹² Subasic, Haris. "The culture of denial in Prijedor." TransConflict.

²¹³ Barsalou, Judy and Victoria Baxter, “The Urge to Remember: The Role of Memorials in Social Reconstruction and Transitional Justice.” *Stabilization and Reconstruction Series, United States Institute of Peace* 5 (2007): 4.

²¹⁴ Mirsad Duratovic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 9, 2013.

4.2 What Would Justice Look Like in Prijedor? “We Need an Earthquake.”²¹⁵

Grassroots civil society in Prijedor is pushing back. Persistent denialist policies result in the creation of more projects to *face the past*. Truth initiatives provide evidence of past human rights abuses so as to prevent denial or revision of history. Memory work transforms facts into spaces in which the truth can be seen, heard, and felt, where dialogue can be encouraged, and victims feel acknowledged.²¹⁶ For Prijedor, the value of such efforts is twofold: “[truth and memory initiatives] are validating and help victims not feel re-victimized and, because efforts of memory and truth are collective and reinforces collectivities, [it provides] an opportunity to get together, share stories, and reinforce the links [in communities that have been stigmatized and displaced.]”²¹⁷ For these reasons organizations, associations, and individuals have undertaken myriad projects that preserve memory and provide a space for victims’ individual or collective truths.

As mentioned, the ICTY has provided some level of truth-finding for BiH and Prijedor in particular. Despite this, the process of truth-telling has been limited to those few individuals who gave testimony to The Hague and, even in these cases, the ICTY’s method focuses on procedure instead of healing for the victim. Recording local narratives, including personal truths, has become a priority amongst local civil society. Chapter Three highlighted *Izvor*’s work with families of the missing. Their first project – the book of missing persons from Prijedor –reflects efforts undertaken in response to shortcomings of official truth-finding sources like the ICTY or state. *Izvor*’s newest project, the “Video Archive of Crimes Against Humanity,” was launched in 2013 to record testimonies from individuals who survived the war in Prijedor, consequently providing a place in which regular survivors can share their unique story and outlook on their experience, be heard, and know that their memories are preserved for the next generation. The project is open to all citizens of Prijedor, not only Croats or Bosniaks, the hope being that the archive will create a multi-faceted, nuanced view of shared experiences of the time – something

²¹⁵ Edin Ramulic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 22, 2013.

²¹⁶ “Truth and Memory.” *International Center for Transitional Justice*. Accessed September 30, 2013. <<http://ictj.org/our-work/transitional-justice-issues/truth-and-memory>>.

²¹⁷ Eduardo Gonzalez-Cueva, online phone (Skype) interview with Julia Dowling, conducted August 1, 2013.

to combat the mono-ethnic narrative pushed by politicians in Prijedor.²¹⁸ Similar projects have been undertaken in divided communities in Northern Ireland and have been remarkably effective empowering individuals and communities because their voices and their stories “become part of public discourse.”²¹⁹

In addition to preserving multiple truths for the next generation to listen and learn from, *Izvor*’s oral history project plays a critical role in trauma healing. Israeli psychiatrist and academic Dan Bar-On pioneered a type of trauma healing based on storytelling or providing testimony. Victims in contact groups in Israel, the USA, and Germany felt recognized through others, including individuals from “the other” group, bearing witness to their trauma and helping them “work through” their past.²²⁰ In contrast, those who survived Prijedor’s concentration camps often live in silence, particularly individuals who experienced sexual assault and rapes, fearful of reliving the trauma and societal stigma. Adis Hukanovic, *Izvor* psychologist, relayed an example about a woman relieved to tell her story to him over the phone. “She used to live here in one village near Prijedor. She was talking about how she's living under psychological trauma because of the things she survived... She told me ‘I appreciate what you are doing, please continue, I want to tell you my story but over the phone, off the record.’”²²¹ These “untold stories”²²² in Prijedor, as elsewhere in BiH, prevent reconciliation on a societal level because they hinder the individual’s ability to first come to terms with their own trauma. Both psychologists working on the oral history project highlighted the dual nature of the archive, as a means of preserving a diverse narrative that combats denial while also giving space for individuals to speak through the events of 1992 in a safe and therapeutic environment.

Personal truth-telling is not the only mechanism grassroots actors utilize to address broader issues of truth and memory. Commemorations are an important manifestation of the rebellion against denial in Prijedor, as they publically demonstrate the refusal of non-Serbs to be

²¹⁸ Azra Karabasic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 3, 2013 and Adis Hukanovic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 5, 2013.

²¹⁹ Lundy, Patricia and McGovern, Mark. “Community-Based Approaches to Post-Conflict 'Truth' Telling: Strengths and Limitations.” *Shared Future: A Research Journal on Peace, Conflict and Community Relations in Northern Ireland* 1 (2005): 42-47.

²²⁰ Bar-On, Dan, and Fatma Kassem. "Storytelling As A Way To Work Through Intractable Conflicts: The German-Jewish Experience And Its Relevance To The Palestinian-Israeli Context." *Journal of Social Issues* 60.2 (2004): 290.

²²¹ Adis Hukanovic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 5, 2013.

²²² Ibid.

ignored or forgotten. Of course, there are also less political elements to commemorations – they allow communities to mourn victims, many of whose remains are still missing, in solidarity with other vulnerable people.²²³

However, “commemorations are the first step,” stated Satko Mujagic. “Tomorrow we go to Keraterm Camp, and we'll go to Omarska. We visit empty places. We visit factories. We visit shops. It's very nice, but let's be very honest, after 30, 40, 50 years, none of the survivors will be alive... You have to have stories, images, something.”²²⁴ For this reason, most of the organizations or associations in Prijedor advocate for the construction of memorials. *Srcem do Mira*'s founder and head, Emsuda Mujagic, suggested that marking places of political and social significance with monuments allows victims to move on with their lives.²²⁵

Since 2005, numerous Prijedor activists have pushed for an Omarska monument but, as previously mentioned, civil society has come up against a number of challenges from ArcelorMittal, Mayor Pavic's government, and even themselves. In the early years of Omarska monument advocacy, much of Prijedor's non-Serb civil society came together to pressure Mittal and Pavic for their support.²²⁶ After heavy advocacy efforts, in 2005 Mittal publically announced it would allow a memorial while also maintaining the ability to effectively operate the mines. The company brought in a foreign NGO – the *Soul of Europe* – to consult and work with local TJ advocates on the design.²²⁷ However, as Satko Mujagic expressed, the project was halted, in part, by local authorities early into this process. It is important to note that internal complications also hindered progress, which will be analyzed in greater detail in chapter five.

Roadblocks to the memorial-building process from Mayor Pavic and the municipality have been discouraging and frustrating to activists, but government official Jez insists that local non-Serb actors were “unreasonable” in their demands.²²⁸ He explained that a portion of the advocates demanded preservation of both the White House and the Hanger, where the majority of inmates were kept. However, including the large Hanger in the memorial might have hindered

²²³ Eduardo Gonzalez-Cueva, online phone (Skype) interview with Julia Dowling, conducted August 1, 2013.

²²⁴ Satko Mujagic, interview with Julia Dowling, Kozarac (Prijedor), BiH, July 23, 2013.

²²⁵ Emsuda Mujagic, interview with Julia Dowling, Kozarac (Prijedor), BiH, July 7, 2013.

²²⁶ In 2005, the process included Sudbin Music and Mirsad Duratovic of *Prijedor '92*, Edin Ramulic of *Izvor*, Satko Mujagic and his cousin “Schwabo” of *Optimisti* (Satko would later start *Guardians of Omarska*), as well as other individuals not described in detail in this work such as Kemal Pervanic.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Dorde Jez, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 15, 2013.

some of the mine's operations. This demand, in Mr. Jez's view, prioritized memory and history over economic opportunities in the future.²²⁹

In engineering a new narrative that erases the very existence of concentration camps, cleansing, and murder in Prijedor, the town's Serb authorities rob non-Serb victims of their status both psychologically and physically. The political strategy continues to be a combination of willful ignorance and placing the blame elsewhere: "All the organizations working on victim's rights, returnees that exist in Prijedor, have full support of the local administration... The local administration is trying to help them to heal their memories, bad experiences. But it's always impossible to put everything in that process."²³⁰ In claiming the process of reconciliation depends on factors out of their control, like the budget or federal legislation, Prijedor municipality can surreptitiously replace one narrative with another. However, the psychological warfare on truth and memory is not the only method of ensuring 1992's cleansing becomes permanent; the local government has also institutionalized systematic discrimination against the Bosniak and Croat returnee population.

4.3 Waging War without Guns: Institutionalized Discrimination

The ethno-nationalist political structure that orchestrated violence in Prijedor remains in place today; though the bombs have stopped, the war continues with systematic discrimination of non-Serbs. This is particularly implemented through public employment and social services, as well as the education system. The denialist policy is paired with discrimination to erase the past while ensuring a future Prijedor that non-Serbs find unappealing and unsustainable. Sudbin Music of *Prijedor '92* believes that continuing discrimination from 1992 especially affects diaspora living abroad who come back to visit Prijedor. "Our people from abroad are still traumatized - they are still in 1992. Many of them are scared to go to the police or the municipality to ask for something."²³¹ This is a huge challenge for returnees and diaspora both, as the fear felt in 1992 remains because hatred towards Bosniaks and Croats is channeled into a form of violence using discrimination instead of guns.

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ Sudbin Music, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 26, 2013.

Public employment is a contested issue in Prijedor because of both those who do and who do not hold positions within the municipality. Some Bosniaks and Croats assume that Serbs in public positions do not hire non-Serbs unless they are required to fill a quota.²³² According to Sudbin Music, there are nine non-Serbs working in the Prijedor municipality out of an approximate two hundred and nine total employees.²³³ In the local assembly too, there is an underrepresentation of non-Serbs; only five of thirty members are Bosniak.²³⁴

More egregious to survivors than underrepresentation of non-Serbs in public institutions is the high-level employment of individuals accused (by either a court or by the community as a whole) as war criminals. Vetting²³⁵ has not been properly implemented in BiH. Only a select number of officials were made to reapply after a background check, namely judges and police officers. Local actors claim that even this basic mechanism has not been fully implemented or adhered to in their community. President of *Prijedor '92*, Mirsad Duratovic, claims, “Police officers were directly involved in war crimes, but they are still working as police officers.”²³⁶ For the former camp detainees that *Prijedor '92* works with, walking down the street and seeing those who tortured them as police officers – paid by public funds, in possession of a weapon, and wielding power – is not only morally unacceptable but severely re-traumatizing.

The National Strategy proposes a broader vetting process for all individuals holding public office to ensure jobs are not provided to war criminals.²³⁷ But this document has not yet become legislation, and so a number of known war criminals hold positions in public institutions in Prijedor. Misa Rodic was an investigator at Keraterm who decided the fate of countless inmates, but today he directs the center that handles veterans’ affairs, social security, and services for the handicapped or disabled. The head of Prijedor’s Center for Social Work too, was involved in the war effort as a member of the Crisis Staff.²³⁸ Civil society actors in Prijedor agree

²³² Boyle, Katherine. “Bosnia: A House Divided.” *Institute for War and Peace Reporting: International Justice ICTY TRI* 484 (January 12, 2007). < <http://iwpr.net/report-news/bosnia-house-divided>> Accessed July 10, 2013.

²³³ Sudbin Music, written (email) communication with Julia Dowling, September 18, 2013.

²³⁴ Haris Subasic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 2, 2013.

²³⁵ In BiH, the term *lustracija* is used to describe vetting and lustration interchangeably because no proper translation has been made to describe the procedure of vetting. The UNDP Transitional Justice Guidebook for BiH states there is a lack of understanding of the concept in addition to the poor translation (see p. 53). I will use vetting and lustration in the way English-language TJ scholars do, meaning vetting is a process affecting individuals through requiring they reapply to a position after a background check affirms they were not involved in war crimes.

²³⁶ Mirsad Duratovic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 9, 2013.

²³⁷ Dzidic, Denis. “Bosnia’s Transitional Justice Strategy Requires Political Support.” *TransConflict*.

²³⁸ Edin Ramulic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 22, 2013.

that war criminals must be removed from public office and prevented from holding any positions in the future: “The main institutions, the *Opstina* (Municipality), the hospital, school, police, post office, should not have officials from the 1992 government in positions today.”²³⁹ In allowing such individuals to hold positions paid by the public budget, the local government condones war crimes from 1992, prevents traumatized non-Serb survivors from fully utilizing much-needed government services, and forces survivors to recede from public life out of fear of encountering former perpetrators.

The entity-level government also plays a critical role in reinforcing the disenfranchisement of non-Serbs returning to their pre-war communities located in the RS territory. Redress for the war-time rights violations best demonstrates this. The RS’s policy on compensation, which differs from that of the Federation, initially imposed an application deadline of 2001. As this was early on in the return process, many Bosniaks and Croats had not registered a permanent address in the RS, making them ineligible to file for or receive compensation paid by the entity. In 2007, an amended version of the law provided an additional five-month window for individuals to apply for compensation.²⁴⁰ Locals in Prijedor claim that there were few efforts made to inform non-Serbs of this five-month period, and the filing process itself was opaque and complicated.²⁴¹ Today, because the time period for applications has closed, individuals can only receive compensation by claiming disability in *helping* the Liberation war or through individual legal suits against the entity.²⁴² Concentration camp survivors cannot get reparations for their experiences because it “has no relation to the liberation war.”²⁴³ Even when compensation has been successfully received, problems remain. Many survivors feel that the reparations scheme is unjust towards civil victims of war – especially survivors of concentration camps, torture, and rape – because current RS legislation requires 60% invalidity directly caused by war-time events (as compared to 20% invalidity for compensation eligibility for war

²³⁹ Emsuda Mujagic, interview with Julia Dowling, Kozarac (Prijedor), BiH, July 7, 2013.

²⁴⁰ International Commission on Missing Persons, “Guide for Civilian Victims of War: How to enjoy the right to protection as a civilian victim of war in the Republika Srpska.” Sarajevo, 2007, 15. <http://www.ic-mp.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/02/guidebook-wictim-of-war-rs.pdf>; and International Center for Transitional Justice, *Bosnia and Herzegovina Submission to the Universal Periodic Review Of the UN Human Rights Council Seventh Session: February 2010*. New York, September 8, 2009, 3.

²⁴¹ Sudbin Music, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 26, 2013.

²⁴² Ibid.

²⁴³ Ibid.

veterans).²⁴⁴ The UNDP Guidebook highlighted the dissatisfaction among camp survivors who, similar to victims of war-time rape, feel the level of physical and mental trauma they survived is not adequately recognized with the current disability standards.²⁴⁵ Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is also only ambiguously covered in the Federation's reparations/compensation legislation,²⁴⁶ while the RS's law does not recognize PTSD at all as a basis for disability. The RS has succeeded in minimizing individual's rights to compensation – both in how much civilian victims receive and what ailments may qualify.²⁴⁷

The local government denies there is discrimination against Bosniaks and Croats living in Prijedor today. Mr. Jez pointed to the budget as the main obstruction to fully realizing the right to compensation for returnees in the RS. He claimed that these hardships are shared equally by everyone – IDPs, returnees, and all other citizens get the same amount, large or small, as others with the same status or level of disability.²⁴⁸ What's more, the municipal government is unable to affect their annual allotment determined by Banja Luka. According to Prijedor's official, those who criticize the amount provided to individuals should first consider the financial and political reality in which the RS and BiH more broadly exist.²⁴⁹

Finally, the education system in Prijedor perpetuates institutional discrimination through *what* students learn and *how* they are treated in the classroom. It is well known that classrooms are segregated and curricula adapted according to mono-ethnic preferences throughout much of BiH. In Prijedor municipality, there are not *two schools under one roof* as in parts of central Bosnia or Herzegovina, but discrimination towards minorities can still be found. Mirsad Duratovic spoke in a roundtable discussion about the challenges his Bosniak children face each day in going to a Serb-majority school in a neighborhood of Prijedor.²⁵⁰ Bosniak and Croat children are often denied the opportunity for Islamic or Catholic religious instruction because,

²⁴⁴ Bosna i Hercegovini Ministarstvo za Ljudska Prava & Izbjejljice i Bosna i Hercegovini Ministarstvo Pravde, *Strategija Tranzicijske Pravde u Bosni I Hercegovini 2012-2016 (Radni Tekst)*, Sarajevo. 49.

²⁴⁵ United Nations Development Programme in BiH. *Transitional Justice Guidebook for Bosnia and Herzegovina: Executive Summary*. 41-42.

²⁴⁶ Ibid. 38.

²⁴⁷ Ibid. 39.

²⁴⁸ Dorde Jez, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 15, 2013.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ The Atlantic Initiative, "Security Law and Integration of Returnees in Prijedor" Roundtable Discussion, Prijedor, July 2013.

teachers claim, the parents ask schools not to teach their children any religious subjects at all.²⁵¹ However, instruction for Serb students on Christian Orthodoxy is readily available. Minorities are also obliged to studying classroom subjects that tend to be revisionist in nature, like history and language (Serbian, in the case of Prijedor). Scholar Edina Becirevic suggested that directives from Banja Luka guide Prijedor's discriminatory approach, but that state-sponsored discrimination may have a silver lining; the high level of centralization in the RS makes it so that if President Dodik, or any other political leader, signaled the need for change, it could occur quickly and thoroughly.²⁵² Therefore, the major problem with discrimination stems from the political leadership and their ambitions in maintaining the status quo as the majority ethnic group in the RS.

Through the most influential institutions in society, entity and municipal-level governments in the RS are working to disempower and disenfranchise non-Serbs in the post-war space. In essence, the policies of discrimination that manifest in the education, employment, and social service systems are playing out those originating from 1992. Despite a high rate of return, the politics and practices of the RS are such that they continue to attempt to erase non-Serbs from Prijedor through making life extremely difficult. Surprisingly, such erasure from the historic narrative, erasure from the public, political, and economic spheres, and erasure from the town itself has inspired non-Serbs to dig in their heels and launch new projects to challenge the status quo.

4.4 Discrimination and its Discontents: Pushing Back Against Systemic Intolerance

Actions, or more accurately, reactions by Prijedor activists to the municipality's systemic and systematic discrimination occur on two levels – collective and individual. Advocacy campaigns have flourished in the recent years, pushing for holistic change. Complimenting this work are civil society's efforts to obtain individual rights through mainly legal means.

Campaigns *Jer me se Tice* and *The White Armband Day* aim to end discrimination against non-Serbs in Prijedor and, more broadly, the political impasse in BiH that prevents many citizens from fully enjoying basic human rights. These campaigns illustrate why and how new ways of

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Edina Becirevic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 9, 2013.

facing the past emerge from local communities during the fourth, global phase of TJ. Co-founder Hodzic pointed to the poor implementation of the 2008 Anti-Discrimination Law, stating that, “As long as when I go to the city council I have the same rights as anyone else” he would be satisfied with progress made by the projects.²⁵³ As this law has yet to be properly implemented and no results are seen on the ground, Hodzic and others’ work is a *real life example* of Backer’s scenario “Hands Off the Wheel” in taking action when the government won’t or can’t. Using art, protests, gatherings, and other grassroots actions, Hodzic and Prijedor-based colleague Zoric use *Jer me se Tice* and *White Armband Day* to gain media attention that puts pressure on politicians. Their grassroots, bottom-up approach was a conscious choice; instead of hoping for change at the top, their initiatives bring together individuals from all ethnic communities with the shared goal of a BiH that adheres to and implements the Rule of Law.²⁵⁴

In order to respect the Rule of Law, however, Prijedor’s Serb population must first accept the past. “It seems to me that Serbs as a community have to face the war events and come to terms with them, firstly among themselves but also to participate in public dialogue with other ethnic communities whose members were civilian victims of war.”²⁵⁵ Zoric explained that, in the campaigns but also his personal life, he has lobbied members of his own community to become involved in the processes of *facing the past*. These elements contribute to strategic advocacy campaigns that achieve two different, but interconnected objectives. Firstly, they create a foundation on which Rule of Law can be effectively applied, mainly through encouraging all ethnicities to *deal with the past* and account for human rights violations committed during the war. Secondly, advocacy campaigns look towards the future of the Prijedor municipality. They promote a local government that does not discriminate on any basis, including ethnicity, as part of the official policy.

However, these advocacy efforts do not address the immediate, everyday difficulties concerning Prijedor’s non-Serbs. As such, local associations have also filled the gap purposefully created by the government through empowering individuals, families, and communities to receive basic public services denied them on the basis of their ethnicity. *Izvor* and *Prijedor ‘92* have helped hundreds of families with filing court cases against the RS government to receive

²⁵³ Emir Hodzic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 1, 2013.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ Goran Zoric, written (email) interview with Julia Dowling, submitted August 28, 2013.

the compensation that civil victims of war are entitled to.²⁵⁶ Edin Ramulic and Sudbin Music both refer to the process of filing for and winning reparations in terms of its effect on *status*. Reparations come to represent official recognition of victimhood by the RS government, and therefore individuals with “unresolved status” face the same psycho-social challenges associated with outright denial of the camps and crimes addressed earlier.

Despite making progress on helping civil victims receive due compensation, Sudbin Music points out that the legal process is subject to political manipulation. Because case reviews are opaque, he stated that many individuals’ claims had been purposely overlooked.²⁵⁷ Time is running out for survivors: “It’s normal for an Omarska detainee to die earlier. They are destroyed psychologically, physically. People are dying before they can get compensation.”²⁵⁸ This means that many who survived camps or equally horrific experiences in Prijedor may never see their basic rights realized. Institutional discrimination in Prijedor is succeeding in many ways, even with civil society fighting for victim and survivor rights. Despite local organizations’ and associations’ work, their capacity remains limited and the RS officials do all they can to slow or hinder efforts.

Clearly, there are a multitude of challenges facing Prijedor survivors and the organizations, associations, or campaigns working to help and empower them. The local government puts up roadblocks at every turn in hopes of discouraging returnees from settling in and demanding substantial changes that might equalize their status in the RS. Policies of denial and discrimination create the possibility that the mono-ethnic Prijedor envisaged by Serbs in 1992 becomes a reality, however distant it may be. As theorized about the fourth, global phase, civil society is both filling in the gaps for non-Serbs left by official TJ efforts and also pushing for changes in local government that would support *facing the past*. Yet, the local political climate explored here is only part of the problem. Internal disagreements and a lack of unity amongst civil society actors in Prijedor has much more potential to destroy their own efforts than anything done by Mayor Pavic or RS politicians.

²⁵⁶ In 2012, *Izvor* worked with 90 families to realize their rights based on the status of civil victim. *Prijedor '92* spoke of 418 individual cases filed against the RS government for reparations. Edin Ramulic, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 22, 2013, and Sudbin Music, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 26, 2013.

²⁵⁷ Sudbin Music, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 26, 2013.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

5. Our Own Worst Enemy: How Internal Politics of Prijedor's Civil Society Jeopardize Transitional Justice

While a number of reasonably successful local TJ projects have been implemented, it remains critical to understand if inter/intragroup dynamics alter the efficacy of civil society initiatives. The elitocide perpetrated through the concentration camps eliminated many of the community's leaders. "[Prijedor] is a perfect example of how fragmented the local community ~~there~~ is. You're lacking true leaders, even in politics."²⁵⁹ Without intellectuals to help guide the community and negotiate amongst themselves and local politicians, organizations and associations promoting efforts at *facing the past* have struggled.

The discriminatory actions of the local government are not the only factors contributing to an obstruction of TJ in Prijedor. The sense of "having one's back up against the wall" has created a defensive and insecure atmosphere between non-Serbs. Each organization, association, or group struggles to survive, resulting in fighting over resources seen as, or actually, limited. Within Prijedor municipality, there is a perception that *dealing with the past* is a zero-sum game - a limited space in which only a few actors can take part – because of contestation over financial resources but also victimhood. For these reasons, civil society infighting has become one of the greatest hindrances to TJ in today's Prijedor. According to Bakke et al., "Infighting undermines a movement's capacity for collective action and diverts energy away from the pursuit of public, political aims and towards the pursuit of private advantage."²⁶⁰ The UNDP in Sarajevo highlights the lack of strategic planning and inter-organizational coordination as a major weakness of BiH civil society.²⁶¹

This phenomenon is particularly prevalent amongst Prijedor's victim associations. At present there are a number of factions fighting for influence, resources, and victim status in Prijedor:

These [local actors] are divided into a few categories - you have the concentration camp survivors, the missing persons' families, the women's associations, associations for returnees. Everything is split, so when you have so many categories of organizations, it's

²⁵⁹ Dennis Gratz, interview with Julia Dowling, Sarajevo, BiH, August 26, 2013.

²⁶⁰ Bakke, Kristin, Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, and Lee Seymour. "A Plague of Initials: Fragmentation, Cohesion, and Infighting in Civil Wars." 265.

²⁶¹ United Nations Development Programme in BiH. *Transitional Justice Guidebook for Bosnia and Herzegovina: Executive Summary*. 58.

difficult to establish communication. Without communication, every organization is supporting their own side, a one-sided story... Every organization is fighting for resources.²⁶²

Prijedor's victim infighting stems from a mix of professional and personal conflicts. The UNDP does not allude to the personal nature of civil society infighting in the TJ Guidebook,²⁶³ but it is understood by internationals and locals alike as a major source of tension and weakness throughout BiH. Another new element adding to the local complexities is online activism or initiatives launched by diaspora. The results of the diaspora's participation in matters of *facing the past* are ambiguous, but it is clear that local actors living in Prijedor year round are disdainful of involvement from abroad. Some locals argue that diaspora activists misrepresent the situation on the ground and create unnecessary tensions between Bosniak and Serb individuals in the town without having to live with the ramifications of stirring up trouble.²⁶⁴

The theories on infighting within movements, as well as victim-relationships in protracted conflict, point to a number of complex root causes. However, the research for this particular case study produced one definite contributor to internal tensions within Prijedor's civil society: resources. As previously mentioned, resources do not simply mean financial or material goods, but also influence and, perhaps specific to conflict-prone societies, victimhood. Actors may try to achieve personal and professional goals simultaneously, compromising the goals of the movement or community because of their desire for private gain.²⁶⁵ This, then, creates an atmosphere in which coordination between various factions of civil society break down, competition for control over resources transforms into conflict for personal influence, and infighting increases.

Unsurprisingly, capacity is a challenge for Prijedor's grassroots actors; both in finances and staff, it is increasingly difficult to find the means to properly and effectively run an organization or association. In fact, throughout the country, international donors have reduced

²⁶² Grassroots activist, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July-August, 2013.

²⁶³ Instead, the UNDP's guidebook states "There is an insufficient level of cooperation among CSOs, which is sometimes due to political affiliation of some civil society organisations." However, it can be assumed that those who have worked in BiH for a significant amount of time have come to understand, at least on some level, the problems emerging from personality clashes and personal conflicts between heads of civil society. See: United Nations Development Programme in BiH. *Transitional Justice Guidebook for Bosnia and Herzegovina: Executive Summary*: 58.

²⁶⁴ Grassroots activist, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July-August, 2013.

²⁶⁵ Bakke, Kristin, Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, and Lee Seymour. "A Plague of Initials: Fragmentation, Cohesion, and Infighting in Civil Wars." 273.

their funding or fully withdrawn from the country, making civil society more vulnerable to minimizing staff and projects, or closing completely.²⁶⁶ The diminishing monetary support is exacerbated by the oversaturation of BiH with NGOs, many of which were established as a means of earning money in the immediate aftermath of the war. Today though, with the excess of non-profits but decreasing grants and prizes available, the competition to fund projects is fierce. One Goldsmith University focus-group participant pointed out that funding was usually provided to organizations that could write grants or hold a conference, even if they did not necessarily provide valuable services to communities – particularly those living outside the capital of Sarajevo.²⁶⁷ Lack of capacity leads to unsustainable organizations left to operate project-to-project.²⁶⁸ Many civil society organizations operating in Prijedor today have managed to continue their work despite decreases in funding, perhaps because organizations based in Bosnian Krajina had little international funding for TJ to begin with. However projects with promise, such as *Izvor's* oral history truth-telling archive, are contingent on renewed grants. If foreign foundations or governments are unable or unwilling to produce capital to continue the project, it will cease to exist.²⁶⁹

Funding, however, is arguably the least contentious resource in Prijedor. Power politics over influence and decision-making affect the local and national associations in BiH. Mr. Jez mentioned a problematic relationship between one local association and their national counterpart. He views the local group in a positive light, yet claimed that the national association was hindering reconciliation by pressuring Prijedor citizens to undertake solutions inappropriate to local problems.²⁷⁰ This begs the question, how can *local actors* work towards *local solutions* with the influence of the “mothership”²⁷¹ consistently pushing their own, national priorities?

Prijedor-based organizations also struggle amongst each other for control over decision-making in matters of *facing the past*. Bakke and colleagues point out that multiple organizations replicating the same work and goal within one movement (or in this case, one town) may

²⁶⁶ CIVICUS World Alliance for Citizen Participation. *Civil Society Organisations in Situations of Conflict*.

Dufranc, Mathilde and Adele Poskitt, 2011: 18.

²⁶⁷ “Prijedor – Focus Group – NGO Activists” *Bosnian Bones, Spanish Ghosts: ‘Transitional Justice’ and the Legal Shaping of Memory after Two Modern Conflicts*: 16.

²⁶⁸ United Nations Development Programme in BiH. *Transitional Justice Guidebook for Bosnia and Herzegovina: Executive Summary*. 58.

²⁶⁹ Grassroots activist, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July-August, 2013.

²⁷⁰ Dorde Jez, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, August 15, 2013.

²⁷¹ Dorde Jez referred to the national-level association in this way.

indicate internal divisions “over collective interests or the means to achieve them.”²⁷² Not only is the end result a matter of contention amongst non-state actors in Prijedor, but so is the *process* of *dealing with the past* itself. Influence over these developments means unofficial authority over much of the Prijedor community. As such, any amount of political, social, or cultural influence is highly sought after.

The least measurable and concrete resource fought over in Prijedor is perhaps the most controversial. When asked “what is the most important element for survivors in Prijedor?” one key local contact responded, “Being accepted as a victim.”²⁷³ The lack of recognition has caused a sort of *economy of victimization* to emerge, where victimhood is a commodity to be competed for, traded, shared, or sold. The exclusion of non-Serb victims in the dominant, official narrative of Prijedor has, in a way, increased the very value of being a victim. Like supply and demand, the less recognition, the more individuals and communities yearn for it. Studies on victimhood in Northern Ireland, where the phenomenon has been more fully explored, recognize that declaring victim status is a weighty political act.²⁷⁴ As a victim, one’s actions – even violent actions – are justified. Furthermore, victim as an identity is often loaded with heavy political and social consequences. Robert Meister writes, “Socrates and Jesus, whose teaching stressed (in different ways) that identifying oneself as the innocent victim of persecution corrupts the soul, even (or *especially*) if one *is* such a victim.”²⁷⁵ Victims associations advocate for individuals and communities, fight discrimination, and address deep-seeded trauma. This is critical in healing, reconciliation, and reconstruction of any post-conflict society. However, when victimhood becomes the *only* identity and is commodified and coopted by interested parties, then indeed it hinders the healing process it aims to help.

As described above, victimization is often politicized and used as one might use other non-material resources for personal or professional gain. When victimization is taken to an even

²⁷² Bakke, Kristin, Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, and Lee Seymour. "A Plague of Initials: Fragmentation, Cohesion, and Infighting in Civil Wars." 268.

²⁷³ Grassroots activist, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July-August, 2013.

²⁷⁴ McDowell, Sara. “Who are the victims? Debates, Concepts and Contestation in 'Post-Conflict' Northern Ireland.” *Conflict Archive on the Internet* (2007). <http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/victims/introduction/smed07whoarethevictims.pdf> [Accessed September 24, 2013]. For other resources on victims and victimhood, please see Patricia Lundy and Mark McGovern’s “Community-Based Approaches to Post-Conflict 'Truth' Telling: Strengths and Limitations,” Diane Enns’ “Identity and Victimhood: Questions for Conflict Management Practice,” or a number of other studies from the Conflict Archive on the Internet database, created by the University of Ulster.

²⁷⁵ Meister, Robert. 2002. "Human Rights and the Politics of Victimhood." 103.

more extreme socio-political level, a *hierarchy of victims* emerges; a scale of suffering against which individuals and groups are measured, and those who suffered the most “win” the title for most victimized within the hierarchy. A report on victims of terrorism from the Organization for the Security and Cooperation of Europe (OSCE) emphasizes that victim hierarchy can cause deep social divisions that are particularly counterproductive in post-conflict regions.²⁷⁶ *Who is the bigger victim* is the key question, whether it is posed to “the other” or one’s own group. In Prijedor, there is a hierarchy of victimization affecting both intergroup and intragroup relations. The competition between who suffered most between different ethno-national identity groups is relevant in Prijedor, as it is throughout the country. However, much more salient but less explored is the competitive victimhood *within* the non-Serb community of Prijedor. It would be naïve not to recognize that victim hierarchy affects the efforts of civil society. In particular, competitive victimhood between the local leaders in TJ causes entire organizations or associations to quarrel, gossip and, in extreme cases, cease communications and coordination. The Omarska monument example will demonstrate acutely how detrimental this dynamic is to *facing the past*.

This phenomenon is not confined to Prijedor. The CIVICUS World Alliance for Participation highlighted this same issue in their Western Balkans section on civil society in conflict situations. Some of the main hindrances to a well-working civil society in the Balkans includes, “Lack of coordination within civil society due to a lack of trust, [which] has several pervasive effects: 1) no sharing of information and no mutual learning, particularly between new and old CSOs, and 2) more competition for legitimacy and resources than collaboration.”²⁷⁷ As stated previously, the perception that resources – particularly that of victimhood – are zero-sum leads to infighting.

There are also deeper factors at play that lead individuals and groups to view the victim hierarchy as an objective, indisputable social status. Those living with unhealed war-time traumas have difficulty reconciling with the “other.” As Prijedor’s policy of denial suppresses the individuals’ need for recognition as a victim, perhaps anger and frustration is projected onto others in close contact, mainly from their own group. This misdirection of energy is further

²⁷⁶ Organization for the Security and Cooperation of Europe. *High-level Meeting Victims of Terrorism: Background Paper*. Vienna: Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2007.

²⁷⁷ CIVICUS World Alliance for Citizen Participation. *Civil Society Organisations in Situations of Conflict*. 41.

exacerbated by the high levels of trauma experienced by all survivors. War-time experiences have left an indelible mark on individuals and groups and, because efforts to work through trauma have been inadequate throughout BiH, individuals are unable to reconcile the past with themselves and others. The psychological processes necessary for reconciliation have not yet taken hold in Prijedor despite many efforts producing tangible yet shallow outputs that give the appearance of “reconciliation.”²⁷⁸ Unaddressed trauma and untreated psychological wounds have increased the frequency that individuals – including those leading grassroots efforts at *facing the past* – lash out at one another because they have not yet found peace within themselves.

Untreated trauma among civil society leaders may not be directly responsible for infighting in Prijedor. A resource conflict is probably the primary catalyst for intragroup tensions. That said, the lack of personal reconciliation and healing does exacerbate infighting. Even worse though, unhealed traumas prevent civil society and its constituents from being open or fully committing to the process of interpersonal conflict resolution. As the following case demonstrates, the refusal to work through disagreements or make necessary compromises has led to diminishing efficacy of local TJ initiatives.

The Omarska monument construction project is perhaps the most notable example of unproductive infighting in Prijedor. ArcelorMittal and Mayor Pavic did not make memorializing the former concentration camp easy; however conflict between two factions of victims remains the main cause of the failed process. According to interviews, the divide emerged because of a disagreement over the substance of the monument as well how a design might materialize. One faction withdrew from the negotiations with Mittal and NGO facilitator *Soul of Europe* because it was “too opaque.” The other party to the conflict agrees that the process lacked transparency, but claims that it was the only way in which to operate at that time.

Arguments over the size of the memorial too, became a point of contention. In particular, one faction asserted that the preservation of the White House would be a proper memorial for the time being, while another side demanded the immediate preservation of the Hanger as well. The concentration camp victims associations came to an impasse which has since been unresolvable. According to an individual privy to memorial negotiations, “It was the ‘golden time’ for Omarska to be resolved, for a monument to be built. But, [between] the civil society

²⁷⁸ Psychologist, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July-August, 2013.

representatives there were different approaches to the memorial. They divided the victims between their different visions - they are much guiltier for [its failure] than political enemies like Pavic.”²⁷⁹ In February 2006, ArcelorMittal froze the project indefinitely, mainly because of civil society’s inability to internally compromise and move forward in a unified decision over monument design and construction. Local politicians knew about the personal and professional rifts and still speak about them today. In this way, Mayor Pavic and the local government have enjoyed the benefits of a “divide and conquer” strategy that civil society has inflicted upon itself. As long as the perpetrators continue to deny crimes committed and traumas caused, Prijedor’s civil society will construct harmful hierarchies, compete over victimhood status, and attack itself in lieu of working through psychological wounds. The lack of a cohesive, strategic approach to TJ in Prijedor plays to the advantage of the municipal government – who need only to sit back and wait for grassroots actors to hinder their own progress.

²⁷⁹ Grassroots activist, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July-August, 2013.

Conclusion

The war in BiH was particularly brutal in Prijedor, producing images that echoed the Nazi-run camps of World War II. The total physical destruction of the city's non-Serb communities however, did not inhibit a significant portion of survivors from returning at the turn of the 21st century. In efforts to rebuild, rehabilitate, and reconcile, a vibrant civil society emerged and continues to mature to address these challenging tasks. At the same time, Prijedor's Mayor Marko Pavic and other local politicians impose a strategic combination of denying past atrocities and discriminating against those who suffered most. Prijedor government's overall policy of denial and discrimination culminates into a lack of recognition for non-Serb victims, a concept that is wholly detrimental to the local society. Without recognition of a factually accurate past, no foundation for reconciliation can be built,²⁸⁰ justice is ill served, and rights based on equality before the law are nonexistent.²⁸¹ Though the camps have closed and some communities have been rebuilt, municipal and entity-level political goals remain aimed at sustaining a Serb-majority territory. All evidence points to manipulation of truth and memory as a means of achieving this objective which, to the disadvantage of activists in Prijedor, translates into obstructing grassroots efforts determined to *deal with the past*.

Coinciding with a difficult local context, broader, officially sanctioned efforts on *facing past* in BiH have hit a snag. What's more, despite significant post-war international aid, projects established and implemented by outsiders have remained insufficient to handle the crimes seen in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Similarly, regional and national actors have undertaken a number of state, entity, and community-level TJ projects, but most have stalled or fallen short of high expectations.

As Backer's theoretical scenarios suggest, civil society in Prijedor has moved to the forefront of TJ efforts because, in part, of these official processes' shortcomings. Prijedor's particularly caustic atmosphere provides the second, equally important catalyst for civil society assuming a preeminent role in *facing the past*. This combination of external and internal factors has resulted in a budding renaissance of locally-owned TJ initiatives in Prijedor. Governmental

²⁸⁰ In an interview, Satko Mujagic stated, "You can't build reconciliation without recognition." Satko Mujagic, interview with Julia Dowling, Kozarac (Prijedor), BiH, July 23, 2013.

²⁸¹ Sudbin Music, interview with Julia Dowling, Prijedor, BiH, July 26, 2013.

efforts are essential, but as is seen in other fourth phase TJ examples throughout the world, civil society can offer effective, alternative sources of justice that help traumatized societies to process historical violence and oppression. For these reasons, Prijedor's flourishing of civil society is hopeful – it recognizes the need for *facing the past*, provides a local perspective appropriate to the unique context, and refuses to wait for official action.

However, the Prijedor case study also demonstrates weak elements of the fourth phase. In particular, it expounds on the consequences of civil society's rapid transformation into a major player in highly contentious but deeply needed TJ efforts. According to Robert Belloni, "The mushrooming of local NGOs does not lead per se to the establishment of a healthy civil society."²⁸² Due to the municipal government's aforementioned policies regarding non-Serb victimhood there is a perception that, however seemingly irrational, victim status is a finite resource. Consequent competitive victimhood and victim hierarchies have led to civil society's unwillingness to cooperate on critical *facing the past* projects in Prijedor. The Omarska monument building process is one such example, as tensions rooted in competitive victimhood snowballed into a conflict over decision-making, which ultimately halted the entire project.

In conclusion, the situation in Prijedor in 2013 is an example of modest gains but also unfulfilled potential. Each project undertaken by local actors in the community adds value to the overall TJ efforts, but the impact would be tenfold should civil society work together. Until civil society's various factions make the effort to unify or, at the very least, coordinate their initiatives, Prijedor will make only marginal progress in *dealing with its past*. The local government's policy of denial and discrimination originates from a central authority with clear goals and powerful instruments. Successful localized, grassroots endeavors on *facing the past* require the deconstruction of intragroup victim hierarchies through, in part, processing individual and community traumas. Furthermore, there must be a dismantling of victimhood as the primary identity of civil society activists, and a transformational shift towards being a *survivor*. Empowering individuals, particularly grassroots leaders, as survivors will create a foundation on which constructive collaboration can begin. Only a civil society that is unified in its projects, strategies, and goals can effectively demand *facing the past* in order to create a meaningful future for Prijedor.

²⁸² Belloni, Roberto. "Civil Society And Peacebuilding In Bosnia And Herzegovina." *Journal of Peace Research* 38.2 (2001): 177-178.

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Appendix A. Interview Subject Profiles

Expert Interviews

Name: Dr. Dennis Gratz

Profession: Scholar/Professor (University of Sarajevo), Lawyer, President of *Nasa Stranka* (“Our Party”) Political Party

Expertise: Legal Dimensions of Genocide, War Crimes, Prijedor’s “Elitocide”

Date and Location of Interview: August 26, 2013, Sarajevo, BiH

Name: Dr. Edina Becirevic

Profession: Scholar/Professor (University of Sarajevo), President of the Atlantic Initiative

Expertise: Genocide and Crimes against Humanity, Peace and Security, Returnee Issues

Date and Location of Interview: August 9, 2013, Prijedor, BiH

Name: Dr. Iavor Rangelov, Transitional Justice Scholar, London School of Economics

Profession: Global Security Research Fellow, Civil Society and Human Security Research Unit, London School of Economics

Expertise: Transitional Justice and International Justice, Human Security, Globalization & Civil Society

Date and Location of Interview: April 29, 2013, Sarajevo, BiH

Name: Eduardo Gonzalez-Cueva

Profession: Director of Truth and Memory, International Center for Transitional Justice

Expertise: Truth and Memory in Transitional Justice, Truth Commissions, South America, Memorialization

Date and Location of Interview: August 1, 2013, online phone (Skype) interview

Name: Haris Subasic

Profession: Emerging Scholar and PhD Candidate (originating from Prijedor)

Expertise: Prijedor, Cultures of Denial, Memorialization and Monument Building

Date and Location of Interview: July 2, 2013, Prijedor, BiH

Local Activists

Name: Adis Hukanovic

Profession: Oral History Staff and Psychologist, Uzdruzenja Prijedorcanki ‘Izvor’/Association of Women Citizens of Prijedor ‘Izvor’

Location Born: Vrhpolje, Sanski Most, BiH

Current Residence: Sanski Most, BiH

1992-1995 Experiences: Adis was ethnically cleansed from Sanski Most during which he was brought by trucks to Prijedor and then to Gracanica. After a few weeks in Gracanica, he moved to a refugee camp in Zagreb. At the end of 1993, he moved to Germany. In December 1997, Adis returned to Sanski Most.

Date and Location of Interview: July 5, 2013, Prijedor, BiH

Name: Azra Karabasic
Profession: Oral History Staff and Psychologist, Uzdrzenja Prijedorcanki 'Izvor'/Association of Women Citizens of Prijedor 'Izvor'
Location Born: Prijedor, BiH
Current Residence: Kozarac, Prijedor, BiH
1992-1995 Experiences: Azra left for Zagreb in April 1992 with her mother. She resided in Austria throughout the war. She returned to BiH in 1996, to Sanski Most, because returning to Prijedor was not initially safe. She eventually returned to Kozarac in 2005.
Date and Location of Interview: July 3, 2013, Prijedor, BiH

Name: Dr. Azra Alic Pasalic
Profession: Pediatrician and General Practitioner, SDP Party Member and Former President, Prijedor Municipal Assembly
Location Born: Prijedor, BiH
Current Residence: Prijedor, BiH
1992-1995 Experiences: Azra moved to central Bosnia in a convoy in 1992. She then moved to Zagreb where she worked with other women to provide services to refugees (psychological and medical help, including for women who were raped in Omarska). In 1993, Azra moved to Germany and returned to BiH in 1996. She initially moved to Sanski Most, but returned to Prijedor in 1999.
Date and Location of Interview: August 20, 2013, Prijedor, BiH

Name: Edin Ramulic,
Profession: President, Uzdrzenja Prijedorcanki 'Izvor'/Association of Women Citizens of Prijedor 'Izvor'
Location Born: Rakovcani, Prijedor, BiH
Current Residence: Sanski Most and Prijedor, BiH
1992-1995 Experiences: Edin was taken from family home in Rakovcani and spent three nights in Trnopolje in spring 1992. He was taken on a convoy to Travnik, and joined the Army of BiH in Travnik. He was heavily wounded several times during the war. In 1996, Edin began volunteering with Izvor, which was based in Sanski Most at that time.
Date and Location of Interview: August 22, 2013, Prijedor, BiH

Name: Emir Hodzic
Profession: Activist and co-Founder for *Stop Genocide Denial*, *White Armband Day Campaign*, and *Jer me se Tice*/Because I care
Location Born: Prijedor, BiH
Current Residence: Prijedor, BiH
1992-1995 Experiences: Emir was living in Prijedor in 1992, and in 1993 left as a refugee to New Zealand
Date and Location of Interview: August 1, 2013, Prijedor, BiH

Name: Emsuda Mujagic
Profession: Director and President, *Uzdrzenja Zena BiH Inicijative "Srcem do Mira"*/Association of Bosnian Women's Initiative "Heart Through Peace"
Location Born: Kozarac, Prijedor, BiH

Current Residence: Kozarac, Prijedor, BiH

1992-1995 Experiences: Emsuda was deported on a convoy to Travnik in 1992. After two days in Travnik, she left for refugee camp in Zagreb. Lived in Croatia until 1996, during which she helped organize “Zene B-H” (Women B-H) for women from the Bosnian Krajina in the refugee camp. She returned to BiH in 1996.

Date and Location of Interview: July 7, 2013, Kozarac, Prijedor, BiH

Name: Goran Zoric

Profession: Activist and co-Founder, *Jer me se Tice*/Because I care

Location Born: Prijedor, BiH

Current Residence: Prijedor, BiH

1992-1995 Experiences: Goran remained in Prijedor for the duration of the war.

Date and Location of Interview: Written communication submitted August 28, 2013

Name: Mevludin Rahmanovic

Profession: Co-Director, *Centar za Izgradnju Mira*/Center for Peacebuilding

Location Born: Kotor Varos, BiH, but moved to Rizvanovic, Prijedor at the age of three

Current Residence: Sanski Most, BiH

1992-1995 Experiences: Mevludin and his family were living in one of the Left Bank communities in Prijedor when the war broke out. He was eleven when he, his siblings, and his mother spent one night in Trnopolje before being transported to Travnik. They remained in Central Bosnia for the rest of the war, moving to a number of towns and cities in the territory held by the Army of BiH. In 2001, he and his family returned to Prijedor municipality. He eventually relocated to Sanski Most to work full time with the Center for Peacebuilding.

Name: Mirsad Duratovic

Profession: President, *Uzdruzenja Logorasa “Prijedor ‘92”*/Association of Concentration Camp Detainees “Prijedor ‘92”

Location Born: Biscani, Prijedor, BiH

Current Residence: Biscani, Prijedor, BiH

1992-1995 Experiences: On July 20, 1992, Serb forces entered Biscani and killed Mirsad’s younger brother (aged 15 years), father, and ten other members of his family. After being used as a human shield by the RS army, he was brought to Omarska Camp. After that, he was moved to Manjaca Camp and Trnopolje Camp. He was eventually released to Travnik and from there he went to Croatia and eventually to Germany. In 1999, he returned to Sanski Most, BiH, and returned to Prijedor in 2002.

Date and Location of Interview: August 9, 2013, Prijedor, BiH

Name: Satko Mujagic

Profession: Lawyer for Dutch Immigration Services, Activist/Founder, *Guardians of Omarska* Advocacy group

Location Born: Kozarac, Prijedor, BiH

Current Residence: The Netherlands

1992-1995 Experiences: In 1991, Satko was in the Yugoslav National Army and fought in the war with Croatia. In 1992 he had returned to Kozarac. On May 24, 1992, Kozarac was attacked by Serb forces, and Satko and his family were brought to Prijedor city. On May 30, 1992, Satko

was brought to Omarska Camp for three months. On August 21, 1992, he was brought to Manjaca Camp until December 6, 1992. After this, he was sent as a refugee to Croatia, and eventually made his way to the Netherlands.

Date and Location of Interview: July 23, 2013, Kozarac, Prijedor, BiH

Name: Sudbin Music

Profession: Secretary, *Uzdruzenja Logorasa "Prijedor '92"*/Association of Concentration Camp Detainees "*Prijedor '92*"

Location Born: Carakovo, Prijedor, BiH

Current Residence: Carakovo, Prijedor, BiH

1992-1995 Experiences: On July 23, 1992, Sudbin survived the ethnic cleansing of his village Carakovo in Prijedor. He spent a number of weeks in Trnopolje with his younger brother and mother. Eventually he was transferred to Travnik, from where he left for Czechoslovakia with assistance from the Red Cross. After two years, he moved to Germany, and returned to BiH in 1998.

Date and Location of Interview: July 26, 2013, Prijedor, BiH

Others

Name: Dorde Jez

Profession: Prijedor's Municipal Government's Official Contact Point for Local Communities

Location Born: Bosanska Krupa, BiH

Current Residence: Prijedor, BiH

1992-1995 Experiences: Dorde joined the Army of RS in 1992 when he was living in Bosanska Krupa. He was the commander of a battalion. In 1995 he was heavily wounded, and he moved to Prijedor after the war.

Name: Elmina Kulasic

Profession: Sarajevo-based Human Rights Advocate

Location Born: Kozarac, Prijedor, BiH

Current Residence: Sarajevo, BiH

1992-1995 Experiences: Elmina and her family were forced to leave their home in Kozarac when the town was captured by the Serb army on May 24, 1992. She, her mother, and two of her sisters were interned in Trnopolje for seven weeks, while her father and eldest sister were transferred out of the camp at an earlier point. Her family reunited in Croatia as refugees, after which they spent three and a half years in Germany. When given the opportunity, her family relocated from Germany to Chicago, USA.

