

agency and shaped elopement and its meaning. Consequently, some important generational differences are missing from the discussion.

The affinal kinship organization provides the primary context of Doubt's examination of elopement. The treatment of this type of kinship organization, however, is somewhat inconsistent in the book. Doubt starts out by arguing that preference for affinal kin is specific to Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims). Later on, he treats affinal kinship organization as a shared cultural heritage in Bosnia-Herzegovina, without providing sufficient empirical evidence for this claim.

Affinal kinship organization that follows a horizontal rather than vertical line, argues the author, is a "living remnant of cultural heritage in Bosnia-Herzegovina [that] harkens back to Middle Ages" (85). According to him, affinal relations serve to "establish the horizontal link where human beings become related to outside world" (127), thus forming a community based on common humanity which is, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, "sustained in a trans-ethnic way" (135). Considering that the majority of marriages in Bosnia-Herzegovina are mono-ethnic, the "trans-ethnic way" does not mean here that affinal kin relations are established between ethnic groups in Bosnia-Herzegovina. That much is apparent from a survey conducted in 2013, the results of which Doubt presents. Mono-ethnic marriages made up 88% of the total sample and over 90% of elopement marriages in the sample. This, of course, comes as no surprise twenty years after the end of bloody civil war. Even during socialist times of former Yugoslavia, however, when official ideology favored interethnic marriages (see Perišić, 2012), their number was around a modest 20%. In rural areas, where the taboo on interethnic marriage prevailed despite the official ideology (see Bringa, 1995), the percentage of inter-ethnic marriages was much lower.

This means that "common humanity" within the affinal kinship organization and sense of community in rural Bosnia-Herzegovina remained confined within separate ethnic groups. Since national culture is not a thing or a substance that exists before political processes, the mere presence of shared customs in complex ethnic situations does not necessarily produce homogenization into one nation—Bosnia-Herzegovina being only one among many other examples. This leads me to some theoretical tension in Doubt's treatment of the main subjects of his study. While he treats elopement in processual manner, focusing on women's individual agency, his approach to the nation, national culture and national identity falls back on old, "objectivist" and even older, Romantic conceptions, like in the statement that "Bosnia's national social character [. . .] is found in their folklore" (109). Still, the book represents fine scholarship, given its interdisciplinary approach and complex methodology. It is a valuable contribution to gender, kinship, and folklore studies. When it comes to the author's ultimate goal—the preservation of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a multiethnic and mono-national society, the book's contribution, unfortunately, is far more modest.

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Citizens of an Empty Nation: Youth and State-Making in Postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina. By Azra Hromadžić. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015. vi, 239 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. \$59.95, hard bound.

In post-conflict zones, one frequently hears that genuine reconciliation will only be possible with time, when a new generation that did not directly experience war comes of age. Refusing such platitudes, Azra Hromadžić conducted fieldwork with

Bosnian youth—Croats, Serbs, and Bosniaks—to understand postwar experience and prospects for Bosnia-Herzegovina's future. Leaving behind Mostar's much discussed Ottoman bridge, rebuilt to symbolically unite this divided city, she organizes *Empty Nation* around struggles over postwar reintegration of the Mostar Gymnasium (while also drawing on examples from elsewhere in Bosnia-Herzegovina). She also leaves behind polarized and oft-repeated myths of either ancient ethnic hatreds that made war inevitable or romanticized projections of an essentially tolerant Bosnian spirit that make postwar reconciliation inevitable. Instead Hromadžić offers up a fine-grained description of new institutional arrangements and how Bosnian-Herzegovinian youth engage them. Her portrait makes clear that time alone will not resolve the bitter legacies of the 1992–1995 war.

In part one Hromadžić describes and analyzes struggles over the reintegration of the Mostar Gymnasium. Located on what was the frontline of the armed conflict, the school finds itself under Croat administration—serving almost exclusively Croatian students—by the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords. The school thus became a major focus of the Organization of Security and Co-operation in Europe's efforts to reintegrate the Bosnian-Herzegovinian educational system, and is a microcosm for broader international efforts to impose postwar unification. Croatian resistance largely stymied these educational efforts, producing a school that was neither united nor fully segregated. While *Empty Nation* catalogues the machinations of Croatian political elites—who framed resistance to school unification as a defense of their linguistic and cultural particularism—it does not vilify the Croatian position, explaining why Croats felt their culture would be assimilated to the more populous Bosniak one within unified institutions. Ironically, even as “internationals” pressed for unification, they too reinforced and further institutionalized ethnonationalist divisions. They also understood the conflict to be the result of ethnic difference—viewing Bosnia's three peoples as mutually exclusive. The broader solutions to the conflict they promoted, and which were reproduced in miniature within the Mostar Gymnasium, included spatial governmentality, that is, a meticulous and rigid cartography that accepted the link between territory and ethnic difference; consociational power sharing arrangements, which were organized around ethnically defined populations; and the reinforcement of political elites as representative of ethnic communities. Even those spaces of “mixing” that did develop, despite separate but parallel instruction within the building, such as illicit smoking sessions in common bathrooms, were unmapable, even unrecognizable within dominant frameworks. What is more, without any other shared urban spaces, these forms of sociality remained tenuous and fleeting.

The second part of the book looks at the wider context for school integration: the disintegrating Bosnian nation. Hromadžić traces the multivalent uses of *narod*, most frequently translated, in the ethnonationalist sense, as ‘nation’ in English, but which also means ‘people.’ Institutionally, and in everyday practice, Bosnian-Herzegovinian life has been profoundly reorganized around the former hegemonic sense of *narod*. Most pessimistically for any future common life, Hromadžić shows how Serbian and Croatian youth in Bosnia-Herzegovina have come to see their homelands, and personal futures, in the neighboring states of Serbia and Croatia, with large swaths of Bosnia-Herzegovina appearing as foreign territory. Despite moving examples of curiosity about their neighbors of different religions, most youth are now strikingly ignorant about the lives, beliefs, and customs of those neighbors. Nonetheless, a trans-ethnic sense of *narod*, a space of interconnectedness, morality, common economic suffering, living proximity, refusal of the Serb-Croat-Bosnian ethnonational grid, and contrast with corrupt nationalist economic and political elite, still lingers, powerfully informing the critical sensibilities of many ordinary citizens. When all is said and done, however, “the Bosnian nation ends up holding too little—it exists primarily to

harbor ethnically conceived and managed populations, while leaving the interconnected histories, economic solidarities, and hybrid lives socially marginalized and politically uncultivated" (185).

This rich ethnography's moving epilogue addresses the popular uprisings that swept through Bosnia in February 2014, explicitly rejecting the ethnonationalist political elite. With slogans like "We are Hungry in Three Languages," protesters evoked a transethnic *narod*. Because formal institutions were utterly incapable of addressing their needs, and could only see them as members of ethnic collectivities, Hromadžić notes that protesters had no choice but to take the streets. In this, Bosnia-Herzegovina, so often treated as exceptional, may be like much of the world today.

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Cultures of Democracy in Serbia and Bulgaria: How Ideas Shape Publics. By James Dawson. Farnham: Ashgate, 2014. xii, 212 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Tables. \$119.95, hard bound.

James Dawson has identified a gap in the literature on postcommunist southeastern Europe: even though Bulgaria and Serbia are neighboring countries, they are rarely compared. It is this lacuna that he intends to fill, and his study offers one methodological argument and one empirical claim: that quantitative comparisons of democracies (such as by Freedom House) which consistently rank Bulgaria's democratization as above Serbia's are misleading. Hence what is necessary are qualitative explorations of democratic culture that seek to determine whether social practices actually contribute to the creation of pluralistic public spheres and liberal democratic citizenship. It is precisely this line of research that the author pursues, and his main empirical claim is that "the Serbian public sphere [is] clearly more contested, pluralist and (at the margins) more liberal relative to Bulgaria" (i).

The book is divided in five chapters, a conclusion and a postscript. Chapter one contains Dawson's critique of Freedom House's approach, and a discussion of the set of normative criteria—derived from the work of political theorists such as Arendt, Habermas, Mouffe and Wedeen—which should inform qualitative studies of contemporary democracies. Chapter two provides an outline of "the comparative ethnology of public spheres," the method Dawson uses in order to go beyond "formalistic measurements" (33). There is also a brief description of his data-gathering strategies, and preliminary information about the locales where he carried out his field work, including Niš (Serbia) and Plovdiv (Bulgaria). In chapter three the author narrates the major political developments in the two countries from the 1970s to the late 2000s and alleges that what emerged in Serbia is vibrant pluralism grounded in "distinct philosophical platforms" whereas what materialized in Bulgaria is a vacuous "mathematical pluralism" (65). Chapters four and five purport to investigate, respectively, "public sphere pluralism in Niš" (97), and the "the absence of public sphere pluralism in Plovdiv" (133). In the conclusion, Dawson explains Serbia's superior liberal-democratic performance with reference to the two countries' communist past: while Tito's regime facilitated the rise of liberal sub-cultures in former Yugoslavia, Zhivkov's repressive dictatorship stifled such developments in Bulgaria. In the postscript, he examines developments that occurred after he completed his fieldwork in 2011.

Dawson's project is promising, but it is marred by two major problems. The first is the lack of a comprehensive comparative framework. Arguably, the theorists he engages with in chapter one may help us determine whether the behavior of citizens