

Silences signal the knowledge of crimes, rather than its lack, but this process “belongs to a very private domain” (111). It could not be spoken easily, let alone discussed publicly. Hence, she concludes, NGO strategies that aim at public discussion of the past are actually unable to reach or resonate with the audience.

The following chapter discusses different strategies of denial and distancing, whether regarding the crimes or the perpetrators. She finds that “there were implicit acknowledgments of the atrocity itself, together with different degrees of distancing” (135). The examples provided include all the classical cases of denial, from transfer of guilt to insecurity about events and confusion. Two main narratives used to make sense of events and to justify persistent denial, Serbian victimhood and antiwestern sentiment, are discussed in the last two chapters. The author provides an excellent interpretation of the use of conspiracy theories as subversion of and resistance to the dominant discourse of the ICTY, mainly enforced through the work of human rights NGOs in Serbia.

Throughout the book, Obradović-Wochnic highlights the failures of transitional justice initiatives in Serbia, contrasting them to the experiences and expectations of the general public. In doing so, she purposely avoids distinguishing between “our” and “their” victims and crimes, which sometimes leads to prima facie contradictions. For example, she is unable to decide whether the media in Serbia did or did not show atrocities during the war, since both claims were supported by respondents. The possibility that both are true, since crimes against Serbs were presented in detail while other crimes were silenced, is left unmentioned. Careful reading of other, sometimes overlong excerpts from interviews supports this conclusion, since only once does a detailed depiction of a crime, followed by emotional and moral disgust, not refer to Serbian victims. Although additional rigor in argumentation might be welcomed, the book still offers an important insight into the narratives about the past shared by those “who observed it, or experienced it in subtle and complicated ways” (223). In the attempt to look beyond the dominance of ethnic nationalism in Serbia, it balances silences with denials, merging them into convincing, albeit exculpatory, narratives about the past.

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Peacebuilding in Practice: Local Experience in Two Bosnian Towns. By Adam Moore. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013. xii, 225 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Maps. \$45.95, hard bound.

Mostar and Brčko, the two Bosnian towns that are the subject of this study, are generally seen as the loci of peacebuilding projects that produced quite different outcomes. Each was the focus of intense conflict and ethnic cleansing during the 1992–95 war, and both were de facto partitioned by the end of it. Both towns were also the subject of intense international involvement aimed not only at rebuilding them physically but also uniting them socially and politically. Yet the intense international involvement in Mostar is generally seen as a failure, the city remaining largely divided physically, socially, and politically between Croats and Bosniaks. Brčko, on the other hand, is often seen as an example of a more successful intervention. In this book, Adam Moore provides a careful analysis of the differences in peacebuilding projects and their outcome in the two towns.

Methodologically, *Peacebuilding in Practice* is an exemplary study of postwar Bosnia. Moore engaged in eighteen months of fieldwork between 2004 and 2012, gain-

ing competence in Bosnian and combining three methodological approaches: formal interviews (more than 120), archival research, and ethnography. The interviews were with local political and administrative personnel in the two towns who had been active during the war or afterward and with international officials working in the towns and in Sarajevo. Thus, the study is based on rich data compiled by a researcher very well grounded in the localities studied. Moore also addresses important theoretical issues concerning state building, notably the distinction between “consociationalists,” who favor ethnofederal solutions, and “centripetalists,” who argue for creating ethnically heterogeneous political structures that favor interaction between members, and elites, of different communities. Mostar is analyzed as a consociational project, as, indeed, is postwar Bosnia as a whole, under the Dayton Agreement; Brčko is a centripetalist project.

Moore makes four arguments to explain Brčko’s peacebuilding success as compared to Mostar’s. First, the internationals built a political framework in Brčko that integrated actors of the three major communities, while Mostar was given ethno-territorial political divisions. The second reason is more conjunctural: during and immediately after the war, the three main nationalist parties lost local support in Brčko, while Mostar “became a bastion of the Croat nationalist party HDZ and its mafia allies” (5), which consolidated their power. Third, the internationals delayed elections in Brčko until after workable institutions had been formed, while the early elections in Mostar (and, indeed, in the rest of Bosnia and Herzegovina, except for Brčko) cemented the ruling nationalist parties’ power and ability to control new institutions. Finally, almost by political accident, the separation of the international administration of the Brčko district from that of the rest of the country meant that peacebuilding in Brčko was centralized in one agency, while the internationals working in Mostar reported to different international and national organizations, all of which had tensions between the local Mostar offices and those higher up, in Sarajevo and in the capitals of the major powers, and the UN.

Brčko’s peacebuilding success is shaky, however, and the place would not likely be seen as a model of stability in any context other than postwar Bosnia, because its relative communal harmony is based on the active presence of the internationals. Moore is explicit about this: Brčko developed reasonably well because the internationals were able to establish patron-client (themselves and the Bosnians) relationships there. One of his policy recommendations is that “locally situated international officials” need great political independence from other international officials and institutions (166). But adopting such a policy would establish neocolonial rule by foreigners not responsible to anybody but, presumably, themselves. I am reminded of the conclusion of Matthew Parrish’s 2010 book on Brčko, *A Free City in the Balkans: Reconstructing a Divided Society in Bosnia*, which regretted the internationals’ failure to run the city in the ways that Danzig and Trieste were once administered. These are hardly inspiring precedents, and “peacebuilding” that requires the constant paternal presence of internationals to tell the locals how to interact with each other is also not very promising.

The fact that Moore is not able to resolve the problems of creating peaceable kingdoms out of divided cities is not surprising. What he does provide, though, is extremely valuable: a careful, empirically grounded analysis of the differing interventions in these two Bosnian towns.

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