

## INTRODUCTION

Bećir: Since times immemorial. They say: until noon – Ilija, after noon – Alija.  
Zahida: That is what we used to say here. Ilija until noon, Alija in the afternoon. The fair! The Serb fair was before noon, and the Muslim one after noon.  
Bećir: That was no doubt so that people could get together.  
Zahida: And that's why, in history and everywhere else, it has remained: Alija and Ilija.

—Interlocutors from the Field

This book unfolds from what may seem a precise central point: noon on the second day in the month of August. Exactly then, the *silhouette* of which I write absorbs most of its layers to become vivid against the Bosnian landscapes. It is the day of Elijah, the culmination of the annual cycle, marked by festivities throughout the country. When the sun peaks above the horizon, it entangles and divides the two equal parts of the day. Of this meeting, a widely known Bosnian proverb tells:

*Do podne Ilija, od podne Alija.*<sup>1</sup>  
Until noon – *Ilija*, after noon – *Alija*.

But, who are Ilija and Alija? Why do they share and divide this day? Why does their encounter, 'in history and everywhere else', define the Bosnian landscapes? What can be said of their midday proximity, well into the twenty-first century, two decades after the tectonic shifts set in motion by the 1992–1995 war in Bosnia? These vexed questions have stipulated the spatial, temporal and affective directions of this book. They pertain to the complex interformation of home, calendar, religion, landscape and community, made even more intricate by the prolonged moment of postwar uncertainty.

The following pages are about the resonance of Ilija and Alija, as respectively the Christian and Muslim faces of Elijah, in a deeply, politically polarized Bosnian landscape, the Field of Gacko (*Gatačko Polje*). Elijah of the two names was once the most significant sign of identity for this wide karst plain in the southeastern Bosnian highlands. As a harvest festival, Elijah's Day belongs to the annual cycle of the traditional calendar.<sup>2</sup> It was the culmination of social interaction and subsistence economy – an encounter par excellence

– a joyful mass get-together, desired and awaited all year. As a gravitational force for the entire landscape, it directed and represented the structure of social relationships. This extraordinary event is the focal point for my discussion of Gacko, because it was a framing device for life before and after the actual day. The in-between of my interlocutors' narratives was expressed by way of this pinnacle. As soon as one Elijah's Day passed, the waiting for the next one would begin.

Such community-defining waiting gained in meaning after the life of Gacko residents was violently restructured. Waiting for Elijah's return became a call for the kind of communal life that entails waiting. It was an orientation of the body and the landscape towards the rebuilding of social relations. Symbolic expressions seem to intensify when a community starts to erode and rituals are often employed as a possibility to 'reconstitute the community' (see Cohen 1985: 50–51). The postwar Field held on to the grand celebration, thus amplifying its political quality, precisely because it was nothing new. It was the best-rehearsed pronunciation of the landscape that was being systematically denied.

Ilija's and Alija's meeting is a sensitive and shifting figure of speech. Their relationship to the landscape, the calendar and each other is a metaphor for the spatial and temporal structures of life. Ilija is also shorthand for the Orthodox Christians or Serbs; Alija for the Muslims who reside or used to reside in the Field of Gacko. The ethnic engineering that climaxed in the 1990s produced a rift between these communities, locking the relationship of Ilija and Alija into the past. In its absence, the Field's memories started to coalesce into strong images of the desired structures of intimacy in the landscape. Through these desires, the past became inextricably linked to a possibility of the future.

Waiting for Elijah was also waiting for George, who inaugurated the warm season on 6 May. His day, *Durđevdan*, was marked by the arrival of the nomadic Gurbeti ('Roma' or 'Gypsies') to the Field. George was celebrated by the 'settled' population, as well, but had become synonymous with the Gurbeti community. Although invisible to the contemporary geopolitical projects bearing on Gacko, the Gurbeti have a central place in the narratives collected during my fieldwork. For the Field, the encounter with the Gurbeti (George) is the 'beginning of time', the encounter of Alija (Muslims) and Ilija (Serbs) its culmination. With the preclusion of these encounters, time itself has been alienated from the present. It was sustained as a thing of the past and a possibility of the future. Hope was imagined in Elijah's (and George's) return, the return of the landscape as home, with which the turn of the seasons would resume.

This book is thus about time as encounter and encounter as time. The two are depicted as so inextricably linked that a crisis in one inevitably affects

the other. I argue that an understanding of communal relationships and landscapes symbolized by Elijah requires prior understanding of traditional time-reckoning in the Field, in both its structural and intimate aspects. I also offer the complimentary argument, that to understand time-reckoning of the Field, we need to understand the relationship between Ilija and Alija. These temporal structures and intimacies were considered to be the substance of home (see Chapters 2 and 3). In that sense, this work is a grounded critique of the, still fresh, nationalist purifications of home(lands) in Bosnia.

Capturing the Field's phantasmagorical conversations between past and present, I ask: what happened to time, as Ilija and Alija were pulled apart? What happened to Ilija and Alija as time was fragmented and restructured? I argue that the substance of temporality and the structure of cosmological time in the Field were guided by ritualized encounters. Such encounters retained strong structural and affective dimensions, which were re-examined and given particular importance after the violent introduction of physical and discursive distances in the 1990s.

Starting from the theoretical premise that temporal systems are always expressed in terms of spatial (or relational) arrangements, this book enters into a number of conversations on time-defining intimacies and distances. The proximities analysed are not limited to 'religious' communities; they extend to various kinds of spatial, temporal and 'nonhuman' phenomena: cosmologies, seasons, discourses, fields, mountains, caverns and rivers, the world and the underworld, ruins, ghosts, dead bodies, graves and mass graves, fairies, epic heroes, animals and saints. . . . In order to traverse such diverse topics, the book engages with the broad phenomenological, anthropological and historical scholarship on time, space, affect and proximity, as well as investigations into Bosnian and wider religious systems. Drawing on echoes and reformulations of the well-established folk cosmology, the book depicts a landscape with a long tradition of 'inter-religious' communication that is, nonetheless, struggling to survive under the weight of nationalist pressures. It shows the way that Bosnian landscapes and seasonal cycles, as well as persons more generally, are all formed continually by relations which shift in space and time, and in so doing both reiterate old spaces and create new ones.

The Field of Gacko was perhaps the most difficult of the many spatial frameworks that could have been adopted. At the centre of the Field lies Gacko (or Metohija), a town that was completely 'ethno-religiously homogenized' in 1992.<sup>3</sup> Scattered around the Field are numerous satellite villages, two of which were particularly important. The village of Kula is the site of *Aliđun* (Alija's Day), the Muslim Elijah's Day festivity. With the surrounding hamlets, it is the only part of the landscape to which Muslims have returned.

In the northeast part of the Field lies the village of Nadanići, which is central to *Ilindan* (Ilija's Day), the Orthodox Christian Elijah's Day celebrations. During my fieldwork, these loci were physically separated by a large Yugoslav thermal power plant built during the 1970s and politically separated by the town embodying the anti-syncretic nationalist discourse. As this politically and religiously intricate space is both the principal site of my fieldwork and a wide stretch of contained karst, I follow the practice of my interlocutors and refer to the Field of Gacko as simply 'the Field'.<sup>4</sup> Although, like any individual case, Gacko has its own historical and cosmological inflections, as the 'Field' it indicates possibilities of comparison with the many other karst flatlands of the Dinaric mountain chain, as well as with other religiously plural landscapes of 'seasonal order' affected by dissociative violence.

The cyclical calendar discussed above has been 'broken' by the war: the nomadic Gurbeti communities, once an inextricable part of the Field's rhythm, were no longer present; other important dates, rituals and forms of economy had been obscured by postwar transitions. Therefore, to understand the structure of the calendar, I needed to look into other locales. From following place through time, the investigation thus extended to following time (the annual cycle) through space: it was like piecing together a time puzzle by using a particular multi-sited approach and each time I returned to the Field, my findings allowed for more elaborate questions.

Most of the narratives, places and rituals that occupy this research relate to the warm seasons. Heralded by *Blagovijest* (Annunciation), starting with *Đurđevdan/Jurjevo* (George's Day), culminating in *Aliđun/Ilindan* (Elijah's Day) and ending with *Mitrovdan/Kasum* (Demetrius' Day), this part of the year is filled with agricultural labour and apotropaic, health and fertility rituals.<sup>5</sup> The fertility rituals are chiefly focused on humans, cattle and nature/crops, and these purposes often overlap in a single 'event'. As David Henig (2011: 185) has noted for central Bosnia, the days of George and Elijah 'overarch the vegetative phases of the summer period, and orchestrate agricultural activities as well as the ritual calendar'. On most occasions, the rituals are followed by an outdoor celebration or a party called *teferič*, popular fairs that usually include food, drinks, the *kolo* circle dance, community-specific songs and traditional athletic competitions. A *teferič* is always a major social event. Because of the 'broken calendar', I attended only one George's Day festivity in the town of Visoko. However, due to the differences between the Gregorian and the Julian calendars, and the alterations of traditional dates to meet the requirements of diasporic attendance, I was able to take part in four Elijah's Day celebrations in 2012 alone. Each Elijah's Day told a story of different tectonic shifts, which have affected the temporal and spatial boundaries of their respective landscapes.

This book is first a contribution to the understanding of ‘shared’ time and transitional temporalities in a Bosnian pastoral community, after it had experienced extensive changes brought on by the violence of the 1990s. Against its own disappearance, the past has entered into an alliance with place to render the construction of new political memory obtrusive to the Field’s identity. The affective lingering of the old landscape has defined the meaning of home and hope through encounters with the intimate Others. The book also gives a reading of the sacral annual cycle heralded by the two most important ‘shared’ festivities – George’s Day and Elijah’s Day. Through a form of ‘deep mapping’, it provides a detailed account of the Field’s traditions, as well as an analysis of the wider religious streams to which they belong.

## Structure of the Book

This introduction positions my findings within the context of my methodological and ethical concerns, the main research concepts and the pertinent academic debates. As an engagement with the questions of ‘evidence’ and ‘interpretation’ in this book, the introduction is roughly divided into discussions of the problems of (1) waiting; (2) proximity, syncretism and sharing; (3) body and history; (4) ethnicity and ethnography; (5) the spatial and temporal definition of my ‘field of research’; and (6) the turn towards words, remnants and affect. I first introduce the Field of Gacko through a contemporary map of ‘ethno-national’ Bosnia and consider the sort of discourses and practices that legitimate it. From recent geopolitical developments, which have created ruptures in my interlocutors’ landscapes, I turn towards the agricultural and pastoral cosmologies in Bosnia and the structure of the annual cycle. I also discuss the methods employed, which attempt to record a variety of synchronotopic and diachronotopic encounters.

This book consists of two parts. The first part, ‘Time and Its Discontents’, contains four chapters dealing with questions about time and space triggered by the 1990s war.<sup>6</sup> Employing various personal and collective perspectives, all of these chapters problematize the uneasiness of transition from the time of one quality to the time of another. They turn towards the Field of the past lingering in the present. As these two times resist and accommodate each other and generate cross-temporal syncretic forms, their friction forms a space of debate on the possibilities and expectations of the future.

In ‘Schizochronotopia, or Elijah’s Pitfall’ (Chapter 1), I propose that the field of anthropological inquiry in Gacko is to be found in the complex interplay between historical, mythical and intimate time and place. To make

these processes intelligible and indicate the indivisibilities of temporal and spatial arrangements, I employ Bakhtin's (1981) notion of 'chronotope'. I analyse two dominant 'confronted' chronotopic formations through the collective memory of harvest festivities and a mass grave. The simultaneity of these formations and the splits they create are discussed as 'schizochronotopia', a case of opposing time-space allegiances occurring within a single body or landscape.

'Time and Home' (Chapter 2) considers the narratives and practices of home through the subtle negotiations between hope, desire and fear in the aftermath of violence in the Field. I argue that the 'possibility of return' has been seen as a problem pertaining not only to space, but also to a time of a particular quality. The lingering of bodies and landscapes, elucidated through the phenomenon of the phantom limb, appears not only as a nostalgic projection, but also as a claim over the Field's futurity. At the same time, the landscape and its humans have been migrating between different temporalities – from texture to silence – in cycles resembling the traditional division of the year into an eventful summerscape and a bleak winterscape. Between the active work on reconstruction of the prewar Field and the solitary practices of scattered elderly returnees, Chapter 2 discerns forms of collective resistance that vary in intensity and latitudes of outspokenness.

'Time and In-Other' (Chapter 3), the heart of the book, is a phenomenological consideration of the Field's time through memories and histories of encounter with the Other. The cosmologies of the Other is founded in a specific orientation of the landscape towards the nearing of the Other. This intimate Other is considered in all its spectra, not just along the lines of 'religious' difference; some encounters have 'thickened' towards the habitual more than others and are thus conveyed as part of cyclical ritual relations. This chapter introduces the concept of 'In-Other' as one of the main stipulations of the Field. The first part looks at the memories and affective remnants of the arrival of the nomadic Gurbeti, which signalled the beginning of springtime. The second part discusses the 'inter-religious' institution of *kumstvo* (sworn kinship) and the position it has been assigned in the politically polarized Field.

'Time and Epic Residues' (Chapter 4) is again about the affective remnants of one Field in another, but this time in a particularly uncanny encounter – between the 'shared' and the 'cleansed' landscape in the body of the nationalist poet. This chapter discloses nationalism as inadvertently syncretic. A textual comparison between the traditional and the modernist Gacko epics, sung to the accompaniment of the *gusle* instrument, speaks of the extensive historical and political shifts converging in the Field, but also of the affective repetition of images solidified into a 'grammar of the body'.

‘The Many Faces of Elijah’ is the second part of the book, but can also be read first, as one of the ‘contexts’ for the preceding chapters. It considers the time of the Field as it extends and talks to other calendars, mythologies and discourses. Its ‘experimental’ structure is markedly different from the rest of book. It shows numerous encounters, temporally and spatially distant from the Field, to be part of a wider field of Georgic rhythms. Unlike ‘Time and Its Discontents’, the second part may seem anthropologically ‘outdated’ on account of its ‘Frazerian’ extensions, but its content and structure are a deliberate intervention. Moving away from the focus on the Field’s fractured community and how it deals with historical change, I piece together narratives related to the traditional calendar. In doing this, I offer structure and content as part of the argument: the calendar of the Field should not be confined to the outcome of ruination or dealings with postwar transitions, any more than it should be trapped in the pronounced discourse of ‘ethno-religious’ differences. What the Field and its cosmology have to contribute to our understanding of Indo-European, early Slavic and syncretic Balkan religions is much wider than a few decades of postwar developments can encapsulate. My interlocutors stressed the importance and diversity of the landscape before it was changed beyond their recognition. In that sense, the second part of the book is an ethical intervention as much as it is a journey through the traditional calendar.

Part II begins with a ‘Prelude’ and unfolds into a single lengthy chapter. The ‘Prelude’ probes the methodological and ethical problems of spatiotemporal extensions, through a sinking river that begins its life in the Field and breaks forth into multiple directions, attaining a new name with each new surface. This very river may be regarded as the key to unlock the proceeding discussions of a grand cosmological interlacement.

‘The Georgics’ (Chapter 5) are conceptualized as the syncretic poetry of the Field’s warm season. They begin with George’s Day, venture into multifarious connections within and beyond the Field and end with the ‘long-awaited’ Elijah’s Day. Between the two days, chthonic creatures enter into battles with fertility deities, apotropaic rituals explain the significance of herbs and the fear of lightning, Christian saints inherit the Slavic pantheon, and Palestinian syncretic practices elucidate Bosnian Georgic conundrums. Chapter 5 establishes an ‘imagined’ focus group, an otherwise infeasible conversation between my interlocutors, divided as they are by predicaments of conflict and migration. As such, the Georgics are an open-ended discussion, at least partially liberated from my own interpretations. At the same time, the entire second part of the book borrows the forms of the theatrical plays and of musical compositions to accentuate the unfolding drama in the landscape, as it becomes a stage for the cosmic battles of life and death, the sequences of colours, scents and sounds, and the intensities of encounters.

## Waiting to Wait

... we wait for the coming of what abides ...

—P. Virilio, *Negative Horizon*

This book provides a temporal and spatial portrait of the Field through many different and interlaced kinds of waiting. Through narratives about the past, silence on the present and persistence of an uncertain future, waiting was the substance of bodily temporality, time in its change, passage and speed. But waiting was also part of Time. Through it, the body was situated in the landscape as the image of the cosmos. The Field's waiting was a tradition of waiting and waiting as the foremost existential imperative.

This entanglement of the Field's waiting is analytically useful, for it simultaneously provides a platform for discussion of its responses to religious, historical and political developments. Many existing texts about waiting have looked into the phenomenon as the bodily experience of time – the existential encounter of our body with the pace of the world. In the passage of waiting, Henri Bergson argued, time is lived, the world coincides with our own duration and we come to know the substance of our existence and the existence of the world (2002: 61, 176). Building on Bergson's philosophical writings, Harold Schweizer saw waiting as the 'intimacy of time' (2008: 127): 'The waiter thus feels – impatiently – his own being' (ibid: 17); 'time enters our bodies; we are the time that passes' (ibid: 128). However, focus on duration reveals but one of the qualities of waiting. It is waiting bereft of its contextual substance.

This book does discuss such intimacies with time in a suspended state of being, but it also explores conversations, dreams and fears within the context of waiting of the Field. Waiting was filled with them. Bodies were rarely 'in-between'. What happened in the duration of the postwar transition strengthened or weakened the commitment to waiting – not to resign, leave or welcome other fields – while also fostering a dialogue between the two dominant chronotopes (see Chapter 1).

Through the practices and narratives occurring in the 'time of waiting', the ensuing chapters of this book discuss a landscape 'waiting to wait the way it used to'. Speaking from the Field of protracted postwar uncertainty, my interlocutors turned towards the image that was most familiar to them, the annual cycle structured by expectation of Elijah's harvest festivity. With the other Georgic saints, Elijah encapsulates the richness of remembered sociality and the temporalities of living by the seasons. The fact that it was a 'shared' day, a literal commonplace for both Serbs and Muslims, could only be envisioned through transposition to another time. It was a possibility specifically of that time. The return of such an Elijah would inevitably en-



tail the social outlines of the old Field and render the politics of separation unsuccessful.

The first kind of waiting was remembered. It was a waiting for ‘eternal return’, a supra-historical promise. The traditional cycle of the year was structured in expectation of Elijah, the fair and the affirmation of community that his day brought. The shared promise of that gathering on 2 August each year was an incentive to endure winter. Waiting for him was also to wait in dread and fear for the crops and the households. Elijah is the Thunderer and with the help of Procopius, he can bring down the wrath of lightning from the skies and set fire to painstakingly gathered livelihoods (see Chapter 5). By Elijah’s Day, however, the villagers would have finished all the major work, so his fair was a relatively secure luxury. As soon as it was over, the waiting would start again. This first, cyclical kind of waiting may be said to have been for Elijah as the sign of the seasons. But, it is also historical. It spoke not only of the harvest and the fear of thunderstorms, but also of political ruptures and tectonic shifts, usually coming from elsewhere. I have given some examples of such memories at various points in the book: people remembered their descent into the Field on Elijah’s Day at the beginning of the First World War, how they had to change the place of celebration because of the Yugoslav thermal power plant, or how the local branch of the Serb Democratic Party (SDS) was formed on Elijah’s Day, just before the 1990s war began. . . . Elijah was an orientational device in the agricultural Field and so other, ‘large-scale’ events were experienced by reference to it.

The second kind of waiting of the Field – a fragile hope, a longing or even a dedicated investment – was a postwar temporality, which I experienced in 2011 and 2012, a waiting for the return of cosmological time, along with the communal landscape it used to entail. This other kind of waiting was again expressed by way of Elijah’s Day when the Field filled up with people, music, laughter, food and dance. It was a waiting for the Field to ‘resemble itself’. Reinstating the celebration, the single most important date in the Field, the few returned refugees reconstructed a piece of their home. But each time the ‘diasporic’ visitors said their farewells, the year was again coloured by waiting. Most ‘returnees’ would leave the Field and spend the winter in Mostar. Those who stayed behind were locked into piles of frost to endure until the early signs of spring with the Annunciation. They no longer had *sijela*, the winter get-togethers, to fill their cold nights with tales and songs of summer. Waiting.

Of course, there were also other kinds of temporalities, like everywhere else. Waiting for Elijah was only the most prominent conversation with postwar transitions. The changes conflated the past into one place and the present into another. Through the waiting, the two places were embroiled in a dispute over the future. This double-coded waiting – waiting to wait,

and waiting in memory of waiting – was again orientational. When it was not outspokenly intentional, it was an evident bodily inclination. The second waiting was not a quality of life structured by agricultural labour, but an active negotiation of the structure and quality of social relationships in the postwar Field.

In his *Waiting: The Whites of South Africa* Crapanzano understood waiting as a kind of ‘passive activity’, through which the waiters lose their grip over the present and have no control over the future. He noted: ‘The world in its immediacy slips away; it is derealized. It is without élan, vitality, creative force. It is numb, muted, dead. Its only meaning lies in the future – in the arrival or the non-arrival of the object of waiting’ (1985: 44). For the most part, this is precisely what the waiting discussed in this book is not. In it, the world is voiced, realized, enlivened, given meaning. Rather, to give up on waiting would create the kind of disillusionment with the world that Crapanzano described. This waiting in the Field can be understood as the creative force, a strategy of dealing with an oppressive ideological formation. Waiting for Elijah may be said to have been against the odds and against the socio-political visions of the Field as to be lived according to the stipulations of national belonging.

The many proverbs and sayings about waiting charted out the logics of future waiting in the Field. When someone was in a hurry, but ran up against an unavoidable schedule, people would ironically refer to a structural inequality that required waiting: ‘Cool your heels, ’till the priest’s grain’s milled’ (1). Or, they would reference the certainty of the seasons in their advice: ‘Don’t die, donkey, before the mount turns green’ (2). The same local knowledge recalled that waiting and subtle efforts had a particular strength: ‘Silent water rolls the hills’ (3).<sup>7</sup> Rethinking the ‘agency’ of waiting, Ghassan Hage (2009: 2) has proposed that we understand it not only as ‘passive activity’, but also as ‘active passivity’. I have found it difficult to discuss ‘passivity’ in terms of the Field’s memories and its insistence on the return of the traditional calendar as its waiting is directional, filled with content (memories and expectations). The creativity of waiting lies precisely in that it works around the impossibility of direct confrontation with the state.

Storytelling is not passive: it turns to the past, but provides an anticipation of the possible future. In fact, as I have indicated in Chapter 2, it constitutes a vital induction into the Field and its cosmology. Waiting keeps alive that which is awaited. It works towards the realization of its own goal. Reflecting on the migrants’ waiting to return home, Salim Lakha (2009) has argued that their waiting is not passive, but rather an active conversation with the present, even a resistance. However, I have been careful not to qualify the overall waiting of the Field as either political resistance or political passivity, because of the diversity of individual responses. From Delva’s ‘probably not’

through Mila's 'God willing' to Eno's investment in the 'building of foundations for future generations', Elijah was more a conversation on his own return than a qualification of any certainty. When Elijah used to be an expected certainty, the worst, jolly curse in the Field was 'May you not await [to see the] next Elijah's Day!' (*Aliđuna ne dočekoi!*). Along with the discontinuation of the curse after the war, waiting has been imbued with the precariousness of the present.

## The Problem of Syncretism and Proximity

Violence in Bosnia was thus antisyncretic; aimed at reducing people to unalloyed ethnic identities.

—C. Stewart, 'Syncretism and Its Synonyms'

Out of the ocean of nationalist rhetoric that developed concomitantly with this research, one right-wing politician's repetitive statement was particularly striking. It was obviously strategic. Widely reported in the news and parroted by other political figures, the claim usually boiled down to one version or another of the following:

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is not a single shared holiday except for New Year and the First of May, but those are international holidays. No common holiday shared by the three peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina is possible, because they have always been on different sides of history and marked [the holidays] in different ways; some as a victory, some as a defeat. (Buka 2015)<sup>8</sup>

Those who do share holidays, the same politician argued, are the Serb Republic (an 'entity' in Bosnia) and the state of Serbia. They should celebrate *Vidovdan*, St Vitus Day, 'the great Serb holiday', together.<sup>9</sup>

What is odd about these statements is the notion that they would make for a viable political platform: my interlocutors found it difficult to recall any popular holiday that was not 'common', 'mixed' or 'shared' by 'the three peoples' in one way or another. In the Field, where the national homogenization of space was perhaps most visible, there was a wide range of 'shared' days, not only in terms of similar and overlapping practices but also in terms of mutual visitations and joint celebrations. The above-mentioned politician did not recognize that many, if not most, people in Bosnia share the feast days of George, John, Peter, Procopius, Elijah and Demetrius, or the 1 May, or that they engage in 'boundary-crossing' rituals for Christmas, Ramadan and the two Eids, or that there is a tradition of mutual visitation for these and other holidays. The politician did not wonder whether any community other than the 'three peoples' might also have something significantly 'in common' with them. Instead, he chose the somewhat less 'syncretic' St Vitus

Day, which memorializes the Battle of Kosovo, to connect across the desired national body. The Georgic saints were left out on purpose. They were a 'shared' bomb, not to be tampered with.

Finding religious (or other) narratives and practices that are antithetical to such programmes is hardly difficult then. It is more difficult to find the right theoretical concepts with which to discuss them. The problem lies in the fact that there are a number of different, yet related, processes to be considered. Carefully looking into the histories and politics of concepts such as 'syncretism', 'hybridity', 'mixture', 'creolization' and others, Charles Stewart has demonstrated that these are 'tangled vocabularies' (2011: 48), with a 'controversial past and an uncertain present' (1999: 45). David Gellner (1997: 288–89) has, for example, advanced a typology of mixture, differentiating between bricolage, syncretism, syncretic traditions and complimentary and accretive coexistence of more than one tradition, which Stewart (2008: 7) sees as different modes of syncretism.

Since all religions (and languages, cultures, etc.) are undeniably syncretic, Shaw and Stewart (1994: 7) have argued that the problem requires a turn from syncretism towards 'processes of religious synthesis' and the 'discourses of syncretism', as well as attending to what they have termed 'anti-syncretism', or the 'antagonism to religious synthesis'. But, what are the 'discourses of syncretism'? What would be their outlines? Can these discourses be detected, if the specific term is not employed? I find it more useful to make an artificial analytical distinction between the proximities and encounters of 'different' religious communities on the one hand, and the complexly layered religious systems that present a problem to claims of exclusive ownership, on the other. This is an artificial distinction, but imagine, for a moment, encounters as synchronic and the layered religions as diachronic proximities. Encounters have a potential for the making of syncretic corpuses: the 'different' concepts, practices and communities may start to overlap, speak to each other and alter each other. Layered syncretisms bear witness to certain former encounters and continuities: as I show in Chapter 5, many 'syncretic' practices in Bosnia have discernible earlier ancestors. In the Field, the 'pre-monotheistic' cosmologies are not simply a remnant. At some point they had to be an encounter and the drama of human–nonhuman agency has allowed material and conceptual continuities across different planes of organized religion.

Diachronically 'layered' religion will often coincide with 'proximities', but not always. Syncretism might reveal a proximity that is 'of the past', which does not exist as a face-to-face encounter, but an amalgam of previous exchanges. Maria Couroucli (2012) and Dionigi Albera (2008) have argued that 'sharing' and 'mixture' should be understood as a 'common Mediterranean experience', one that has inherited the space of the plural Byzantine

and Ottoman Empires. The Ottoman willingness to ‘tolerate’ differences and include them into the imperial system of governance did reflect on ‘inter-communal’ relationships, although archival research cannot capture the subtleties of everyday practices (Barkey 2008: 110–14, Bryant 2016: 5, 13–14).

The focus on the ‘mixed’ Mediterranean may be a logical consequence of the fact that ‘unmixing’ and ‘anti-syncretism’ are also a common experience. The ‘unmixing’ of religious communities, which has occurred in systematic episodes from the Western European edicts of expulsion to the cleansing of ‘Islamic’ territories in the twenty-first century Mediterranean, did not manufacture ‘non-syncretic’ thoughts and practices, but only claims to purity and authenticity. What the ‘unmixing’ has achieved, however, is to deprive communities of the kind of active making of ‘syncretic’ thoughts and practices that was possible only with proximity.

In that sense, religions in the Field of Gacko were producing their ‘syncretism’ before the imposition of distances during the 1990s and have remained syncretic thanks to the remnants of the Other. This phenomenon is comparable to Bakhtin’s distinction between external and internal dialogue: external dialogue is spatial and occurs between oneself and another; internal dialogue is diachronic, between two layers of the one self (see Bakhtin 1981: 279–86, Holquist 1981: 427). This comparison with dialogic orientations is, of course, rendered problematic by the nonhumans, particularly the landscapes full of remnants of the Other. A syncretism that functions through such remnants is an external dialogue as the Other still may give a reply. And, the reverse is also possible: if the Other is an absent nonhuman (e.g. a landscape), as it is often the case in this book, it may still enter into ‘external’ dialogue through its residues in another human or nonhuman. Affective remnants complicate the matter further; they may register through a completely different material context (see Navaro-Yashin 2012; and Chapter 4).

Another problem with the analytical differentiation between ‘internal’ and ‘external’ syncretism comes with the fuzzy religious boundaries. This is the case with the Bosnian ‘inter-religious’ marriages (particularly since the second Yugoslavia), but also in the early modern Bosnia for those Ottoman subjects who found themselves to be ‘both Muslim and Christian’. In 2012, I visited the village of Kazanci near Gacko, where two seventeenth-century endowments of Osman Pasha still remind of an early time when families in Bosnia were, albeit under different circumstances, simultaneously Muslim and Christian. Osman Pasha was a local man who ‘converted’ to Islam and rose through various high-ranking positions in the Ottoman Empire (see Heywood 1996: 38). He built a mosque and a church in his village. His brother served as a monk in the church (*ibid*). Although only the minaret of the mosque stands today, it is said to have survived the 1990s war at the insistence of the local Orthodox Christian villagers.

My attentiveness to encounters between the Gacko communities, in the observed ‘Serb-Muslim-Gurbeti’ occurrences, owes much to the anti-syncretic drive at odds with the ‘lived religion’ in the Field. These encounters stressed the similarities and intercommunal intimacy. They did not describe the borrowing from or an amalgamation of ‘different’ religious concepts or practices. To those who were committed to the ‘shared’ religion, it was a way of life pertinent, first and foremost, to the Self. No Muslim in Gacko ever told me that they celebrated the ‘Christian’ saint days, just as no Muslim or Christian in Gacko ever told me that they continue ‘pre-Christian’ rituals. Syncretism can only ever be an analytical endeavour, justified for scholarship as a tool for thinking about the trajectories of encounters.

None of my interlocutors, save for a few academics, employed the word ‘syncretism’ at all. Instead, they spoke of ‘celebrating together’, ‘meeting’, ‘coming together’, ‘sharing the same day’, ‘traditions being the same’, ‘traditions being 95% the same’, ‘engaging in joint competitions’, ‘visiting each other on holidays’, ‘care’, ‘love’, ‘rejoicing in their holiday’ etc. In all these designations, proximity and similarity rest on the possibility of differentiating between religious groups (or bodies of thought and practice). Why would these terms be conflated into units of meaning? They indicate a need to remember the reconciliation of sameness and difference at a time when difference is augmented. Such moments, as my interlocutors pointed out, have happened before. The ‘unmixing’ and ‘anti-syncretism’ in Bosnia are indeed contemporaneous with the writing of this book. Sharing has gained a particular political resonance with the advent of nationalisms, which is not unique to the region: as I show in Chapter 5, Muslim–Christian syncretism in Palestine is also voiced as a form of resistance to the State of Israel. In the Field, memories of mixture have a similar, if much less politically explicit, reverberation.

Elijah’s two names are the product of difference in intimate proximity. The diagram of this relationship has been offered in the Bosnian proverb: one day with two names. As I show in Chapter 3, intimacy and Otherness were one of the main stipulations of the Field’s cosmology. The question that seems to remain is the ‘intensity’ or ‘level’ of intimacy. For example, there has been an ‘anthropological’ discussion about whether the Serbs and the Muslims in the village of Gerzovo celebrated Elijah’s Day together or separately, whether it was a case of two separate events or one (see, for example, Baskar 2012: 54). In the Field, Elijah’s Day was celebrated within the religious community, but with significant interactions. This was confirmed not only by my interlocutors, but also in a 1935 interview with Đula Dizdarević, for a study of epic poetry (Vidan 2003a: 89). Asked whether Elijah’s Day in Jasike was a celebration for Muslims, she replied: ‘This is a celebration for the Muslims, but the Orthodox people can come as well. They come just like

us'. Đula's reply relates to the particularities of 'timespace' sharing. At first, one could argue that it does not necessarily point to any kind of shared religion. Glenn Bowman (2012: 8) preferred to call such phenomena 'mixing' rather than 'sharing', so as not to presuppose either antagonism or syncretism and 'amity'. The problem addresses the need for finer methodological frameworks for the study of 'non-homogeneous' timespaces.

Azra Hromadžić (2012) argues that the everyday communication in 'mixed regions' included various sorts of intimacies, particularly through visitations, 'coffee visits, "sweet visits" (*na slatko*), visits "for joy" (*na radost*), and visits "for sorrow" (*na žalost*)' (ibid: 35). However, she holds that, since there were no 'mixed marriages' in the villages, 'practices of mixing simultaneously verified and challenged ethnic divisions' (ibid: 34). She, like other authors (for example Hayden 2002b, Kolind 2008: 207), takes 'marriages' across 'ethnic' lines as some kind of litmus test for the degrees of ethnic distance. We cannot a priori conclude that such 'mixtures' did not verify ethnic divisions. Whilst the 'mixing' in Gacko did work with the given social stipulations, verifying and challenging them, it must be noted that the relationships between the communities have grown into the tissue of everyday life and the annual cycle, to such an extent that time and space of home could not be conveyed without referencing the 'shared points'. These references are not only spatial but also temporal maps incongruous with the Dayton constellation.

Hromadžić (2012: 38–39) likewise notes that 'mixed citizens' have become a sort of 'anti-citizen' and that the 'new spatial governmentality of ethnic division' has made them unmappable.<sup>10</sup> Although invisible to the eyes of the state, such 'hybrid' positions can have a stronger claim over the spatial and temporal scapes unmixed by the state. Even if they did not necessarily create 'ethnically mixed' individuals (imagining for a moment that we know what that means), rural landscapes made possible the spaces of shared temporalities. So, the unmixing has created peculiar lacunas in the annual and everyday rhythms of Gacko. These absences, made vivid in memories, hopes and yearnings, reveal the significance of 'sharing'. The language of body-space-time constantly harks back to these 'mixtures'.

But, the most problematic question is the definition of what constitutes religion in the Field. Where are we to draw the boundaries in pastoral and agricultural cosmologies? Obviously, its economies cannot be discounted. Neither can landscapes and the seasonal changes. The same applies to cattle and vegetation, childbirth, weddings, medicine and food, etc. So, why should something as simple as a meeting not be part of the religious system? My claim is that it is. In a structural, discursive and affective sense, the 'inter-religious' meetings were part of the religious experience. The most important quality of the Elijah's Day celebration was the socializing as the

final annual outlet. As I demonstrate in my discussion of *kumstvo* (sworn kinship) in Chapter 3, ‘inter-religious’ visitations were an equally important part of the same system and the encounters encapsulated a crucial part of the logics behind the cosmos.

The work of anthropologist Robert Hayden has been at the forefront of the conversation about the nature of shared religion in the Balkan Peninsula.<sup>11</sup> He has offered an argument pertinent to the anthropology of proximity, while managing at the same time to sideline any discussion of encounters. By his own admission, he gathered his information through ‘census data, public opinion polls, voting patterns and the configurations of the contending military forces, rather than primarily [relying] on more traditional forms of ethnography’ (Hayden 2007: 107). This lack of situated knowledge led him to make contentious claims regarding ‘competitive sharing’ that ‘becomes war’, which is, in Bosnia, followed by undemocratic ‘[a]ttempts to impose diversity after a country has been partitioned’, and an implicit proposal that a ‘clear recognition of this situation’ may be based on ‘what people are willing to accept, even if that means the injustice of partition’ (Hayden 2002a: 219). It requires some ‘cutting and pasting’, but his support for ethnically homogenized territories has been clearly stated: this state of affairs should be accepted because violence has been more than successful. What is intriguing about Hayden’s argument is that it provides a more eloquent version of the political speech from the beginning of this section and, as such, a discernible springboard for a number of academic critiques long after Huntington’s (1996) thesis on the supposed ‘clash of civilizations’ had lost its novelty.

The shared rituals recorded in this book are competitive, only in a somewhat different sense; competition is not centred on ‘ethno-religious’ belonging. But the Field of shared religion is competitive, very competitive. On George’s Day, children lit fires on hilltops, competing to see whose would sprout the tallest and brightest flames. In Kreševo, Catholics competed with bonfires on John’s Day. When I visited the town in 2012, one of the bonfire teams drove on the back of a truck through the other team’s neighbourhood. Jolly youths with nylon tights on their heads held a spray-painted rhyme ‘Gornje Čelo eats shit’ (*Gornje Čelo govna jelo*), which eventually burned on top of the bonfire. On George’s Day, all over Bosnia, girls competed to see whose swing would fly furthest into the air. On Elijah’s Day, men competed at peculiar local athletic disciplines. Groups of the same men competed in the singing of *bečarac* and *ganga* at religious feasts and fairs. Young women competed to become *namuša* (a reputable bachelorette) by garnering the most marriage proposals on Elijah’s Day. On George’s Day, children competed by stinging each other’s legs with nettles. On Peter’s Day, they competed to see who could get the most sweets from the neighbours. On Elijah’s



Day, there were traditional group fistfights, but even these were commonly between men of ‘the same religious group’. These and many other similar examples are the only kinds of ‘competitive sharing’ that I was able to record. Hayden, however, manages to elide all of them, giving nationalist spatial demarcations some kind of historical and emotional depth.

While I agree with Stewart (1999: 45) that syncretism should be salvaged as a useful theoretical tool, this book rather endeavours to discuss encounters – both the encounters affecting cosmology, and cosmological encounters – as phenomena upon which the religious system of the Field and its corresponding timespaces rest, and without which they cannot be fully expressed. Each encounter may be read as a mosaic of economies, intimacies and histories. They simultaneously take the form of synchronic and diachronic entanglements, which have influenced this book’s temporal and spatial extensions (see Chapters 3 and 5).

Developing the proposal out of his research in southern Zimbabwe, Joost Fontein has called for an anthropology of proximity:

We may do better not by emphasizing ‘radical difference’ but rather by cultivating an acute sensitivity to the proximities, coexistences, and continuities that derive from people’s shared material and historical engagements, as a way of writing against politicized differences rather than reasserting them on ever more abstract philosophical grounds. (2011: 723)

I have tried to adopt Fontein’s proposal as a particularly apt methodology for the study of Bosnian landscapes. Focusing on the ‘presence of encounters’ does not, as Fontein noted, avoid acknowledging difference and distance (ibid: 721). Indeed the concept of proximity depends on a certain distinction or distance and/or processes of anti-syncretism, which then need to be analytically situated. My research into proximity reveals how intimacy and distance are processed by landscapes and negotiated in spaces hidden from the main political arenas. It does not only take proximity when it is ‘harmonious’, but also proximity as a tension. For example, the second chapter discusses the proximity of two conflicting chronotopes and the ‘frictions’ (see Tsing 2004) produced in their encounters. Throughout the text, I introduce interlocutors who interpret proximities differently. Some do not want to return to the Field, others argue for varying degrees of past and/or present communication between Serbs, Muslims and Gurbeti, while yet others prefer distance. However, I also show that the annual cycle, with its traditions, included an established system of proximity (see Chapter 3); indeed, durable remnants of this system were sometimes visible even in the discourses of distance. So the question is not only how people imagined proximity, but also how proximity imagined people and their landscapes.

## From Victorian Travelogues to the ‘Bosnian Mosaic’

A common theme has been found for analysed Bosnian rituals in their shared and/or syncretic character and how they are narrated through encounters. Not only are they performed by contemporary Roma, Muslim, Orthodox Christian and Catholic communities in Bosnia, but they may also, without exception, be traced to early Slavic cosmology and an inheritance from wider fields, tentatively referred to as Proto-Indo-European religion. Although no systematic research has been done about this aspect of the folk Bosnian calendar, much has been published about individual elements.

It is no wonder that the early depictions of Bosnian syncretism and religious mixture came from spaces where Muslims and Christians did not live together and, thus, did not share religious landscapes. They were remarkable as a peculiarity, a mixture as seen (perhaps *only*) from the perspectives of homogeneity. Many such accounts are to be found in travelogues, particularly those of British provenance. In her detailed study *Unveiling Bosnia-Herzegovina in British Travel Literature (1844–1912)*, Neval Berber has noted that the mid-nineteenth century British interest in Bosnia was the result of new British foreign policies and interest in the Eastern Question (2010: xiii–xv). She has also noted that, up until the outbreak of the First Balkan War in 1912, such travelogues provided a mixture of Orientalist and markedly political visions. They, nonetheless, offer invaluable details of fin-de-siècle Bosnian shared landscapes.

In 1877, Georgina Muir Mackenzie and Adeline Paulina Irby, two good friends and keen travellers, published a highly political portrayal of Bosnia in their *Travels in the Slavonic Provinces of Turkey-in-Europe*. Although using the term ‘nations’ in quotation marks to denote the differences between the religious communities in Bosnia, they also observed certain similarities:

The Mussulmans of Serajevo still keep St. John the Baptist’s day (24th of June, O. S.), when the sun is said to dance at dawn on the top of the hill Trebovich : on that day, and on St. Elias’s and St. George’s days, the Mussulman population turns out of doors, and the whole side of Trebovich, especially the neighbourhood of the Moslem saint’s tomb, is bright with red turbans and jackets and groups of women in white veils. (Mackenzie and Irby 1877: 8)

The Muslim nobility, the same authors further pointed out, still keep the name of their family’s patron saints (ibid: 9). The anonymous author of a ‘Ride through Bosnia’ published by *Frasier Magazine* provided a very similar report, adding Peter to the list of shared saints (Anonymous 1875: 557). The same year, the famous archaeologist Arthur Evans travelled through Bosnia ‘on foot’, as he pointed out in the title of his monograph (1876). And although he considered it pathetic that ‘the influence of Islam seemed to

have infected' Christian rituals (ibid: 133), he described some of them in the most remarkable detail, acknowledging 'elements of grandeur and beauty' (ibid: 134). On the eve of the Assumption, he visited Komušina, a Catholic mountain pilgrimage site, where there was a large fair, an 'elegant' *kolo* circle dance, and 'cherry bonfires', 'round which the peasants clustered in social circles' (ibid). The pilgrimage survives until today, much as he described it then. Evans also recognized the transposition of early Slavic deities into Christian saints. He noted the perpetuation of the Slavic God Viddo in St Vitus. As I argue in Chapter 5, most of the main dates of the Field's sacral calendar can be traced back through significant connections to the Slavic pantheon.

Roy Trevor, in his travelogue of the Balkans, described shared apotropaic rituals at the pilgrimage Church of St John near the town of Jajce. His informant apparently witnessed

a special throwing out of devils that took place upon St. John's day some years ago. The chapel was filled to overflowing with Moslems and Christians, men and women, who rolled upon the ground gnashing their teeth, tearing their hair and rending their clothes. (1911: 47)

On the eve of John's Day in the town of Kreševo, I myself participated in the lighting of apotropaic bonfires. Surprisingly, it was not the elderly inhabitants but the local children who told me of the fire's ability to 'ward off evil spirits'. Another, more recent, political travel diary was written by the journalist and suffragette supporter Rebecca West (2006). The latter element of her biography provides some clues as to the roots of the analysis she provided of shared fertility rituals in Macedonia. She dedicated two chapters of her bulky monograph to a very intimate portrayal of syncretic George's Day festivities, ultimately rejecting the sacrificial fertility ritual as 'shameful' and 'a conscious cheat' (ibid: 810–31).

A number of early twentieth-century researchers laid the groundwork for studies into Slavic cosmology. An 1860 treatise by Ignác Jan Hanuš was one of the first attempts to analyse the Slavic mythological calendar, its related rituals and beliefs systematically. Louis Leger (1901) tried to work out the structure of the pantheon. This method of compiling both 'trans-Slavic' and state-specific ethnological and historical data was continued by a number of later researchers.<sup>12</sup> In their works, the specificities of the Bosnian calendar tended to be considered as a part of the Serb and Croat traditions, if at all. As Natalie Kononenko (2007: 1) has noted, for 'Slavic peoples' folklore was often a way of defining themselves against other groups. The development of folklore studies really began with the onset of nationalisms. This is particularly true of the Balkan Peninsula and was noticeable in the 'scholarly' battle over the national definition of folklore in Bosnia.<sup>13</sup> Ethnologists in Bosnia contrib-

uted to the topic mainly through individual, small-scale studies published in the *Herald of the National Museum (Glasnik zemaljskog muzeja u Sarajevu)*.<sup>14</sup>

In 1978–79, historian Muhamed Hadžijahić published *The Syncretic Elements in Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Sinkretički elementi u islamu u Bosni i Hercegovini)*, which looked at the different layers amalgamated by one of the religious communities. It remains a seminal work for research into shared landscapes and the folk calendar in Bosnia. However, due to its brevity, it does not point to the wealth of similar phenomena. Secondly, rapid changes to social circumstances that followed soon after the paper was published have made a significant impact on these practices: some no longer exist. Finally, the reason why Hadžijahić was able to look at ‘syncretism in Islam’ was because of his choice to see syncretic Islam as a diachronic composite, rather than as a matter of active engagement. In Bosnia, there are few traces of ‘syncretic Islam’ that are not also part of the same cosmology as ‘syncretic Christianity’. His argument turns towards the layers of mediaeval Christian and early Slavic religiosities contained in the lifeworlds of the Bosnian Muslim communities. However, as this book demonstrates, in places where different religious communities live in proximity, religious mixture is a process of active ‘recalibration’. It responds to historical changes and political events.

There is an ever-growing corpus of research into the Bosnian ‘notion’ of neighbourhood (*komšiluk*) and its meaning (or lack thereof) for inter-religious mixing and communication.<sup>15</sup> Based on my research within and beyond the Field, I noticed significant differences, as one would expect, in the constitution of *komšiluk*, which depend on spatial proximities of dwellings, including the proximity of dwellings inhabited by people of different religions. The many hamlets have always been scattered around the Field and the typical *komšiluk* usually consisted of a few extended family households. Some hamlets were closer together, and so the *komšiluk* included people of different religions, but this was rarely the case in the second half of the twentieth century. In fact, *komšiluk* as such did not feature prominently in the narratives of place or memories of the prewar Field. To ‘mix’ or ‘share’ in any sense, one needed either to make a journey of household visitation, or wait for the festivals. The institution of sworn kinship (*kumstvo*) in the Field, exhibited some aspects of the moral, pragmatic and affective dimensions of *komšiluk* in other parts of Bosnia (see Chapter 3). For syncretic forms of religiosity to develop, visitations and festivities had to be sustained cyclically and consistently.

In his account of shared religiosities and violence in Kosovo, Gerlachus Duijzings has questioned the notion of stable identities: ‘When we take a closer look at what happens on the ground over a prolonged period of time, we see that identity shows many ambiguities in areas like Kosovo, Macedonia and Bosnia. Contact between different groups (such as between Serbs and Albanians) has been marked by cases of reciprocal assimilation and (incom-

plete) conversion' (2000: 13). The need to locate well-defined boundaries around communities, as exemplified by the aforementioned Victorian travelogues, is partly a symptom of writing, of constructing a story. Ambiguities are not 'easy to think with', as Glenn Bowman noted in his editor's introduction to *Sharing the Sacra* (2012: 4), in which the essays attempt to complicate solid identitary tropes. Religious 'boundaries' in the Field were simultaneously connections and disconnections. Before writing about sharing across these 'boundaries', we need to think about the shareholders and the border patrols. For those who do research in Bosnia, ethical and ethnical pitfalls converge. Bougarel, Helms and Duijzings (2007) have suggested that we should be looking for a new kind of 'Bosnian Mosaic', a messier, more particularized one. The mosaic presented in this book, constituted around the Elijah of the Field, is a negotiation between a traditional pastoral cosmology and nationalist politics, both of which enjoy 'accomplices' and 'supporters', and both of which influence the definition of time and space (see Chapter 1).



**FIGURE 0.2** Map of Bosnia, with indicated sites of attended rituals, the inter-entity border and my minibus itinerary from East Sarajevo to Gacko

## Locating ‘the Field’: From Map to Affect and Word

The worst trait of these lands is the war, which returns every thirty years. Everyone has suffered. People do not hate each other. This is a place where it is easy to live together. Nature provides.

—Nada, interlocutor from the Field

You went into the town? Were you not afraid?

—Delva, interlocutor from the Field

This research deals with two main problems, which I have been confronting from the beginning of my fieldwork. These problems have shaped and reshaped the arguments and the topic of the book, as well as the process of cognition, that is, my paths of inquiry. The first problem is space; the second is time.

It makes some sense to open discussion of these problems with the U.S. Department of State map of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was officially introduced in 1995 through the Dayton Peace Accords at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio. In the words of the Clinton family and the State Department, it brought ‘an end to the devastating war in Bosnia and Herzegovina’, ‘transformed [the] Balkan region and remains a signal achievement in American diplomacy’ (Rodham Clinton 2010). What it in fact produced was a structure of institutions through which the particular map may be enforced. The transformation started considerably before the Ohio ceremony when the Bosnian, Serbian, Croatian, U.S., EU and Russian diplomats placed their signature on the Constitution, which remains the present state of geopolitical affairs.

Bosnia and Herzegovina seceded from the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia after the Referendum on Independence in early 1992. I was six years old at the time. Shortly before, my family had moved from the small town of Brčko on river Sava in northern Bosnia to the capital of Sarajevo, so that my mother could take up a new job. My sister, who had just started her primary education in 1990, became one of ‘Tito’s pioneers’ at a schoolyard ceremony. Brandishing her well-ironed red scarf and a blue hat with a five-pointed red star stitched to the front, she solemnly swore ‘to love Yugoslavia’ and ‘uphold the ideas for which *our* comrade Tito fought’. I never got to be officially initiated into the Yugoslav identity; the rite of passage escaped me by a single year. There are uncountable historiographies, ethnographies, eyewitness testimonies and humanitarian reports of what happened next. I have recorded some of these accounts during my research. In Sarajevo, most of my family survived the siege. Members of my family from Brčko, Gradačac and Stolac went into exile. That 1990s war, my own, embedded into my understanding of the world, touched and destroyed different times, spaces and relations for my interlocutors in the Field of Gacko. Their lives often revealed the limits of my initial questions. It took some effort to hear and then speak again.

In a now famous essay, Renato Rosaldo (1989) described how the death of his wife produced the affective grounds needed to understand what Illongot men had been telling him about their headhunting rituals and their ‘rage born in grief’ at losing close relatives. The shift in his theoretical model was made possible only through the bodily impact of his new experience. Most of my findings depart from the experience I had before I was guided into certain kinds of times and spaces. My participant observation was threaded with new conversations, emotional reflections and altogether different bodies of knowledge.

After I discarded the initial ‘discursive’ uneasiness of closeness and distance, the Field analytically opened up to me through the affectivity of encounters. My main ‘methods’ became *kafa i cigara* (coffee and a cigarette). They would define the narrative space, seize the conversation and allow it to endure its extensions and rhythms. They licensed long silences and sudden punctuations. And journeys. If I were to locate ‘the Field’ in any particular way, I would argue towards these moments of encounters. They opened this work to the relational: entanglements which seemed to have an autonomous resonance through their lingering, residues of which abound in the Field. Yael Navaro-Yashin (2012) has described how such ‘remnants and residues’ produce affects, moments that we confront as a certain kind of bodily knowledge.

Throughout this book, I have made use of the affective traces in language and enjoyed recognizing that etymologies relate the words of my interlocutors to their cosmologies and ritual practices. As Bakhtin noted:

Historically language grew up in the service of participative thinking and performed acts, and it begins to serve abstract thinking only in the present day of its history. The expression of a performed act from within and the expression of once-occurrent Being-as-event in which that act is performed require the entire fullness of the word: its content/sense aspect (the word as concept) as well as its palpable-expressive aspect (the word as image) and its emotional-volitional aspect (the intonation of the word) in their unity. (1999: 31)

I am, of course, not suggesting that ‘etymology is destiny’, but rather that language is layered with both defined meanings and affective residues and that it may offer extensions of analytical value at least equal to the historical contextualization. In that sense, I have made extensive use of the proverbs and sayings from the Field, discussed proximity through local idioms and spatial expressions and found clues about the calendar in the tradition of Gacko epics.

Remnants craft connections to the past, but they also interfere, trespass on the proposed present. Yugoslav communism was disrupted by remnants of earlier social forms. Banned rituals were continually practised when the state was not present and pilgrimages were made in secret. An institutionalized ideology until recently, communism now also lurks in the pile of affective

materialities. Several nationalist projects from the 1990s produced further incompleteness. It remains relatively easy to name the ideology that induced destruction in any given Bosnian locale. An artificial distinction between Self and Other entered the landscapes through a process of defining the former and obliterating the latter. Sacral architecture was systematically destroyed. Houses were burned and often branded with fascist logos. Places were represented in the image of new power relations. Over two hundred thousand people were killed and two million more displaced (ICRC Report 1999: ii).

There is an uneasiness inherent to the counting of dead bodies and the mapping of identities. Political quantifications of the human suffering produced by the 1990s war in Bosnia lack the complexity of intimate narratives. I have thus decided to use only qualitative research methods. The product is a certain kind of inherently incomplete ‘map from within’. It locates the various entanglements protruding in the landscapes. By entanglements, I do not imply the relationships of those groups that were officially polarized by the 1990s war, namely Serbs (Orthodox), Bosniaks (Muslims) and Croats (Catholics). To speak of those kinds of entanglements would be akin to the simple identity politics that take the Ohio map as their starting point.

Has the violence been successful? Most of this book looks at the Field of Gacko, one of the most polarized places in the world. Yet, even there, different kinds of proximity resonate in the landscape. ‘Active’ encounters between Muslims and Serbs have been drastically reduced, but proximities remained embodied in daily practices, places, rituals and language. Even *after* mixing, the shared character of inherited religion/landscape constitutes a certain kind of meeting, in the same way that Elijah’s chair is the silent, unshakeable witness (see Preface). One example of these ‘post-encounters’ is given in Chapter 4: a nationalist song about the destruction of the Gacko landscape is composed through shared images and utterances. These seemingly unseverable proximities lurk behind the most unobtrusive details of everyday life, like the handling of crops, the narration of a personal memory, or the utterance of a toponym.

## Big History, Historicity and the Body

Alas, my child. Big History. But, our people did not write history. The Serbs did. The Croats did too. So much could have been written about this Kula if there were older people. But, there are none left. There are no old people here anymore. I think that I am the oldest one here, in this Kula.

—Fata, interlocutor from the Field

Fata’s lament over historiography raises a number of questions vital for this work, firstly in terms of my methodological and ethical investment and then



with regards to the research methods employed. History often sources from the already objectified. Yet, as Fata said, it can also be taken from the body, the old body in particular. It can be gathered for one purpose or another, moulded into a static piece of evidence, the body as an object. What happens when we tackle the past through the body as a subject? Faced with the historicity of the old body, the oldest one left in the village, I became frightened of the power of writing, and writing over, of the larger-than-life historical fact and anthropological metaphor. At the same time, Fata offered to me, by way of her own old body, the possibility of writing as a resistance to writing. She described the chasm of being between others' histories. Bodies engage with history in different ways. Bodies also literally are history, positioned and dynamic. They can speak to other bodies, of places and landscapes with which they have an old intimacy. The young bodies extend the past of old bodies, but also open novel directions for it. As I show in Chapter 2, the problem of continuity of the Field was located in the absence of intimate proximity between the young and the old.

I was thus left with the question of how to write a portrayal of bodies and landscapes – a dynamic being of history engaged with both the past and the future – that would not become a historiography. The waiting of the Field and the storytelling about the old waiting for Elijah may also be described as 'historicity', as discussed by Eric Hirsch and Charles Stewart (2005). For them, the term

describes a human situation in flow, where versions of the past and future (of persons, collectives or things) assume present form in relation to events, political needs, available cultural forms and emotional dispositions'. . . . Reconfiguring 'historicity' to index the fuller qualities of this social and personal relationship to the past and future makes it a complex social and performative condition, rather than an objectively determinable aspect of historical descriptions. Historicity in this sense is the manner in which persons operating under the constraints of social ideologies make sense of the past, while anticipating the future. (ibid: 262)

It is this intimacy with the past, sensing one's body that is 'of history' but also a possibility of the future, that comes across in the narratives about the Field's annual calendar interrupted in the 1990s. Responding to the fragility of the present, Elijah and George stepped out of the mytho-historical framework to assume the flesh of the Field's ('ethno'-) religious communities. As I noted, the 'Alija-Ilija' figure of speech was previously double coded to include the shorthand for the communities of the Field, but in the post-1990s, this 'second code' augmented, because it already had the possibility (and perhaps even the function) of responding to change.

One question I decided to tackle is whether this response can be affective and nonconscious (see Chapter 4). Looking at the Greek island of Naxos,

Stewart (2012) found that dreams may attain a collective agentive quality and become expressive of historical consciousness, but a consciousness that also responds to the present and anticipates, or moulds, the future. This book is about a certain kind of (day)dreaming, a rich storytelling about the past time-reckoning and encounters. Memories, then, are comparable to dreams; they absorb concerns to become the body's coping method (cf. Antze and Lambek 1996: xii).

Whilst only the Chapter 4 delves into nonconscious historicity, which I have called the 'grammar of the body', the other chapters look at the affectivity of remnants (cf. Navaro-Yashin 2009, 2012). They show how the body communicates between its own past, present and future. Stewart (2012: 196) argued that ('standard Western') historiography traditionally eschewed such forms of historicization. The value of this work is in the fact that it speaks to the past and replies to it from the perspective of positioned bodies, whilst attempting to walk around the traps of 'Big History' and ethnography.

If such a positioned project is indeed feasible, what would be its purpose? Is it justifiable to steer clear of the political implications of entering this dialogic space between the body and history? The encouragement to couple research findings with a visible 'impact' strategy has a problematic inheritance. The post-Holocaust Nuremberg Code proposed that research 'experiments' with humans ought to 'yield fruitful results for the good of the society, unprocurable by other methods or means of study and not random and unnecessary in nature' (Nuremberg Military Tribunals 1949: 182). Although addressing medical experimentation, the Code prepared the grounds for later anthropological discourses (cf. Ransome 2013: 29–32). The 'UK anthropologist' is guided towards a research ethics by which findings are communicated 'for the benefit of the widest possible community' (ASA 2012: V-1). With regard to anything written and published, there exists a possibility that it may have some 'impact', that it will 'further', 'illuminate', 'change', 'keep', 'testify to' some social process, be it an 'academic debate' or 'the state of "human rights" in Guatemala'. We often strive for those possibilities, without being able to ascertain the consequences of our work.

What kinds of effect may this book produce? Eno, one of the first returnees to the village of Kula in the Field, repeatedly told me of his trust that my work would make a difference in the geopolitical constellation that marginalizes groups of people in the Field. Such a responsibility I can neither accept nor discard. The best that can be done, I think, is to write decisively, with the multitude of narratives in mind and not infringe upon one's interlocutors' lives with further violent abstractions. Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1995) called for a politically committed anthropology. I have imagined Gačani asking me the same question she received from the inhabitants of Alto do Cruzeiro,

‘What is anthropology to us, anyway?’ (ibid: 411). This research, not least due to its excruciatingly slow pace, cannot answer any of the urgent needs my interlocutors continue to face. It can, however, question the various political shifts and strategies of nationalist violence in Bosnia, and point towards the discrepancies between the Field as a lived space and Gacko as an ideology in construction.

These processes are not solely pertinent to human actors of the landscapes. What might be ethical research into soil, water and trees? Environmental and heritage protection discourses are frequently poorly attuned to the complexities of landscaped relationships. The thermal power plant in the centre of the Field has been, in many ways, detrimental to both the human and the nonhuman environment. It has buried one locus of Elijah’s Day festivities and polluted the dwelling areas of the nomadic Gurbeti communities. The Devon Karst Research Society (2007) described the situation as ‘nothing short of a total disaster’. On the other hand, through the forty years of its existence, the plant has generated employment, new relationships and memories. These latter layers complicate the ‘nature conservation’ discourses. Similar questions may be raised for other landscapes, such as Djevojačka Pećina, a cave in central Bosnia, which is visited by thousands of pilgrims each August. The walls at its entrance have accumulated various etchings over centuries and in an attempt to preserve the ‘outstanding value’ of these etchings, the local government has put up a metal fence around them (see HadžiMuhamedović 2012). Ironically, the same human–nonhuman relationship that has been ‘protected’ is simultaneously being denied to contemporary pilgrims. Charlotte Joy’s (2012) work on heritage conservation in Mali raised a similar question. What does conservation imply for the local community beyond a recreation of an imagined ‘authentic’ past? Rather than advocating for or against the fence around the walls of the Djevojačka Pećina, this book finds its ethical grounding by recognizing the variety of processes that shape its landscape and other landscapes across Bosnia.

Inextricable from the projection of purpose is the question of motivation. Why am I researching ‘shared’ ‘Bosnian’ ‘landscapes’? What impelled me to ask certain questions? Pat Caplan (2003: 16) has noted that, since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the war in Bosnia, violent identity politics have moved the discussion of ethics towards the discourse of human rights. By approaching certain kinds of phenomena through my writing, I inevitably seek to amplify their presence. The fact that I was an ‘eye-witness’ to the violence of the 1990s did, without any doubt, inform some of my early research questions. The central one is obvious: how can we interpret the simultaneity of shared lives and exclusivist political programmes? I have relied on the methodology of hermeneutics, which, as Renato Rosaldo (1989: 7) has noted, depends

on interpretive repositioning: 'Ethnographers begin with a set of questions, revise them throughout the course of inquiry, and in the end emerge with different questions than they started with'.

The methodology of hermeneutics significantly altered the 'spatial' scope of my fieldwork. The initial plan of spending one calendar year in the town of Gacko was replaced by a particular kind of multi-sited research. Firstly, because of the large-scale wartime emigration from Gacko, communication with some of my interlocutors moved to other towns or to so-called 'cyber-space'. In this space, Gacko is a place deeply related to the tangible landscape of its origins, yet one that exists in a parallel dimension. Photographs and memories are exchanged. Visitors are not 'virtual': they all know each other. Central to this exchange is a website intriguingly entitled *Gacko in my mind* (<http://www.gacko.net/>). It is a place that exists, not in the tangible town, but rather in spite of such Gacko. Marianne Hirsch and Leo Spitzer (2010) have written about the afterlife of Czernowitz, a place sustained in the memory of the displaced Jews, yet one that 'cannot be found in any contemporary atlas' (ibid: xiii). It was maintained through memories that amalgamated the beauty of home and the pain of persecutions. 'Gacko in my mind' similarly exists in a shared cognitive atlas. It informs the displaced Gačani (people from Gacko) about funerals, weddings, newspaper articles, political and everyday problems, as well as the major festivals. It is updated by people who now live in Mostar and the U.S.A. The antipode to *Gacko in my mind* is 'The Official Internet Presentation of Gacko Municipality' (*Opština Gacko: zvanična internet prezentacija*, [gacko-rs.info](http://gacko-rs.info)). It provides thorough details on the political structure of the municipality and a 'short history' of the town. In this short, big history, all references to non-Serbs and traditions Serbs 'share' with others have been carefully omitted.

These two opposing 'virtual' landscapes assert their online authority differently. *Gacko in my mind*, like countless other web presentations and discussions of displaced Bosnian communities, pieces together an elaborate 'memoryscape' from particular intimacies with the landscape. Memoryscapes, as Nuttall (1992: 39) noted, are constructed through 'mental images of the environment', particularly through remembered places. For the displaced Gačani, this discursive process is closely related to their feelings of distance and inaccessibility. Landscapes are also memorialized as an act of resistance. Both the 'official' and the 'imagined' Gacko websites have a page dedicated to the history of the town. The former provides a short article, which selectively spans the pertinent 'historical facts'. 'Officially', Gacko is thus 'in Serb Herzegovina and the Serb Republic', and is 'the cradle of Serb spirituality and folk literacy'. The page lists census data, with particular reference to the number of Serbs, thus providing evidence that they were always the majority:

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Year 1991	10,844 inhabitants (6,723 Serbs, 3,795 Muslims, others 2,179)
Year 2001	10,500 inhabitants

(gacko-rs.info)

According to the census in 1991, the website notes, there were 6,723 Serbs, 3,795 Muslims and 2,179 others. It does not note, or engage with the reasons for, the absence of the ‘non-Serb’ half of the population in 2001. The category ‘others’ here also includes both Yugoslavs and Croats, although they would have been officially recognized nationalities; in the 1991 census, the term ‘others’ was actually used to describe ‘non-constitutive’ categories, such as the Roma or the non-defined. The ‘official’ history of Gacko also defines major events, namely the Serb uprisings against the Ottomans and, later, the Nazis.

*Gacko in my mind*, in contrast, approaches the past through an assemblage. Visitors are invited to improve the website by sending ‘Gacko-related documents, photographs, drawings, etc’. Snippets of books, poems and written narratives are available as a space for discussion, rather than promoting an outline for the reading of history. Photographs, stories and reports are grouped in series such as ‘Forgotten Gacko’ or ‘The Gacko that does not exist’. This virtualized memoryscape is decidedly against ethnic divisions and wants to ‘gather all those for whom Gacko was the place of their birth, who carry Gacko in their hearts, and who have any other link to Gacko, whether they have been expelled, returned or remained there’. When the authors invite contributions, they also warn against ‘religious, national, racial, gender and any other kind of segregation’.

Noting the frequent status of remembered places as symbolic anchors for dispersed communities, Gupta and Ferguson (1997: 39) argue that the very denial of firm territories generates attachments to imagined communities. This tension between the ‘official’ and the ‘imagined’ Gacko websites is relevant to Fata’s comment on history. The official history of Gacko, in the tradition of political histories, centres on a number of selective references to events. Fernand Braudel (1972: 21) called it *l’histoire événementielle*: ‘the history of events: surface disturbances, crests of foam that the tides of history carry on their strong backs. A history of brief, rapid, nervous fluctuations’. In Fata’s words, this is Big History. I capitalize the term to express the systematic, disciplinary model of such historical construction. Eventful history picks its events and interprets them. They stand as mere signifiers in need of appropriation. Paul Carter (2010: xvi) has coined the term ‘imperial history’ to denote the kind of history that reduces space to a stage. Its goal, he noted, is not to interpret but to legitimate, ‘Orphaned from their unique spatial and temporal context, such objects, such historical facts, can be fitted-out with new paternities’ (ibid). Projects pertaining to historiographize Bosnian landscapes are numerous and appear in various forms. The value of

careful description drawn from the intimacy of the body is in the attempt to look beyond the 'Big History' that Fata problematized, towards more telling kinds of temporalities.

## Following Time through Space

It was through *Gacko in my mind* that I first approached what I call, for lack of a better term, 'tangible' Gacko. I read about the prewar rituals shared by the Orthodox, Muslim and Gurbeti communities. Elijah's Day, I learnt, saw a large number of displaced people return to the Field; for most, however, this return was little more than a day trip. Human displacement was thus the first issue to require a widening of the spatial scope of my research. The second problem was, as I soon found, that the war had also dislodged time.

Elijah's Day cannot be understood outside of a well-structured annual cycle. George's Day, once inextricable from the calendar, is no longer celebrated, and a number of other 'common places' have become mere references. This was crucial to my methodological shift. What or who is the object/subject of my study? Instead of turning to place – the township of Gacko with its surrounding villages – or a group of spatially and temporally dislodged people who have once lived or continue to live in Gacko – I decided to approach the annual cycle and a variety of harvest-related rituals. This required a particular kind of multi-temporal and multi-sited fieldwork. I visited various pilgrimage places, festivities and smaller rituals within and outside of the state. The more places I visited, the more pieces of the 'time puzzle' that became apparent to me.

Even my research in the Field could be described as multi-sited as most of my conversations occurred in the many satellite villages around the town. Some of these villages have been polarized to the point where they can only be researched as separate loci. Branching out of a single site (however defined) allowed for productive reconfiguration of the key questions. It made sense to record conversations about food, crops, cattle, medicinal herbs and so on. The specificities of the calendar in the Field also became more noticeable. For example, the absence of the George's Day fertility rituals in the returnee's villages was understandable as young women and the Gurbeti communities were once central to this Day; in 2011/2012, there was only one Muslim girl and no Gurbeti in the Field.

This multi-sited fieldwork disrupts the geopolitical divisions of contemporary Bosnia and Herzegovina. Closely related rituals and narratives have been found on both sides of the 'inter-entity' border, as well as in Palestine and other countries. Rather than accepting the logic of recent changes, multi-sited research, as George Marcus noted (1995: 105), follows threads,

conjunctions and juxtapositions bound together by the research question. As such, this book could only benefit from further spatial and temporal extensions, beyond the Bosnian contexts.

My archival and library research in London, Sarajevo, Tuzla and Kreševo has facilitated this process. Conversations with friends and colleagues who have lived or worked in other contexts have informed me of additional connections between Bosnian and other sacral geographies. The possible extensions were a reminder that careful spatial and temporal boundaries, however artificial, need to be drawn for the purpose of narrative. The scope of this inquiry was limited by my one-year fieldwork in Bosnia and stints of investigation in Palestine and Israel. Research into the annual calendar as a particular social situation depended upon a given definition of its temporal and spatial boundaries. As George Kingsley Garbett (1970: 216) noted, the extent of these boundaries as well as any increase in the events, actors and cultural forms included, all add to the complexity of a situation. My work in the Field may thus be seen as the central part of an extended case study. Synchronic and diachronic extensions into secondary sites and other parts of the calendar have informed and tested my theoretical generalizations.

Marcus (1995) considered several ‘tracking categories’ in multi-sited fieldwork. The one I employed – following time through space – is perhaps closest to his analysis of ‘following plot, story or allegory’ (109), for the folk calendar is a relatively well-structured story. It includes actors, relationships, expositions, climaxes and resolutions (see Chapters 1 and 5). Particular versions of the story will have some of their pages torn out, especially after durable political pressures. The missing pages found elsewhere are often scribbled over, adapted, printed in different colours, but the main actors and their agentive qualities will make the binding possible. The pieced collection could be understood as both a single story and many independent and diverging stories. I have come to know the Bosnian folk calendar through an inductive approach, from a web of experiences and data; my attempt here is to simultaneously present some possible unified interpretations and the more focused idiosyncrasies.

## Census and Consensus: Scalar Obstacles

I have indicated that this book builds on my multi-sited explorations, well beyond the Field. However, as I have conducted the majority of my research in the Field, my arguments are primarily ‘grounded’ in the knowledge about the lives of its people and their Georgic traditions.<sup>16</sup> This, I hope, has softened my own generalizations, and made this project useless for the prevalent forms of identitary violence in Bosnia. At the same time, my research in the

Field was multi-sited itself. I worked in different locales, which experienced almost no active interchange.

Although the Field is not a large physical space, there is an intricate problem to its definition as a unit of analysis. This problem can be broken down in terms of spatial and temporal scalar obstacles. They do not allow an easy 'socio-demographic' snapshot of the Field. Firstly, I have noticed that villages beyond the actual karst field, sometimes beyond the mountain, as in the cases of Ključ and Cernica, belong to the same symbolic and social network. Only on the surface were they 'physically' separated – the steep mountain passage of Sedlo, initially invisible to me, was used to make the crossing, particularly for Elijah's Day. Secondly, Gacko as a toponym may designate either the whole municipality with the villages, or the town proper only. Thirdly, one village often serves as the gravitational point for other smaller villages and hamlets. Again, this larger village toponym may be a reference to the whole cluster or only to itself. Finally, the substantial 'migrant' communities have complicated the problem of locating the Field. It now spreads over 'diasporic' and 'virtual' networks. For all of these reasons, my work does not pertain to a municipality or a physically mappable landscape.

In terms of temporal scales of residence, people in the Field belonged to several distinct groups: those who did not leave the Field in the 1990s; those who left in the early 1990s and returned after 1999; those who left in the early 1990s and took temporary residence in the Field during the warm season; those who left before or in the early 1990s and visited the Field for one or a few days (mostly for Elijah's Day); and, finally, those who left before or in the early 1990s and did not return. Each of these groups dealt with different contexts of identity, legal and economic politics.

These spatiotemporal issues are intimately related to one overtly political scalar problem encapsulated in the controversies over the 2013 'Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in Bosnia and Herzegovina'. The results of the census were eventually published but remain unrecognized by the Republika Srpska government (which published its own, entity-specific version), partly because of the disagreements over the definition of resident population. The battle revolves around the people who have claimed residence in places like Gacko, mostly as returnees, but take residence elsewhere on a part-time or permanent basis. The results of the census thus determine whether 'part-time' and 'potential' future returnees are politically visible and measurable. For this work, it raises an important question on the disclosure of anthropological data. Is it ethically justifiable to provide quantified descriptions that might risk playing into the political campaigns pertaining to define territory and belonging and thus hinder future return? In providing you with an image that the state (and its would-be state of Republika Srpska) 'sees', I thus refrain, for the most part, from verifying any of the data.



TABLE 0.1 Gacko population, census comparison

	Total	Serb	Muslim	Croat	Yugoslav	Montenegrin	Roma
1981	10,279	6,215	3,424	21	380	215	0
1991	10,788	6,661	3,858	29	84	112	4
	Total	Serb	Bosniak	Croat	Undeclared/	Others/	Unknown
2013 prelim.	9,734	?	?	?		?	
2013 B&H	8,990	8,556	369	15		3/41/6	
2013 RS	8,710	8,316	332	13		3/40/6	

*Source:* Retrieved from census details published by Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1993), Grabeljšek et al. (1983), Agency for Statistics in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2013, 2016) and Republika Srpska Institute for Statistics (2017).

In 2013, brief preliminary results of the 2013 census had been published, noting only the number of entered or enumerated persons, households and dwellings (see Table 0.1). After some reconsideration, the Agency for Statistics in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) published its final results in 2016, followed by the Republika Srpska Institute for Statistics' (RS) own results in 2017, which both included an ethnic/religious enumeration. Everyone except Serbs, Croats and Muslims ('Bosniak' in the new census) were counted as 'others', 'undeclared' or 'unknown'. The overall Gacko population, which stayed roughly the same between 1981 and 1991, decreased by 1,054 in the preliminary results of the 2013 census and by 1,798/2,078 in the final results. The difference between the preliminary and the two versions of the final results probably has to do with the political tensions over the definition of 'permanent residency'. Muslims made 35.7%, Serbs 61.6% and all 'others' 2.1% of the total population in the 1991 census (not taking 'Yugoslavs' into account). In the state-published 2013 census, Bosniaks make 4.1%, Serbs 95.1% and all 'others' 0.5% of the total population. This stark difference would suggest that only 9.5% of the prewar Muslim ('Bosniak') population and 16% of some 'others' have returned, although this percentage is actually significantly lower, as it does not take into account the seasonal residents. There is a similar problem in other Bosnian municipalities. Wagner (2008: 5) noticed that although the return to Srebrenica, as in Gacko, started in 1999 and property had largely been returned to the prewar owners by 2005, actual permanent return was 'conspicuously low'.

I have not conducted any primary statistical research as part of my fieldwork. It included around 200 interlocutors who reside or used to reside in Gacko, and many more in other areas of Bosnia. In the Field, I have focused on two villages – Kula and Nadanići – where Elijah's Day took place. Because

these are clusters of hamlets, I reference a more specific toponym to clarify some statements. When my interlocutors said that they are ‘the only returnees’ or ‘the oldest person in their village’, the claim functioned within the specific spatial context. Instead of defining any ‘sample’ of my interlocutors at the beginning of fieldwork, I approached the villages of Kula and Nandanići and followed stories by ‘branching out’. As I attempted to grasp the flow of temporary migration, visits and holidays, I often gained interlocutors unexpectedly and for a short period of time. It was relatively difficult to estimate their economic status as the well-off Gačani from the diaspora sometimes took great care not to ‘show off’ when they visited. I was told that there are around forty returnee families, mostly to the village of Kula and surrounding hamlets. However, the households were often inhabited by one or two elderly people. (Counting returnee and ethnic bodies is a highly controversial endeavour, even without the politicized results of the 2013 census.) Looking through the listings by age from the 1991 census, it struck me that there were 161 children below fourteen years of age in the village of Kula and eight of its thirteen hamlets.<sup>17</sup> In 2011/2012, only one child, Kanita, lived in the same space, near an empty school optimistically reconstructed after the war.

### Measuring Yugoslav Time and Ethno-national Territory

My interlocutors argued that Gacko was a relatively well-off area of ex-Yugoslavia. Their subsistence relied mostly on farming and, to a lesser extent, agriculture, and they were known for the local cow breed, as well as quality meat and dairy products. However, statistical data shows a significant increase in urban population between 1981 and 1991, which roughly corresponds to the decrease in rural population over the same time, but also to the number of employees in the mines and thermal power plant in Gacko (Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina 1993, Grablješek et al. 1983).

The sudden modernization might be gauged from the alluringly concise propaganda documentary, *Construction of Mine and Thermal Power Plant Gacko (Izgradnja rudnika i termoelektrane Gacko)*. It was made by Hajrudin Kravac (1984), a Yugoslav director celebrated for the ‘partisan’ genre. The film begins with images of shepherds running after herds of sheep and horses through the Field in front of the power plant and a narrative on the brutality of the bare life of the peasant. The narrator states: ‘Here, the human being is destined to be born, to leave and never return, or stay and battle the cold and the wolves, wretched fate and such a god, always getting worse

and worse, always after the flock – one’s only hope’. Through the next hour, the film describes the ‘glorious’ transformation of landscape in meticulous detail. These necessitous humans of the Field, it says, grew crops and buried their dead, but could not even suspect the immeasurable layers of coal lying beneath, which were about to change their destiny. To this day, however, people in Gacko remember that the plant was constructed on top of the old locus of Elijah’s Day celebrations in Jasike, thus violently displacing their most important annual ritual. Knowingly or not, the film underscores this spatiotemporal intervention. The narrator notes: ‘Time here will once be measured like this: there will be the time before the mine and the thermal power plant and there will be the time after them’. However, time, as encapsulated by the traditional calendar, persisted – the Muslim celebrations of Elijah’s Day festivities were moved to the village of Kula. The film brings rare footage from before, during and after the violent modernization. We get to see perhaps the last traditional horse races at Jasike juxtaposed to the power plant in 1974: ‘old’ and ‘new’ time beside to each other.

A curious discussion started online <http://www.gacko.net>, when the editors of the portal, who live in the United States, concluded that they recognized Jasike on an old illustration from a nineteenth-century edition of the British weekly newspaper *The Graphic* (see Z.Z. and Homogeceka 2010). The 1877 illustration and the 1974 footage speak of a ‘long-gone’ place that still lingers in the memories of the Field. The plant, just like the more recent nationalist histories, somehow failed its purpose; it never became the sole measure of time.

The decrease in agricultural activity, according to the documentary, was the socialist dream. The plant was supposed to emancipate. Its actual effects on rural economy were staggering. Between 1971 and 1991, we see a sharp decline in the number of sheep, horses and cows owned and the percentage of actively agricultural in overall active population slides from 83.6% in 1971 to only 17% in 1991 (see Table 0.2).

**TABLE 0.2** Agriculture in Gacko, census comparison

	Number of sheep	Number of horses	Number of cows	Percentage of people actively agricultural in overall active population
1971	64,166	2,414	9,719	83.6%
1981	51,887	1,225	8,953	42.2%
1991	41,829	466	7,083	17%

*Source:* Retrieved from census details published by the Republican Bureau of Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1991) and Federal Bureau of Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1998a).

Judging by the official reports, the company Mines and Power Plant Gacko (RiTE Gacko) employed 1,600 people in 2013 and 1,774 people in 2014 (National Assembly of Republika Srpska 2015). This is 19.7% of the overall Gacko population according to the 2013 state-published census. At the same time, the company has not employed a single returnee. So, whom did they employ? Branislav Milekić, the General Director of the Power Utility of Republika Srpska reported that special care was taken that the new employees should come from ‘the lines of soldier categories, families of deceased soldiers, disabled persons and the socially endangered’ (ibid). The returnees generally argued that employment was given on an ‘ethno-political’ basis or ‘friend and party lines’. At the time of my fieldwork, the press reported that the company had employed around one hundred members of the ruling Republika Srpska party (SNSD) as well as by recommendation of the regional Orthodox bishop (Vukanović 2012).

### **Ethnography after Ethnic Cleansing?**

The making of connections towards a larger story is often achieved by zooming out of the temporal and spatial map. The ‘particular’ is used to paint the picture; it is put to work for various tropes. The ‘smaller scales’ – the intimate, the local, the vernacular, the idiosyncratic and other literary acts, in turn, are given as the substance – such stuff as abstractions are made of. This division is understood to require constant shifts from ‘synthetic’ to ‘analytic’ methods of perception (see e.g. Vernon 1971: 202–4). The problem with fitting the detail into the larger picture, as Sari Wastell (2001) has pointed out, is that it already presumes an evaluative judgement:

The presence or absence of scale is important because when one talks about, for example, ‘global’ as opposed to ‘local’, the scale is already in place. Nothing is particularly ‘local’ unless it is measured against something ‘bigger’, less ‘local’ than itself – and here so many prejudices flee from analytical view . . . The scale insists that we accept each manifestation of a local context as a constituent element of a global whole, each local perspective as a subjective position in an objective reality. (ibid: 186)

The ‘detail’ is fixed to the ‘whole’, both inherently imagined in each other. However, while these scales should be problematized, they cannot be escaped; they have reified – transformed into facts of being – the knowledge and practice of relation. Ethnographies harnessing the (already positioned) ‘particular’ still may be able to destabilize the presumptions of their own ‘particularity’. And, more importantly, they have the potential to act as a critical obstacle to easy ‘synthetic’ accounts.

Throughout this book, intimacy (my interlocutors' and my own) with the Field of Gacko has been useful in inquiring into the possibility of scales. It has allowed for a turn towards a bodily relation to proximity and distance, a 'thick description', as Geertz (1993) called it:

If anthropological interpretation is *constructing a reading* of what happens, then to divorce it from what happens — from what, in this time or that place, specific people say, what they do, what is done to them, and from the whole business of the world — is to divorce it from its *applications* and render it vacant. (ibid: 18, emphasis mine)

Importantly, 'thick description' should not simply situate the arguments, but also the researcher. I sometimes wonder which 'I', I am supposed to situate, the one before or the one after this research? (The two are far apart; the latter one visits a lush, wide-limbed oak in Hampstead Heath in London – Elijah's Tree – on 2 August.) The Field situates us as well. When they told me their world; it spilled into mine.<sup>18</sup> I apologize, but I cannot be your native to anything clear-cut. So, instead of the more usual introductory paragraphs, I offer reflexive moments throughout the book.

To bridge the traps of abstraction and particularity, Anna L. Tsing (2004: 2) called for the study of 'friction', 'the sticky materiality of practical encounters' through which the abstract scales are enacted. My methodological choice of also turning to friction implies a necessary complication of any recognized scale, be it the national or the traditional calendric structure in Bosnia. This research points to various deficiencies of ethnography as the name for its written outcome. The 'ethnie' (or 'ethnos') in ethnography needs to be qualified or abandoned. It has abstract boundaries and dangerous consequences. It allows us to present phrases like 'ethnic conflict' (or 'ethnic hatred', 'coexistence', 'mixing' and 'cleansing') as analytical concepts. What could the 'ethnie' in ethnography possibly signify? A biological subspecies of race, a culture, or, perhaps, a group of people strung together by religious, territorial and linguistic affiliation? The analytical shift from race to culture to ethnicity has been gradual (Jenkins 1999: 87). Ethnicity became a commonplace for anthropology only in the 1960s (ibid) and the fact that it has persisted into the twenty-first century is remarkable. Ethnography is not a floating signifier: it perpetuates its object, the ethnie, and when this object is more difficult to pinpoint, we manage to find it anyway. Arjun Appadurai's concept of 'ethnoscapes' only managed to spread the 'ethnie' over a differently imagined spatial horizon: 'The landscapes of group identity – the ethnoscapes – around the world are no longer familiar anthropological objects, insofar as groups are no longer tightly territorialized, spatially bounded, historically unselfconscious, or culturally homogeneous' (1991: 48).

Perhaps we cannot afford any longer to group the findings that go against the above-mentioned boundaries under the common signifier of ethnogra-

phy. Recognizing discourses and practices of ethnicity is one thing; recognizing ethnicity as an object of analysis is something else. Ethnographers have successfully problematized the kind of evidence upon which ethnographies are constructed; the remaining problem is what ethnographies are constructed to be the evidence of. Lévi-Strauss has noted this problem of representation: ‘Both history and ethnography are concerned with societies *other* than the one in which we live. Whether this *otherness* is due to remoteness in time (however slight), or to remoteness in space, or even to cultural heterogeneity, is of secondary importance compared to the basic similarity of perspective’ (1963: 16).

More often than not, groups with ‘essences’ feature in our writing and, although we are disturbing these collectivizations, the very name we ascribe to our project speaks to the contrary. We are not only critical observers of collective meanings; we are participants in their creation and perpetuation. Ethnogenesis, as it pertains to Bosnia, expands this argument; working from/towards ethnies implies a field of vision that accepts collective essence and essential boundaries. Marcus Banks (1996), in the introduction to his book on the anthropological constructions of ethnicity, sets the problem with eleven quotations pertaining to the definition of ethnicity. What becomes obvious is that there is no unified interpretation, which has probably helped the term creep into contemporary scholarship. Ethnicity, Banks notes, is nothing more than ‘a collection of rather simplistic and obvious statements about boundaries, otherness, goals and achievements, being and identity, descent and classification, that has been constructed as much by the anthropologist as by the subject’ (ibid: 5).

For researchers working in Bosnia, ethnicized research also implies acceptance of the nationalist *modus operandi*. Within the contemporary political boundaries of Bosnia and Herzegovina, ethnicity cannot be taken as the scale (or, is it scope?) of inquiry without certain levels of violence and exclusion. Officially, according to the postwar Bosnian Constitution, there are three ‘constitutive peoples’ and ‘the others’. The constitutive peoples, namely Croats, Serbs and Bosniaks, are entities equated with the Catholic, Orthodox and Muslim communities, respectively. The designation ‘others’, which swallows up the identities of sizeable and historically present communities, exhibits their unimportance to the nationalist project(s). Strongly bounded ethnicities were the prerequisite for the partition of Bosnia. The Catholic Croats would merge with the state of Croatia and the Orthodox Serbs with Serbia. The logic was to homogenize territories on the ‘one religion, one nation, one language, one state’ model.

As Duijzings (2003: 4) has pointed out, national identities in the Western Balkans were a nineteenth-century superimposition over religious identities: ‘The image of fixed, stable and permanent ethnic groups and of “ancient

ethnic hatreds” in the Balkans is misleading and inaccurate from both historical and anthropological perspectives’. There was not a single religiously ‘homogeneous’ township in Bosnia prior to the 1990s war. From the nationalist perspective, however, the three ‘ethnies’ continue to be misrepresented as respectively coherent and all those who have difficulty fitting themselves into this tripartite image have been erased. ‘Others’ are not legitimate candidates for membership in the Presidency or the House of Peoples. Dervo Sejdić, a Roma activist, and Jakob Finci, a Jewish politician, recently successfully contested this Constitutional provision before the European Court of Human Rights. The judgement, reached in 2009, has yet to be implemented, however.

My interlocutors used a number of words, sometimes interchangeably, to identify themselves. Many were frustrated with choices on offer, especially those who had lived under Yugoslavia or who belong to ‘mixed’ families and ‘mixed’ communities. Some preferred the term ‘Bosnian’ for all Bosnian citizens; some found their Yugoslav identity to be a stronger mode of resistance. In the Field, however, I encountered a conflation of Serb identity with Orthodox Christianity. For the Muslims, at least those who had returned, the naming situation was somewhat ‘simpler’. Muslim was both a communal and a religious designation, which is probably largely due to the ethnic provisions of the socialist Yugoslavia, which recognized a Muslim ethnicity. Some Gacko Muslims, however, employed the term ‘Bosniak’ as well, reflecting the development of the nationalizing vocabulary since the 1990s.<sup>19</sup> The meanings inferred by ‘Serb’ and ‘Bosniak’ were equally incoherent, ranging from reference to pan-national identities to just a word for a local community with certain traditions. In other parts of Bosnia, Catholics have faced the confusing processes of Croat ethnicization. The Catholic clergy in the town of Stolac adamantly preached the national unity of all Croats during the 2012 Elijah’s Day celebrations. Yet, in many other towns in central and northern Bosnia, Catholics often described themselves as Bosnians or Bosnian Croats. Duijzings (2003) has argued that the violence of the 1990s reinforced national identities within communities that previously lacked loyalties of such strength. The initially confusing tapestry of identity politics, violence, memories and self-definitions is a product of different kinds of ideological and actual proximity/distance experienced by people over a relatively short span of time.

Religious (or, ‘ethnic’) background as an organizing principle of life in Bosnia is arguably not a new occurrence. Yet, strong territorial boundaries of ethnic groups, as ratified through the Dayton Agreement, certainly are (Hromadžić 2012: 32). As Halilovich (2013: 10) has pointed out, although the ideology of ethnicity was crucial to both the violence of the war of the 1990s and its aftermath, ‘the emphasis on ethnicity as a natural and political

group identity of Bosnians has come at the expense of shared place-based local identities – defined by local geography, cultural norms, dialect, kinship, neighbourliness, a common way of life and embodied relationship with the place and social networks’ (2013: 10). The group identifiers in this book cannot be true to all the different definitions encountered. I have opted for the ones used by most of my interlocutors in a given place. Thus, in looking at Gacko, I re-employ ‘Serb’ (instead of ‘Orthodox Christian’ or ‘Bosnian’), ‘Muslim’ (instead of ‘Bosniak’ or ‘Bosnian’) and ‘Gurbeti’ (instead of ‘Roma’ or ‘Cigani’ or ‘Bosnian’). Alternatively, I also employ the term ‘Gačani’ (people from Gacko), the word implying a particular notion of non-ethnic local identity.

This research is ‘ethnographic’ inasmuch as it places emphasis on a specific style of research that, as John Brewer (2000: 11) argued, attempts to acquire ‘knowledge of the social world from intimate familiarity with it’. The familiarity is achieved through the key ethnographic method of participant observation. Participant observation is primarily inclined to experiential learning that implies an understanding ‘from within’. This premise relies on the idea that social situations might be better understood after a certain proximity to the humans and nonhumans who take part in them. However, it implies distance too, always being on the outside, analytical.

The ethnopolitical discourses, coming from high-level politicians and clergy, attempt to redefine the spatial and temporal qualities of landscapes. The chief ideologues, however, only occasionally visit the smaller towns and villages. They use the opening ceremonies for memorials and restored or newly built temples to give charged public speeches about ethnic boundaries, historical rights and the dangers of unstable ethnic identities. Throughout the course of the year, however, these discourses trickle down via local politicians, activists and clergy, who, to be respected and voted for, inevitably have intimate ties with their ‘flock’. These local leaders position themselves as gatekeepers and my access often depended on some kind of rapport with them.

The second type of agent is the politically marginalized individual. They sustain landscapes through daily practices, a kind of embodied knowledge. For these bodily dispositions that determine enactments and their perceptions, Bourdieu (see 1990, 2002) employed the notion of ‘habitus’: an ‘embodied history, internalized as second nature and so forgotten as history [that] is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product’ (1990: 56). Turning to habitus as the site of memory (and history) implied accepting minute details of daily practices as evidence of landscapes rooted in the past. These landscapes are acted rather than memorialized. The kind of memory they exhibit is what Henri Bergson (1911) called ‘habit-memory’. It is an embodied memory, shaped by the experienced environment, which



becomes apparent through the ‘action itself, and in the automatic setting in motion of a mechanism adapted to the circumstances’ (ibid: 87). This kind of memory is more resilient to contemporary political and historical discourses. It is a space of condensed social meaning. I frequently asked my interlocutors: Why do you engage in this ritual? What is the meaning of this festivity? The response I heard time and again was: This is how it is done. It has always been done so.

## Roots of Religious Nationalism

The ethnonational terms that I have encountered in the Field have been unevenly amalgamated with religious difference; ‘Muslim’ and ‘Serb’ were often but shorthand for the religious communities. During his fieldwork in a central Bosnian Muslim village, David Henig was asked about the number of Serbs and Croats in his native Czech Republic by people who wanted to know about the Catholic and Orthodox Christians (2011: 22). Similarly, more than twenty years earlier, during her fieldwork, Cornelia Sorabji was asked if she was a Catholic or a Serb (1989: 20–21). These confused designations have much to do with the histories of nationalisms that pertained to define Bosnian (and wider) religious communities. Contemporary religious nationalisms in Bosnia may arguably be traced back to the articulation of Ottoman social pluralism. The *millet* system, which provided some self-government to the religious communities, also defined difference along religious lines. It eventually served as the basis for the imagination of national communities in the nineteenth century and the projects to create new, homogenous nation-states (Banac 1984: 64, Bryant 2016: 4, Henig 2011: 21–22). For example, the Peć patriarchate had jurisdiction over large territories inhabited by Orthodox Christians, including Bosnia (Banac 1984: 64). A similar centralized power was given to the Serbian Orthodox Church in the Yugoslav monarchy (Perica 2002: 8), one that continued in the socialist Yugoslavia. Due to the ‘universalist’ direction of the Muslim *millet*, Bosnian Muslims did not develop their version of religious nationalism at the same time (Todorova 1997: 172–78, Banac 1984: 66).

Vjekoslav Perica (2002) has argued that the rise of religious nationalism in the socialist Yugoslavia has its roots in the ‘ethnicization’ of religion that started much earlier. In the case of Serbian nationalism, based on the Kosovo myth and the cult of ‘ethnic saints’, the gradual fusing of ethno-national and religious identity can be traced at least to the end of the eighteenth century (ibid: 7–8). The full-scale nationalisms of the nineteenth century have been nurtured firstly on linguistic and then on religious difference (Todorova 1997: 176–77). Austria-Hungary, on the other hand, supported both the idea

of *Bošnjaštvo* ('Bosniakness'), a distinct trans-religious Bosnian nationality (Banac 1984: 260) and the development of separate religious and cultural movements. Bosnian Muslims gained an autonomous religious organization and a religious leader (*Reis ul-ulema*) soon after the annexation, in 1882 (Malcolm 1995: 196). This organization was the root of what would later become *Islamska zajednica* (Islamic Community) with jurisdiction over Muslims in all the socialist Yugoslav republics. Bosnian nationality was never introduced and, although the Islamic Community was particularly co-opted by the Yugoslav state (cf. Duijzings 2000: 112), Muslims were not recognized as a nationality until 1968 (Perica 2002: xxiii).

Religious identities and institutions were co-opted into the Yugoslav nationalisms of the Second World War, not only through the equation of religion to ethnicity and the correlated crimes, but also through the fact that the 'leaders of religious organizations backed the nationalist factions directly or indirectly' (Perica 2002: 23). There were high-level endorsements from the Orthodox Church for both the Četniks and Nedić's Nazi regime in Serbia and from the Catholic Church and some Muslim clerics to the Croatian Nazi regime, although many supported the Partisans as well (ibid). After the war, much of the prior religious nationalism, now expressed as anti-Yugoslav sentiment, continued within the various diasporas (ibid: 28).

A number of events throughout the 1980s, after Tito's death, have been related to the strengthening of religious nationalism, from the Međugorje apparitions and the recentring of Kosovo and Bleiburg claims, to the trials of nationalists, many of whom would soon be at the forefront of the new ethno-national parties. In 1990, the Islamic Community commemorated five hundred years of Islam in Bosnia and 'restored' the Ajvatovica pilgrimage, whilst the Serbian Orthodox Church organized a yearlong commemoration of Serbian victims of the Second World War (see Perica 2002: 86, 120 and Henig 2012b: 756). Belaj (2012: 83–85) describes the state reaction to the Međugorje apparitions and the widespread interpretation of the phenomenon as a revival of nationalism, which included police interventions to stop pilgrim access to the site.

### *Teferić and the State*

At the beginning of the twentieth century, four 'cultural-educational' organizations were established in the Austro-Hungarian Bosnia: Gajret for Muslims, Prosvjeta for Serbs, Napredak for Croats and La Benevolencija for Jewish people. With many local branches, they were allowed to organize public events, as well as make use of ethnonyms and national flags (Hadžibe-

gović and Kamberović 1997). During the first Yugoslavia, *Aliđun* festivities in Gacko (at Jasike), with horse races and athletic competitions, were always organized by Gajret, which would provide concessions for the sale of drinks and food. Likewise, Prosvjeta organized the *Ilindan* gatherings in Nadanići. The two organizations cooperated and even had a joint boarding school for high school students (Hasanbegović 2000). All the national/cultural societies were abolished by 1949 in the socialist Yugoslavia (Hadžibegović and Kamberović 1997: 53), although they were ‘revived’ in 1990. After 1949, the coordination of Elijah’s Day in Gacko shifted towards the local branches of the Serbian Orthodox Church and Islamic Community. These institutions increasingly attempted to exert control over the organization of religious events (cf. Sarač-Rujanac 2014: 116, Sorabji 1989: 137–41).

It is difficult to agree on the degree and extent of the pressure that the socialist Yugoslav state applied on religious life in the Bosnian villages. My interlocutors have certainly informed me about some forms of intimidation. For example, party members were expected not to attend religious funerals, even for members of their family, and circumcizing your son risked party interrogation and excommunication. Others have noted bans of rituals and processions, police surveillance of religious practices, expulsions from the party after a child’s christening and imprisonment for those who claimed to have witnessed apparitions (see, for example, Mojzes 1986: 31–33 and Henig 2011: 92, 102).

During this time, many religious practices were thus reserved for the private domain (Henig 2011: 28). Reflecting on the Yugoslav laws from the 1970s, Paul Mojzes has noted: ‘No special permission is needed for activities within church buildings, but for any out-of-door activities permits must be sought, and such permits have often been denied’ (1986: 29). Additionally, Bringa noticed:

[a]n interesting parallel between the way the I.Z [Islamic Community] tended to take over and direct religious customs and rituals that had earlier been initiated by the individual household or the local community, and the way the regional branch of the communist youth organization was taking over the organization of the traditional *teferić* or fair, and, indirectly, the *sijelo* through the Saturday dance. (1995: 250)

One of my interlocutors remembered that *teferić* was banned one year by the Gacko police ‘after some fight broke out’. However, this was related to the escalation of the traditional fistfights and was not understood as a suppression of religious activities. In fact, because of the ‘secular’ and ‘folk’ appearance of the *teferić* festivities, these events seem to have been able to survive in socialist Yugoslavia with little interruption. Zulfikarpašić noted that Elijah’s Day *teferić* was primarily ‘tolerated’ as a folk rather than a religious custom

(see Đilas and Gaće 1994: 54). This ‘secular flavour’ was preserved in the postsocialist period. The parish priest for Gacko told me how he preferred the Elijah’s Day church service to the ‘alcohol-fuelled’ celebrations that followed. Henig’s (2012b: 758) interlocutors also drew a distinction between Ajvatovica, which they saw as but a *teferič*, void of religious substance, and the prayer (*dova*) in Karići. Henig notes:

Indeed, as some older Muslims often pointed out to me, ‘Prayer for rain, it was the only place and moment where you could even meet people engaged with the [Communist] Party’, as these events were usually organized with special approval under the official umbrella of traditional village parades (*teferič*) and gatherings (*tradicionalno okupljanje*). (ibid: 760)

All of this gives us an idea about the state’s allowances for *teferič*, seen as more traditional than religious, but also the imaginative strategies of circumventing the prohibitions. These strategies built on the already discussed problem of defining the boundaries of rural Bosnian religiosity.

Yugoslav socialism also appropriated the main themes of the seasonal get-togethers, so we can speak of a syncretism between the state and the traditional calendars. The 1 May (*prvomajski*) *teferič* for the International Workers’ Day was, and continues to be, a widespread practice in Bosnia. It looked like any other seasonal party and occasionally incorporated ritual elements of Annunciation and George’s Day, like the hilltop bonfires. The Yugoslav socialist calendar, Dunja Rihtman-Auguštin (1990: 29) has noted, did seem to follow the basics of the traditional and religious cycle of winter and spring holidays, but imposed its own rhythm ‘by anticipating or postponing’ the important moments. Traditional Tuesday gatherings were sometimes moved to Saturdays or Sundays to accommodate the state calendar (Henig 2015: 138). Similarly, the returnees to Gacko moved the date of *Aliđun* to accommodate the diasporic attendance (often agreed over social media). This readiness to be flexible in light of new political and social circumstances should be seen as an important element of resistance in Bosnian folk cosmology.

Despite the co-optation of religious institutions by the state, the local clergy also had day-to-day contact with the people, which diluted some of the top-down agendas. During her fieldwork in Yugoslavia in 1987–1988, Bringa witnessed a George’s Day *teferič* in a central Bosnian village, which was held ‘on the highest hill’ (1995: 225–26). It was obviously a substantial gathering with ritual and festival elements, chiefly focused on young and unmarried girls who threw shoes over their houses to determine the direction of marriage proposals (like the nettle and bread in Gacko) and visited mills to gather water (*omaha*). On the eve of George’s day, boys made flutes

from the wood of young trees with which they would wake up the girls in the morning. The *teferič* included picnics and football games. Additionally, Bringa notes that Vasvija, one of her interlocutors, ‘disapproved of the *hodža* for discouraging them from celebrating’ (ibid: 226) and insisting on the ‘Muslim new year’ as a substitution for George’s Day. Both the villagers and the clergy displayed certain corrective agency, basing the argumentation either in doctrine or tradition.

We can also speak of the changing circumstances and the post-1960s Yugoslav ‘liberal phase’ when the Serbian Orthodox Church flourished (Perica 2002: 8) and the Muslims gained recognition as a nation after the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement. The 1965 issue of the *Herald of the Islamic Community* gives a description of the celebrations marking the restoration of the Kula mosque (Bečić 1965). It reports the ‘surprise visit’ of Hadži Sulejman Kemura, the Head of the Islamic Community in Yugoslavia (‘His Highness, the *Reis-ul-ulema*’), ‘with an escort’ of other dignitaries. The event was also attended by the local government officials, including the President of the Gacko Municipality Assembly and the President of the Commission for Religious Affairs. These representatives of the state are all mentioned by the title ‘comrade’ (*drug*). The *Reis-ul-ulema*’s speech praised Yugoslav ‘democratic liberties’ and appealed for the mosque to be used ‘for its purpose’, namely ‘religious education and the performance of religious duties’. He also called for the ‘brotherhood and unity’ between the different religious communities, which the ‘enemy’ attempted to destroy in the past. Comrade Živko Lojević, President of the Municipality Assembly, expressed regrets that he did not receive a timely notification of *Reis-ul-ulema*’s visit, as they would have otherwise been able to make it more ‘visible’. He further said that ‘the practice of religion in our country is free’ and that the cooperation (of the local government) with Islamic Community is ‘good’. Other speakers also described the religious liberties enshrined in the Yugoslav Constitution. This was, according to the article, the first visit of any religious leader to Kula and the region. After the ceremony, where the people reportedly applauded in tears, a *teferič* with songs and *kolo* dance was spontaneously organized.

Although published in the official *Herald*, this snippet of life in the Field speaks volumes of the changes that occurred in the 1960s. It points to the alliance between the state and the Islamic Community, but also to their new orientation within which the village of Kula was suddenly ‘mapped’. After some three hours of ‘intervention’, the *teferič* was something that belonged to the ‘crowd’ rather than the dignitaries. It was the same during my fieldwork; after the *mevlud* in the mosque and the service in the church, it was the time for the much less state-structured ‘folk programme’, which was often disliked and unattended by the clergy.

## False Binaries and the Destruction of the Bosnian Village

Another perspective on the question of state influence on religious life has to do with the rural/urban divide. The rural settings made some allowances beyond the socialist emancipatory project. Bringa (1995: 62) argued that the village and the neighbourhood were felt as a zone where ‘ethno-religious distinctiveness’ was expressed much more publicly than in the cities. The villages were often difficult to supervise: the Field was on the margins of the state and most of the villages were on the margins of the Field; it took both time and effort to reach them. As this book largely speaks of a rural landscape sitting along the Dinaric mountain chain and engages with its heritage of ‘heroic’ epics, I will briefly outline some of the highly problematic historical and contemporary qualifications of this space, its people and its traditions. In particular, I focus on the oft-espoused idea that the Dinarides were some kind of enclave for the nationalism that erupted in the 1990s.

The 1990s wars have been repeatedly represented as the destruction of the city and the ‘revenge of the countryside’. Bougarel (1999) noted how the city/village binary came to constitute a rather common discourse, variously employed by intellectuals. He traces the roots of this problem in the works of the Serbian geographer and ethnologist Jovan Cvijić, Croatian sociologist Dinko Tomašić, as well as a number of latter (particularly wartime) revivals of their arguments. Although offering principally the same schemata of social, cultural and psychological ‘types’, these authors prescribe different moral qualities to the (Dinaric) village: Ottoman bandits become either heroes of national liberation or criminals and plunderers; their songs are either brave yearnings or ominous aggression.

Cvijić (1922 and 1931), in his two-volume treatise of the Balkan Peninsula, established the ‘Dinaric type’ that is ‘instantly recognizable . . . with the best-expressed features of all the South Slavs’. These features are of ‘deeper meaning and more national’. ‘The Dinaric man burns with the desire to avenge “Kosovo” and ‘considers himself to be chosen by God to fulfil the national duty. All of these eternal thoughts he expresses in songs and stories, even in funeral lamentations’ (Cvijić 1931: 15). He also notes:

Those people are powerful and strong, generally very tall, slender, almost never obese, with face full of expression, falcon’s eyes, the best breed in the Balkan Peninsula. They have almost no degenerate types. They gain with bold, highlander’s morals, deep feeling for the community and a dedication that does not cease even before the most precious of sacrifices. (Cvijić 1992: 85)

In this racial constellation, he gave particular superiority to the Ottoman bandits (*hajduci*), who have prepared the grounds for national liberation (ibid: 216).

Tomašić (1993), who simply switched the moral high ground (away from the highlands), thought that the Dinaric space had produced tribal and patriarchal societies, which glorified heroism and crime, especially through the figures of the bandits (*hajduk*, *uskok*, *četnik*). He provides a list of ‘original tribal and *hajduk-uskok* psychological and cultural traits . . . at odds with the standards set by the Western-European civilization’ (ibid: 904–5). Some of these traits are the hierarchical organization of tribes, heroism (*junaštvo*), looting and plundering. These people have, he argued, strengthened enmity through blood revenge and a quest for pride, fame and honour, which built impulsive and aggressive personalities, pushy and bullying types, who glorified their crimes in heroic songs (ibid).

Echoes of this binary were employed to qualify the viciousness of the 1990s wars, sometimes rather eloquently. Bogdan Bogdanović, perhaps the most famous Yugoslav architect and theoretician, whose scholarship dwelt on the phenomenology of the city, spoke about an ‘archetypal fear of the city’ (2008: 37) and the ‘restless epic man’ who needs to be introduced to the meaning of *pax urbana* (ibid: 128). Likewise, in one wartime interview from Geneva, Adil Zulfikarpašić, the founder of the Bosniak Institute in Sarajevo, argued that the ‘natives of the city’ did not cause the war, as they had a culture of moderation and tolerance (Đilas and Gaće 1994: 71). He further remarked: ‘One of the tragedies of the current war is that this nonurban, I won’t say semisavage, but certainly uncivilized, part of the population became the agent of warfare’ (ibid). As Kolind (2008: 151–56) observed, the postwar returnees to Stolac also employed this logic to explain the violent unmaking of their town. Most of my interlocutors, however, did not have this narrative at their disposal. If anything, they sometimes reversed it, blaming those who charted out grand histories in their urban armchairs.

Beyond the ethno-racial fantasy, these arguments present other dangers. They obfuscate the traditions and cosmologies of the Dinaric villages, blurring them with the mythology of the Balkan ethno-national enterprises. They project causality between the epic and the nationalist violence. As I argue in Chapter 4, parts of the Dinaric folklore, including the *gusle* tradition, have been gradually cleansed of their original common (or, ‘shared’) qualities and associated with the crimes of the state(-making). Bougarel likewise argued that this “‘ethnicization” of mountains’ attributes is fallacious’ (1999: 165). My whole book may be read as an argument on the richness of ‘intercommunal’ rapport in the Bosnian village, sometimes similar to, other times different from, the various other rural and urban lives across the region, but always significantly divergent from the nationalist imaginations of pure traditions.

So, what have the Field’s villages contributed to warfare? Have they been the igniting loci of the 1990s violence? No, they have imaginatively endured

the cascade of propaganda. Repeating the misconception of his academic colleagues, Kolind (2008: 158) notes: ‘One might see these major cities as living proof against the nationalist dream of ethnic homogeneity. The cities were ethnically mixed and a cosmopolitan attitude prevailed’. Rural ‘mixture’, however, leaves behind less ‘architectural’ remains; it requires a wholly different approach, for example a move away from the spatial to the temporal structures of proximity. When it turns the highlanders into the murderers of the city, the ideology of the ‘rural Dinaric type’ omits the effects of the war on rural life, which often amounted to the unmaking of the village (‘ruricide’, if you will). I attempt to transgress this problem by also engaging with the destruction of the intangible in Gacko, a plethora of *longue durée* connections that often remains invisible to the eyes saturated by the fragmented material being of the Bosnian city.

### Landscapes as Archives

Secluded upon a rock in the forest, an old man, Ajvaz Dedo, prayed to God for water to reach his village. His prayer lasted for forty days and forty nights. On the last night, he fell asleep and dreamt of two white rams colliding in the air. When he woke up, the rock beneath him had split in two and water was bursting through the crevice. So goes the legend that sustains Ajvatovica, the largest Muslim pilgrimage site in Europe, also known as ‘the small *haji*’. Each year in late June, tens of thousands pass through the crevice. I made the pilgrimage in 2012. Passage through the crevice was the dramatic culmination of a long and steep climb up the mountain. Some women took out their prayer mats to perform *namaz* (prostration, or *salat*). Others picked up pieces of the rock lying on the floor and, murmuring something indistinctly, struck it against the walls of the cliff; one girl told me it was for good luck. The rocks were taken home, as an amulet. Apparently, they also used to be milled into dust to fertilize the crops (see Hadžijahić 1981).<sup>20</sup> So I, too, completed the brief ritual and carried a few rocks to London in my rucksack. Later on, I gave it to friends for prosperity and fertility.

Quite a few of these thought-capturing objects have made their way into my growing collection of research-related books, documents, audio recordings, photographs and transcriptions. As they continued to inform and shape my arguments, I could not but think of them as important archival material. For, landscapes become when something distinct can be said of their selfhood; they affect, emit a tone upon us, through their (lack of) interactions, orientations and memories. They densify around the human–nonhuman fragments, revealing multiple discursive and affective layers and opening up a possibility of archival readings.



The 'historical' narratives I have collected take the form of epic poetry, folk songs and personal memories that pertain to landscapes and seasonal festivities. Most of this material has been recorded, with the permission of my interlocutors. Other collections have been added to my own. For example, Eno decided to write down all the Gacko proverbs he could remember, which amounted to ten pages of surprisingly useful analytical tools. I have received mix-tapes with traditional songs and photographs from family albums. These tangible and intangible possessions bridged the gaps in my understanding of the individual and group trajectories in the Field.

I have entered into various kinds of dialogue that informed this book. They were, for the most part, conversations, unstructured and semi-structured interviews. The annual cycle is related to almost every facet of human existence, so stories about crops, food, neighbourhoods, diaspora, wars, politics and cattle were all related to the meaning and the process of the seasonal landscapes. Overall, I ended up with some 340 hours of recorded conversations alone. Many of them turned seamlessly into kinds of life-history. After some time, when most of the obvious questions had been asked, the day-to-day, completely unmethodical, conversations seemed a more honest approach. As Antoinette Errante (2000: 20) noted, one is not confronted with a combination of 'data' and whatever surrounds it, but with something much more interesting and surprising – another person:

I stopped listening for what I could extract from the narrative and started listening to the whole person. There is no easy way to translate this into a methodology; it is not an attitude you can feign; but it results in narrators feeling that they have an appreciative and respectful audience.

As an appreciative audience, I soon gained some rapport with the Field's villagers and was able to join in on a 'normal' day. Painting Delva's kitchen and watching telenovelas with older women was interwoven with narratives about the sacral calendar. During picnics with 'refugee' visitors, I was allowed to experience some of their encounters with the landscapes that simultaneously shaped and caused their lives to rupture. Waking up at four in the morning to join Eno and the 'reconstruction crew', feeling their insecurities in the town centre and vigorously working to piece together something that was destroyed, was crucial to my understanding of life as it is lived, rather than some ideal model of the calendar grounded in the past.

I was often able to implement the time allocation technique (cf. Gross: 1984) by closely observing and recording how individuals or groups spent their day. My presence was less intrusive as I became known to the communities. The time allocation technique was useful to understand the patterns of 'ordinary' days as well as the local celebrations. It clarified how certain actions become embodied. For example, by collecting tree branches and light-

ing John's Day bonfires with kids in the town of Kreševo, I understood not only the structure of the ritual, but also experienced the affective elements of gatherings which existed in the memories of my interlocutors from the Field.

I have employed the 'life-hi/story' method, mostly in the villages of Kula and Nadanići. The syntagm 'life-hi/story', as opposed to 'life-history', suggests that important dimensions may also be found in fiction. As Jeff Titon (1980: 278) noted, '[a] story is made, but history is found out. Story is language at play; history is language at work'. Stories about fairies, magical sparks and supernatural caves have often been more informative than a mere chronology of events. Some of my interlocutors were extraordinarily gifted storytellers. My translations cannot do justice to their narratives, although I have included them throughout this book. People able to skilfully tell a story are 'perceptually attuned' to gathering information about the environment, as Ingold (1993: 153) noted, but also to guiding others through the landscape with that knowledge.

While knowing the language proved an extremely important asset, I soon understood that knowing the language and knowing how to communicate are not necessarily the same (see Agar 2007). The language of my interlocutors was not only much richer than my own, but also reflected an intimate knowledge of the Field. I made an attempt to understand the symbols, dispositions, histories, and then listen to the stories again, after attaining some feeling for those contexts. Similarly, Evans-Pritchard (1951: 79) argued that being able to think in the symbols employed by the community is a prerequisite for understanding how they think and what they are talking about. This knowledge comes mainly from experience. Joining the *kolo* (traditional circle dance) during the seasonal festivities, feeling the kind of *communitas* it creates, gives a different perspective on all those depictions of *kolo* on mediæval Bosnian tombstones and its centrality at popular fairs. Having to learn this language within language made me uneasy about assuming the role of 'native ethnographer'. I kept repeating the question raised by Coleman and Collins (2006: 9): 'How close to home is "home" . . . ?'

## Cognitive Mapping

Every story is a travel story – a spatial practice.

. . .

. . . the map has slowly disengaged itself from the itineraries that were the condition of its possibility.

—Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*

Fieldwork is a specific kind of spatial practice. It always begins with some type of map into which the researcher descends. Upon deciding to go to

Gacko, a place I had never visited before, I was not equipped with much more than a discursive geographical package. I employed my knowledge of the correspondingly discursive economies and, instead of opting for the central Sarajevo bus station, I chose the cheaper ticket from the eastern suburbs of Sarajevo. My travel itinerary was already indicative of the kind of geography-in-the-making to which Gacko had been subscribed in the 1990s. After its departure from Eastern Sarajevo, or 'Serb Sarajevo' as it was officially known for a decade, the minibus stopped to let off and receive passengers at homogenized villages and towns along its route. In other words, we had been carefully driven through the jurisdiction of the Republika Srpska, the 'Serb Republic', one of the entities forged in the war of 1990s and confirmed through the Dayton Peace Agreement.

Like pages from a political science publication on postwar Yugoslavia, dark masterpieces of nationalist masonry along the road rendered memory from their strategic public positions. However systematically arranged, these monuments were far from monumentality in their mismatch of the belated modernist impetus and a postmodern language. Passing through this 'new history' seemed to be a rather common experience for my fellow passengers. They kept mostly to themselves while the popular music on the radio ornamented their silence.

Heads noticeably turned towards the outside only once we had reached the picturesque village of Tjentište. Opening beneath the mountains, stood a monument par excellence, a battle site of the Second World War marked quite literally by the 'life and times of Tito'. The battle was portrayed in the celebrated Yugoslav film *Sutjeska*, starring Richard Burton in the role of Tito. Known as the 'Valley of Heroes', the memorial was a much more eloquent 'truth' on this path of various victors. Its irrefutable simplicity, designed to echo the horrors of battle, instead awakened nostalgia for a time that seemed equally simple. This was a monument to itself, to the kind of *Zeitgeist* that gave birth to it, not to the bloody event that happened exactly seventy years before my fieldwork. As such, it stretched from an interval into an altogether different kind of time.

On another trip to Gacko, two young men sitting in front of me started a passionate refutation of the current political rhetoric. One of them said something that I typed into my mobile phone: 'If it weren't for the daily news, I wouldn't know where I live. They are constantly inciting people; the RS [Serb Republic] will secede – the RS will not secede. And they themselves are lounging and taking coffee'.

The minibus soon passed some 'SNSD Dodik' graffiti and road signs on which any words in the Roman alphabet had been sprayed over. Milorad Dodik, the president of the SNSD party (the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats) and President of the Serb Republic, has built his career upon

the idea of the Serb Republic's autonomy from Bosnia and Herzegovina. The discursively (re)mapped space, as I learnt from my eavesdropping, has shifted landscapes and its people into an identity crisis.

The method of cognitive mapping, which I used in different locations, attempts to look at space beyond the official map, from the perspective of embodied spatial and temporal practices. Although the method traditionally turns to the spatial elements of landscapes, the calendar-related places discussed in this research and the trajectories of rituals and everyday practices combine to make it an equally legitimate endeavour into the temporal. Building on Bourdieu's arguments, Gell (1985) preferred to differentiate between mental mapping and what he called 'practical way-finding', as the latter centres on the agent. The kind of 'practical space' he describes – embodied and activity-based – corresponds to what I have encountered in this research.

I employed this method in a number of ways. I often asked my interlocutors to draw a personal constellation of their landscapes. The maps were usually part of a story, and so depictions of specific itineraries or relational spaces. Eno's memories of nomadic Gurbeti ('Roma') communities and their camping sites in the Field were substantiated by his map of almost military precision. In the town of Visoko, Melina charted for me the movement of Roma people on George's Day celebrations. The central points on these maps were not the squares or main roads; they were determined by the specific story. To invoke De Certeau (1984: 129) once again, '[w]hat the map cuts up, the story cuts across'. The folk, sacral calendar cuts across all kinds of boundaries. I made many of the cognitive maps myself, either as I was charting them in front of my interlocutors, while listening to their stories, or when I amalgamated the different narratives with my own movements through the landscapes. Kimberley Powell (2010: 553) has argued that cognitive mapping methods foreground the mutually constitutive aspects of place and social relationships. To varying degrees, the maps that inform this research also contain my own presence within the web of spatial and temporal engagements.

The third type of cognitive mapping method that I have employed was experimental. It produced a discussion between the archival maps and the cognitive maps as archives. The 'Dayton' map of Bosnia was well known to all of my interlocutors. My research in two private archives in the towns of Tuzla and Sarajevo led me to copies of fin-de-siècle Austro-Hungarian and Yugoslav military maps of the Gacko region. The Austro-Hungarian Empire made the first detailed maps of Bosnia in general. They contain many older topographic details. The Yugoslav military maps, however, contained enough topographic information to be considered 'classified' during the 1990s war. I carried a printed copy of these maps with me. Many stories developed from the recorded toponyms, terrain and infrastructures. Some places did not ex-

ist or were no longer accessible. Others unearthed memories. The reverse process was also useful. My interlocutors analysed the maps after specific conversations, reflecting upon the similarities and discrepancies between the maps and their experiences.

Starting from Tilley's (1994: 19) argument that 'names create landscapes', I have implemented an auxiliary method of toponomastics, a study of place names and place naming, in order to understand the memory, history, emotions and practices associated with specific sites. The vast scholarship on Proto-Slavic mythology was central to this endeavour. Through the semantic and etymological analyses of place names, I established countless links between contemporary practices and the Old Slavic pantheon. Similar ethnographic analogies, possibilities of correlating landscapes of the past with those of the living communities, were made through other objects, narratives and practices.

The methods used in this research have attempted to overcome the gap between the large-scale abstractions, most often violently encroaching upon Bosnian seasonal landscapes, and the embodied knowledge of the Field's inhabitants – 'the world as it is known to those who dwell therein' (Ingold 1993: 156). The book, as I have argued, is neither an ethnography nor a historiography. Following my attempts to understand the multiple facets of time-reckoning in the Field, I would rather describe it as a chronography.

## NOTES

1. Ilija is pronounced as 'Ill-ee-uh' and Alija as 'Ah-lee-uh'.
2. As a general rule, I write 'Elijah' and 'George', not 'Saint Elijah' and 'Saint George' as the designation of sainthood does not occur in common Bosnian names for their feasts (*Ilindan/Alidun* and *Jurjevo/Durđevdan*). Exceptions to this translation may be found in quotations, references to hagiographies or when my interlocutors themselves refer to sainthood.
3. Despite the apparent success of the homogenizing conflict, this book speaks to the tangible and intangible remnants of shared life as obstacles to religious 'purification' in the Field.
4. This research began in October of 2010 and ended in October of 2015. From September of 2011 until September of 2012, I was based in and around the Field of Gacko, but also conducted investigations in numerous other locations in Bosnia (Ajvatovica, Foča, Kladanj, Kreševo, Međugorje, Mokro, Prusac, Ratiš, Sarajevo, Stolac, Tuzla, Visoko). I have conducted some research in Palestine and Israel in December of 2013 and January 2014. I prefer to understand 'fieldwork' as inclusive of my writing and conversations in other spaces as well.
5. In many parts of Bosnia, the warm season also includes Muslim *dove* (prayers, particularly for rain), some of which have grown into occasions of pilgrimage. The prayer meetings were usually organized in relation to George's Day (on subsequent Mondays and Tuesdays) and usually ended before Elijah's Day (cf. Henig 2011: 187).

6. With other authors, you will encounter different phrases for the 1990s conflict in Bosnia (e.g. ‘civil war’, ‘war on Bosnia’, ‘Bosnian war’, etc.). I use the phrase ‘1990s war’, not to avoid this discussion, but to indicate that the systematic, nationalist orgy of violence in the ex-Yugoslav countries was, and continues to be, co-orchestrated. Precisely because of that, the phrase ‘civil war’ (as applied to Bosnia) needs to be discarded. Was it, however, a war ‘on Bosnia’? Due to its perceived religious (or ‘ethno-national’) ‘mixtures’ and ‘diversity’, Bosnia suffered a purification similar to parts of Serbia, Kosovo and Croatia. The 1990s war was thus primarily a series of systematic, militarized, territorial nationalist campaigns, which were expressed most vehemently in spaces where the perceived diversity positioned strategies of Othering. A general term, ‘the 1990s war’, could then be applicable to the violence in Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo, which all had the same nationalist foundation (regardless of ‘who’ the perpetrators or the victims are).
7. In Bosnian: (1) *Polahko dok se hodžino samelje*; (2) *Ne crkni kenjče dok gora ne ozeleni*; (3) *Tiha voda bregove valja*.
8. All translations are mine, unless indicated otherwise.
9. See ‘Vučić i Dodik: Da zajedno slavimo Vidovdan!’ published in the *Telegraf* on 13 June 2014. (Retrieved 12 June 2014 at <http://www.telegraf.rs/vesti/politika/1112114-vucic-i-dodik-da-zajedno-slavimo-vidovdan> on 13 June 2014.) This strategic discourse was conceptualized by Nenad Kecmanović, a scholar closely allied with the Serb hard-line nationalist politicians, in his book *The Impossible State: Bosnia and Herzegovina* (2007: 7, published in Bosnian).
10. See also Hromadžić (2011 and 2015).
11. See, for example, Hayden (2002a, 2002b, 2007), Bowman (2012) and the responses following Hayden’s (2002a) article in *Current Anthropology*.
12. For the Slavs in general, see Ovsec (1991), Gimbutas (1971, 2004), Kulušić (1979), Mikhailov (2002), Kononenko (2007); for Serbs and Croats, see Nodilo (1981), Gavazzi (1939), Čajkanović and Cajić (1995), Belaj (1998).
13. Hadžijahić and Purivatra (1990: 186–87) compiled a bibliography on these tensions.
14. See Lilek (e.g. 1893, 1894) and Truhelka (e.g. 1894, 1941) amongst many others.
15. For a discussion of the more prominent scholarship on *komšiluk* see Sorabji (2008) and Henig (2011: 116–36, 2012a).
16. Throughout the book, I have adopted the adjective ‘Georgic’ to describe the ecological aspect of the pastoral and agricultural calendar. As a noun, from the Greek *geō-* (‘earth’) and *ergon* (‘work’), ‘Georgic’ indicates the focus of both my interlocutors’ narratives about the calendar and this book (see Haddad 1969 and Chapter 5 of this book). I capitalize it, because the folk annual cycle in Bosnia (and elsewhere) begins with George’s Day.
17. These figures were reported for Kula proper, as well as Bašići, Branilovići, Drugovići, Hodinići, Međuljići, Mekavci, Muhovići and Stolac (Federal Bureau of Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina 1998b).
18. Katherine P. Ewing (1994) has nicely described the ‘epistemological abyss’ often created between anthropologists and their interlocutors, one that I have tried to transgress by leaving both the book and myself open to the Field’s ontologies.
19. ‘Bosniak’, it should be noted, has largely been synonymous with ‘Bosnian’ in historical records since the Middle Ages.
20. Henig (2012b) and Sarač-Rujanac (2013 and 2014) have written about Ajvatovica in terms of its political contexts.