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## A Physcialist Theory of Managing Impediments to Democracy and Peace Building in the Balkans

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# A Physicalist Theory of Managing Impediments to Democracy and Peace Building in the Balkans

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## Abstract:

The post-conflict societies of Bosnia and Kosovo continue to be plagued by the deleterious effects of ethno-nationalism and ethnic enclaves. Unfortunately, this mix impedes both democracy and peace building within these Balkan countries. One way to promote such building is for these enclaves to collapse, thereby allowing multiethnic societies to develop. This essay proposes that enclaves be dealt with physically by ridding them of those evocative objects that help to create and

maintain enclaves. By getting physical in this way, however, we find ourselves in a dilemma, caught on the horns of legality and expediency. Yet there is a promising path between the horns that involves civic design. This essay offers a physicalist theory of managing these impediments to democracy and peace building, beginning with four hypotheses, followed by an abstraction and mathematization in the form of a matrix, a dilemma arising from these hypotheses, and possible solutions.

Keywords: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Deliberative Democracy, Peace Building, Democracy Building, Deliberative Engagement, Ethno-Nationalist, Evocative Objects, Evocativity Matrix, Matrix, Civic Design, Ethnic Enclave

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*But here you need something to move you and turn you in a new direction.... Once you have been turned round, you must stay turned round.*  
Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*\*

\* Wittgenstein (1980: 53e).

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## Preliminary Considerations

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When it comes to seeing eye to eye about democracy, democracy is, more or less, seen through the eye of the beholder as theorist, which means that not all theorists of democracy see it in the same way. For the aggregative theorist (Przeworski 2010), to see eye to eye is to have arrived at a legitimized outcome by way of voting, whereas the agonist theorist (Mouffe 2009, 2013) finds seeing eye to eye to be inherently difficult because of the conflictual, antagonist nature of human relations and of human plurality. It is little wonder, then, that some within the agonist group believe that the best democratic politics can do is to transform the *enemies* of antagonism into the *adversaries* of agonism (Mouffe 2009: 102–3). And, last but not least, there is the deliberative theorist (Gutmann and Thompson 1997, 2004), who views democracy as the outcome of the internal deliberative process of critical reasoning and engagement with an eye to resolving conflict and creating collective decisions. Despite these different theoretical foci, the likes of voting, alterity, deliberative engagement, and consensus building remain points of contact between these theories of democracy, which find their partial expression in well-ordered and decent societies.<sup>1</sup>

As we know, however, some societies are not so well ordered and decent. There are, for example, post-conflict societies within which democracy is to be built and within which a sustainable peace is to be achieved. Not surprisingly, such societies present a variety of challenges to the theorist and the practitioner of democracy and peace. Take, for instance, Bosnia and Kosovo. Although each Bosnian and Kosovan possesses a multitude of identities — a plurality of selves — many of them select their endorsed ethno-nationalist identity as their dominant or most salient public identity. In fact, the salience of the ethno-nationalist identity has become so widespread among individuals that it reverberates within entire ethnic groups leading to “in-

group” hypersolidarity and “out-group” distrust, and the formation of ethnic enclaves. These enclaves dampen interaction and integration between the various ethnic communities, preserving “fields of battle” instead of creating “fields of existence” (Conces 2011: 10). Even though the social distance between people who have the same ethno-nationalist identity is often reduced, allowing for enhanced solidarity (trust and cooperation) within that group, the same cannot be said when those with competing ethno-nationalist identities arrive on the scene. In fact, a “war of solidarities” often erupts within an ethnic enclave as those differing ethno-nationalist identities take precedence over other important identities (e.g., class, religious, and sexual), as well as the more general, if not universal, identity of *person*. Consequently, the tolerance that moves people *closer* to intergroup solidarity is much in demand when building a viable democracy, let alone for the much broader initiative of building a sustainable peace.

Of the three groups of theorists, it is the work of the deliberative theorist that resonates the most with this emphasis on “interaction” and “integration” because it is through communicating with others in close quarters through conversation, dialogue, and, ultimately, deliberative engagement that divisive identities and toxic relationships can be deconstructed and then reconstructed to eradicate the enclave, thereby promoting democracy and peace. The premium placed on proximal interaction and integration is especially true for peace building because its realization includes changing conflictual relationships through reconciliation, a process that incorporates both empathy, compassion, and forgiveness (Conces 2009: 22). It may even involve resilience, the capacity to recover from adversity. Admittedly, it is difficult to imagine such change within a situation short on interaction and integration, where fraternity is difficult to come by.

Unsurprisingly, these post-conflict situations are often sustained, even worsened, by the presence of a specific type of physical object, the evocative object, and in particular, the type

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<sup>1</sup> The theoretical landscape becomes even more robust when supranational democracy theory is added to the mix. See Cafaro 2017.

that cognitively, affectively, and conatively resonates along ethno-nationalist lines.<sup>2</sup> By provoking various ideas and emotions — perhaps images of past military engagements and their associative emotions of joy or anger conjoined in the form of “affective-cognitive structures” (Izard 1991: 15) — such objects attract some people and repel others depending upon their ethno-nationalist identity, thereby contributing to the creation and maintenance of ethnic enclaves. So a social project charged with preventing or breaking down these enclaves through social mobility needs to occur before the work of democratic theorists can be fully exploited. Dealing with ethnic enclaves, however, is foremost a physical project, since it involves the rearrangement and/or displacement of powerful evocative objects like flags, murals, and monuments. It is by changing the physical landscape understood as “the background against which choices are made [i.e., choice architecture]” (Sunstein 2014: 14) that the movement and resettlement of peoples is made more likely, resulting in less divisive and more encompassing or transcendent identities and relationships,<sup>3</sup> thereby generating the conditions of trust important for the creation and maintenance of a democratic and peaceful society. Initially this project will be plagued with difficulties and much backsliding. In the long run, however, this project will move us closer to something like a meaningful and efficacious “we.”

This mechanism of ridding neighborhoods of these objects sounds simple, yet it is anything but that. To put it bluntly: it leads us to the horns of a dilemma. One horn is for elected officials, for example, to legislate these provocative objects swiftly out of existence but at the cost of

violating constitutional and human rights law. In such messy situations, the judiciary and legislative bodies would be at loggerheads over these interventions, resulting in constant turmoil within civil society. The other horn is to follow constitutional and human rights law but at the cost of taking the much slower route of mass education and debate, as well as attrition. The cost may be enormous since these objects would continue to spread their deleterious effects for years to come. Unfortunately, this dilemma is especially troublesome for the post-conflict societies of Bosnia and Kosovo because the continued abrogation of the law and the continued existence of these provocative objects are unacceptable and incomplete *solutions* to the problem of enclaves, respectively.

How, then, are we to proceed? I believe there is a path between the horns that can supplement the slow approach to enclave collapse. It is provided by civic design,<sup>4</sup> the design of cities and towns, and the interstices of urban centers — the rural and the edgelands — with the ultimate “goal of creating persons who are more inclined to work toward civic improvement” (Conces 2013a: 12). Civic design attempts to create a built environment that brings people together within “empty space” and beside shared objects, “crowding out” boundary markers and warning signs of provocation, and promoting proximal interaction and integration between people, thus quickening the demise of the ethnic enclave. At a minimum, civic design under the auspices of NGO’s, advocacy groups (including architects and urban planners), and local government officials create the possibility for all to dwell here or there, to feel at home in places and through spaces that were once deemed off

<sup>2</sup> I employ the standard meaning of the cognitive (understanding), the affective (emotion), and the conative (action) throughout this work knowing full well that the conceptual and empirical landscape within psychology is nothing but vast and complicated. I also use the term ‘idea’, referring to mental representational images or abstract concepts, though ‘belief’ (a disposition in the Quinean sense) and ‘attitude’ (possessing cognitive, affective, and conative components) may be better suited at times. By an emotion I mean that which is “experienced as a feeling that motivates, organizes, and guides perception, thought, and action” (Izard 1991:3).

<sup>3</sup> I agree with Cass R. Sunstein that choice architecture is at work when a person enters a café or a market. But I also take such architecture to influence whether one enters this café or that café and this market or that market simply because the neighborhood to which the café or the market belong is inundated with flags, graffiti, or other evocative objects that attract some people and repel others.

<sup>4</sup> ‘Civic design’ is a process that takes urban planning and design (Krieger 2009) into new areas. Robert Geddes uses the term ‘civil architecture’ to refer to architecture whose goal is civil improvement (2013: 56–58).

limits. As a result, the market and the hair salon are truly open for business, and the neighborhood park and walking street are truly available for strolling. While the nudge that civic design provides democracy and peace building will be modest, it will be real, and, thus, worthwhile.

Like the dilemma's horns, the path between will result in ethnically homogenous neighborhoods being hollowed out and sanitized of that which made them attractive and livable for some in the first place. A gentrification of a sort, the flags and murals that make the ethno-nationalist brand visible to bystanders in the neighborhood — signaling whose turf it is — would be stripped away (though some of those objects would fill-in other spaces and at other places). However, it is hoped that the path between promotes rather than sacrifices more extensive livability across ethnic boundaries. The idea is something like this: if people feel more at ease in navigating the other's neighborhood, then this might allow for opportunities of mutual well-being stemming from shared experiences at places like the market, the hair salon, and the café. Sharing of experiences may not only allow for some degree of bonding and bridging,<sup>5</sup> but they may also allow them to directly deal with conflictual relationships (whether it be with the past in general or with people in particular). This constructive interaction may also occur in a "space of constructive provocation," a place like a studio — maybe even more like a laboratory (less about control and more about exploration) — in which the distinction between artist and non-artist becomes blurred and in which hotly contested issues are approached with the help of the aesthetic eye. Although some "cultural erasing" is unavoidable, the overall goal

of the non-legislative approaches is to create a *diverse community* that respects uniqueness and difference without the hegemony that often comes with the forging of a "we."<sup>6</sup> To be sure, I am opposed to coercive heterogeneity (and tolerance as an end-state).

This essay offers a physicalist theory of managing impediments to democracy and peace building, beginning with four hypotheses, followed by an abstraction and mathematization in the form of a matrix, a dilemma arising from these hypotheses, and possible solutions.

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### Hypothesis One (H1): Deliberative Engagement and Democratic Theory

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*H1: Deliberative engagement as a process involving the use of critical thinking and engagement with others in order to resolve conflict, problem solve, and create collective decisions is an important element of democracy insofar as democracy is about getting things done in a certain way.*

Whether theorists stress the legitimacy of collective decision-making through voting, pushing the deliberative process into the background; accentuating the difficulty of consensus building within democracy, making it seem almost impossible at times; or emphasizing the deliberative process, pushing the voting procedure onto the horizon, they all recognize the internality (thinking as an internal activity) and the externality (dialogical activity) of deliberative engagement in democracy. They are all well aware that engagement is a means by which people change their minds and lives in meaningful ways.

<sup>5</sup> I rely here on Putnam (2007: 143) in distinguishing between bonding (tying "people who are *like* you in some important way") and bridging (tying "people who are *unlike* you in some important way").

<sup>6</sup> The "cultural erasing" I have in mind is neither an outright destruction of a people's cultural heritage nor a re-grasping of history, though I understand how it can be both. The first face of cultural erasing is illustrated by the systematic attempt to destroy the religious and cultural heritage of Bosnia during the 1990s war. The diversity and coexistence among the different peoples of Bosnia's was to be deleted from the landscape of the country. In addition to over a thousand mosques and churches that were destroyed, the National Library (Vijećnica) and the Oriental Institute in Sarajevo and the sixteenth-century Old Bridge (Stari Most) in Mostar were targeted and destroyed. Present-day examples of this erasing include the destruction of the Buddha statues at Bamiyan, Afghanistan; archaeological sites in Nimrud, Iraq and Palmyra, Syria; and Muslim shrines in Timbuktu, Mali. The second face is exemplified by efforts to eliminate representations of racism and slavery on university campuses by removing monuments (Cape Town) and plaques (Oxford), and by renaming buildings (Yale). There is also the controversy surrounding the Confederate battle flag.

Deliberation involves critical thinking, with the construction and assessment of reasoned argument as its core activity. In deliberation, the social theorist Amitai Etzioni writes, we “assemble and dispassionately discuss the facts of the situation, explore their logical implications, examine the alternative responses that might be undertaken, and choose the one that is the most appropriate as determined on the basis of empirical evidence and logical conclusions” (2001: 151).<sup>7</sup> What we have here is more or less a reflection of the competitive or adversarial form of argumentation in which there is advocacy, critique, and refutation of various positions. However, deliberation also includes a cooperative form of argumentation, one that is transformative inasmuch as it promotes interdependence and the building of deliberative communities (Makau and Marty 2001: 83–107; 2013: 69–70). But whether we emphasize the competitive or the cooperative form does not detract from the fact that as a cognitive process, deliberation occurs internally, within the heads of people.

The deliberation over interests, views, and positions, however, is not only with oneself, but is an engagement with others. This is its externality, exhibited in to-and-fro dialogical communication between people who acknowledge “a mutual commitment to hear and be heard” (Makau and Marty 2001: 175). There is an “uptake and engagement — other people must hear or read, internalize and respond — for that public-sphere activity to count as remotely deliberative” (Goodin 2003: 178).

Additionally, engaged deliberation between many minds is important for democracy because the viability of democracy depends on “citizens’ reasoning beyond their narrow self-interest and considering what can be justified to people who reasonably disagree with them” (Gutmann and Thompson 1996: 2). Moreover, it is “through the give-and-take of argument, [that] citizens and their accountable representatives can learn from one another, come to recognize their individual and collective mistakes, and develop new views

and policies that are more widely justifiable” (43). No wonder, then, that deliberative engagement entails a certain degree of non-partisanship, an attitude that works against a person naturally taking a particular side in a conflict from the very start (Conces 2016: 69).<sup>8</sup> This attitude encourages an openness to *drawing in* possibilities, rather than *crowding out* possibilities because of partisan bias or prejudice. Little surprise that people change their minds through cooperative argumentation, which fosters inclusivity and collective decision-making: “we depend on each other’s perspectives to generate meaning and a comprehensive understanding... [Consequently, we] view those who disagree with us as resources rather than as rivals” (Makau and Marty 2001: 88).

There are, of course, critics of deliberative and participatory democracy, who have written less about democracy than its “deliberateness,” and they have not been reticent in their criticism. A glimpse into this criticism can be found, for example, in Jason Brennan’s provocative *Against Democracy* (2016). His catalog of criticisms is wide ranging, but I believe what is relevant to this essay can be reduced to the following. It begins with accepting the “education thesis” as a core principle of these democracies: it is through a reasoned engagement with others about civic and political affairs that citizens become *better informed* in order to promote the common good. For sure, all citizens, including those who rely on evidence-based arguments and who are more or less non-partisan, use reasoning in their engagement with others. As the argument goes, however, reasoning is all about crafting winning arguments, arguments that are self-serving and that have little to do with a pursuit of the truth (54–55, 38). Brennan claims matters are far worse because we all tend to deviate from rational thought, deviations like the well-known confirmation, disconfirmation, and intergroup biases (37, 61–62). So what actually occurs in democratic deliberation falls far short of the benefits suggested by the education thesis. Brennan refers to a body of empirical studies that corroborates the shortcomings of political deliberation. Studies indicate,

<sup>7</sup> I also include commonplace self-restraints on reasoning (i.e., intellectual virtues, epistemic goods, and one’s background beliefs and values) (Conces 2009: 24).

<sup>8</sup> Incidentally, that work also distinguishes impartiality from non-partisanship.

for example, that in some situations deliberation undermines cooperation among groups (Mendelberg 2002: 156), tends to move people toward extremist positions (Sunstein 2002), and leads people to question whether there is a correct position (Ryfe 2005: 54). In addition, Brennan reminds us of the phenomenon of “epistemic delinquency,” that is, people do not always revise their beliefs (or at least weaken their confidence in them) when faced with overwhelming contrary evidence (2016: 68). This point is well-taken. As someone who has taught undergraduates for twenty-five years, I can personally attest that people often do not state reasons, let alone good reasons, for their claims, and are often swayed by who said what and how they said it, rather than by the substance of what was said. Gullibility and complacency have taken on new meaning, especially in the era of “fake news.” It is no wonder that Brennan concludes that “deliberation tends to stultify and corrupt us; it makes us worse, not better” (20). That is hardly the sort of deliberative engagement promoted in this essay, however.

Although I find *Against Democracy* to be an acknowledgment of the uphill struggle we face in the act of deliberation, it is a fact that deliberation often leads us to something better. Whether we realize it at any given moment, many of us do take seriously the regulative ideals of understanding, intelligibility, trustworthiness, credibility, and knowledge. Intellectual virtues like humility (vs. arrogance), empathy (vs. narrow-mindedness), integrity (vs. hypocrisy), perseverance (vs. laziness), and autonomy (vs. conformity) are important for many of us as well. And let’s not forget that many of us still care about truth itself, which becomes clear when faced with the nonsense of “alternative facts.”

It should now be obvious that aside from those defined by youth or infirmity, we are all positioned along the continuum of how strictly we hold to these commonplace self-restraints (including the ideals and virtues above) on belief construction and maintenance. Perhaps we fluctuate depending on the situation, moving back and forth along the continuum between two polar opposites: the regulated and virtuous critical thinker extraordinaire and the one who tosses aside the common-

place self-restraints on reasoning, leading to, for example, the self-righteousness, intolerance, over certainty, and zealousness of the fanatic. One can well imagine that a conservative Republican might come off as fanatical when talking politics with a bunch of Democrats, but as more rigorous in his thinking when responding to a group of moderate Republicans. In any case, deliberation occurs and we get results. We can only try to do it better by being more mindful of the self-restraints on reasoning and the value that resides in non-partisanship.

The externality of deliberative engagement, however, is not just about the number of heads within which it occurs and not just about it being in the public eye. For sure, new technologies and social platforms can help with all that. But it is also about how engagement takes on new meaning by becoming more personal. It is when externality is not just about the public dissemination and reception of communications, but includes the “crowding of *all* others” into close proximity with one another, that it will have a powerful impact on identities and relationships of real people (Šavija-Valha and Šahić 2015), sometimes holding those who want to manipulate and control the crowd in check. The anti-Semite demagogue, for example, may count on the following insight to promote bad behavior towards Jews: “If some prominent person declares that Judaism equals Zionism equals racism,...the negative effect is likely to be all the greater among people who know no Jews,... regardless of how good their basic intentions might be” (Niebuhr 2008: xx). As long as non-Jews are separated from Jews, it will be easier for the demagogue to manipulate the former against the latter. Manipulation need not occur, however. When non-Jew and Jew coalesce and dwell in close proximity with one another, they become neighbors, and as such they gain some immunity against the demagogue’s shenanigans because they will be in an epistemic position to know better. In the end, then, we should agree with the philosopher Ian Angus: “Relations of immediate reciprocity such that each can speak and listen in turn, combined with access to relevant social knowledge [due to close proximity],

*ideally* [my italics] guarantees that deliberation and decision-making cannot be monopolized by powerful interests" (2000: 130).<sup>9</sup>

What this shows is that the value of deliberative engagement far exceeds what democratic theorists have traditionally given it.<sup>10</sup> Deliberative engagement is part of the much larger undertaking of peace building that is particularly important for the post-conflict societies in Bosnia and Kosovo. Among other things, this sort of engagement plays an important role in refashioning identities and relationships of people who are at odds with one another. Indeed, why would people withdraw peacefully from anti-democratic modes of governance and ways of living if it were not for a more empowering way of engaging with one another (Dewey 1987, 1988)?

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## Hypothesis Two (H2): Peace Building

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*H2: The process of peace building, as the transformation of conflictual relationships into more sustainable and peaceful ones, includes deliberative engagement as a principal component.*

Deliberative engagements understood as learning environments are crucial if peace build-

ing is to be successful at creating sustainable and peaceful relationships (Lederach 1997: 20), especially between peoples who are living together in a post-conflict society.<sup>11</sup> By the way, these engagements have little to do with tolerance. "[T]olerance doesn't welcome. It allows, endures, indulges....It doesn't ask us to care for the stranger. It doesn't even invite us to know each other, to be curious, to be open to be moved or surprised by each other" (Tippett 2016: 15–16). If to be tolerant is "to leave that person alone, unhindered to pursue his or her own way," then it is unlikely that "people might learn about — and possibly from — one another" (Niebuhr 2008: 40). Even worse, the indifference that is wrapped up in the dictum "to live and let live" may cultivate misbehavior (Rosenblum 2016).<sup>12</sup> All in all, peace building requires moving beyond simply tolerating others, beyond the coexistence of diversity and to ratify mutual acceptance.

Yet it is against this background of tolerance that we can discern the underlying mechanism of creating sustainable and peaceful relationships. Being tolerant or intolerant of people is largely about who they are — i.e., identities, though what they have done or not done is often connected to how tolerant or intolerant we are in our relationships with them. The crucial point is this: the re-

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<sup>9</sup> In truth, we must find whatever tool that helps us to keep the demagogue or spin doctor at bay. David N. DeVries (2016) distinction between "thinking through" and "thinking" offers an insight in this regard. "Thinking through" is the deliberative engagement that is referred to in this essay, but thinking is something quite different. "Thinking," for DeVries, allows one "to be alone with one's mind in the long stretch of life meeting the untold number of moments when one's fundamental aloneness will confront one" (B15). Those crisis moments when one feels alone and unprotected from those who are tearing apart one's life and identity are moments that the demagogue and spin doctor can manipulate to their advantage. Thus, it might be of some value "to have something interesting going on inside your head" and "to have things inside your head to absorb your attention" (ibid.) rather than allowing your aloneness to be hijacked.

<sup>10</sup> However, some may say that it does not do the "heavy lifting" that Hannah Arendt associated with thinking, i.e., deliberative engagement may justify what Arendt says is unthinkable (Berkowitz 2010: 240).

<sup>11</sup> Given that deliberative engagements include the sort of Socratic thinking that is prized by Martha C. Nussbaum, she is correct to point out that such thinking "is particularly important in societies that need to come to grips with the presence of people who differ by ethnicity, caste, and religion. The idea that one will take responsibility for one's own reasoning, and exchange ideas with others in an atmosphere of mutual respect for reason, is essential to the peaceful resolution of differences, both within a nation and in a world increasingly polarized by ethnic and religious conflict" (2010: 54).

<sup>12</sup> Perhaps this meaning of tolerance is a poor but inevitable way of dealing with the other once tradition is lost, tradition that expresses unity within multiplicity as noted by Rusmir Mahmutćehajić (2005, 2000a, 2000b). Although Mahmutćehajić frames his work within the particulars of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the following statement is a clear nudge towards the universal: "The Bosnian-Herzegovinan model of tolerance and inter-religious relationships can be interpreted as accepting that all religion should enable the reunion of all human beings with their single transcendent origin" (2000b: 16). In a different context, being tolerant may lead (or has led to) more and more people taking up a cult of ignorance and wallowing in anti-intellectualism. Loud repetition is taken as evidence for whatever claim some see fit to adopt, e.g., climate change is a myth.



relationships that are in need of changing are a reflection of certain salient identities. In the case of Bosnia, for example, the many ethno-nationalists exaggerate the salience of their ethno-nationalist belonging, a salience that does not go unnoticed by others. It is no wonder, then, that identities are said to be socially constructed, de-constructed, and reconstructed (Putnam 2007: 159). Their “constructed-ness” can be understood in two important ways. First, identities are social constructs insofar as they draw on a “variety of authentic elements held in common within a group: a common history, language, or religion; or common customs, cultural expressions, experiences, value, grievances, or aspirations” (Kelman 2004: 65). Second, not only is self-identifying important, but what also matters is how others identify you, i.e., what category or class they assign you (Yue, Li, and Feldman 2016: 77). Both forms of identifying figure into how people are treated in a society. Again, ethno-nationalist identity continues to play a prominent role in the lives of many Bosnians, often determining relationships that treat some as friend and others as foe. For their part, some Bosnians have deconstructed ethnicity as a salient line of social division, even though ethnicity itself remains personally important. Perhaps ethnic endogamy has something to do with this deconstruction in Bosnia.<sup>13</sup> But for those who have not been affected by endogamy, they need to establish deeply meaningful and sustainable identities and relationships resulting from interaction and integration.

What are some specific ways in which this can be pursued in practical terms? Perhaps ordinary conversations that build casual social connections may be the best one can hope for early on (Thornbury and Slade 2006: 25). An exchange of pleasantries at the market place may be all that the shopkeeper and housewife can muster

towards each other: “Kako si ti?” “Dobra, hvala.” But chitchatting and more transformative communication like dialogue and, eventually, deliberative engagement, are needed so that enemy images can be broken down, leading people in conflictual relationships to gain an ever greater understanding of one another’s positions, needs, and interests. As I see it, deliberative engagement offers the most robust source of change, since it incorporates dialogue, “a process of genuine *interaction* through which human beings listen to each other deeply enough to be changed by what they learn...[a process through which] one’s mind opens to absorb new views, enlarge perspectives, rethink assumptions and modify judgements” (Saunders 1999: 82). And it incorporates critical thinking, “the ability to seek out and evaluate relevant information on a given topic, to question and assess the value of different arguments, and to draw informed conclusions” (Makau and Marty 2001: 11). It is hoped that this enhanced understanding and openness to change will lead to a lessening of mistrust and uncertainty and more fellow-feeling, which are important for reconciliation, “a mutual, conciliatory accommodation between formerly antagonistic groups” that is very much needed in the Balkans (Conces 2009: 22).<sup>14</sup> Of course, another option is the construction of an alternative identity (and its associated relationships), that is, a transcendent identity, not to replace the particular ethno-nationalist identities, but to “stand alongside” them in a more prominent position (Kelman 2004: 65). This identity is reflected in discourse about Bosnia as a country inhabited by Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks), Bosnian Serbs, and Bosnian Croats who each share the identity of citizen of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Unfortunately, this identity, which reflects another type of nationalism — civic nationalism, a supraethnic na-

<sup>13</sup> Putnam (2007: 160–61) notes that many Americans have done the same sort of salience reduction with religion. However, I am afraid that the events of 9-11 have once again made religion salient in the eyes of many Americans.

<sup>14</sup> There are reasons to be suspicious of such an idealized view of deliberative engagement (see Brennan 2016; Mendelberg 2002). Make no mistake: we should not delude ourselves into thinking that learning more about our enemy or our adversary will always lead to more pleasant relations. It may result in the exact opposite; our worst fears about the other may be confirmed: “My neighbor is a terrorist!” In fact, developing trust with a stranger or an adversary usually takes more than ongoing deliberative engagement; it takes acting in certain ways and not in other ways. Yet deliberative engagement is a portal through which one can act in a more respectful way towards another person or to a group to which they belong.

tionalism devoid of the ethno-chauvinism and ethno-xenophobia — is not currently as salient as its ethnic counterpart for many Bosnians.<sup>15</sup>

It is the integral role that deliberative engagement plays in democracy and peace building that makes them social projects, albeit difficult ones. However, democracy and peace building are also physical projects. Crowding into close proximity and relations of immediate reciprocity are affected by the presence or absence of particular types of objects (often physical). What sort of objects could these be? Could the presence of certain objects make the physical environment so toxic that some people will not move into close proximity with the other? If so, what would it take to make those environments more livable as communities of diverse peoples?

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### Hypothesis Three (H3): Evocative Objects

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H3: Some objects are evocative for groups of people and, as such, either attract or repel members of groups depending on whether those objects are construed positively or negatively.

I find it interesting that the German philosopher Martin Heidegger began his analysis in “The Thing” by raising the issue of nearness: “Nearness, it seems, cannot be encountered directly. We succeed in reaching it rather by attending to what is near. Near to us are what we usually call things” (Heidegger 1971b: 166). Whether we find ourselves amongst things or we surround ourselves with things, things are near to us. It is this notion of nearness, and not the “thingly character of the thing” (167), which I borrow from Heidegger. The way in which things become relevant to the concerns of this essay is *connected* with the way in which things become objects in the Heideggerian sense of the term: “An independent, self-supporting thing may become an object if we place it before us, whether in immediate perception or by

bringing it to mind in a recollective re-presentation” (ibid.). Since nearness is to be understood in terms of our awareness of the thing which makes it an object, we must be aware of things as objects in order for them to become important for us in a lived sense.

John Berger and Jean Mohr, in their insightful work *Another Way of Telling: A Possible Theory of Photography* (1982), bring color to this “lived sense” by informing us that circumstances do matter when we look at our surroundings (118–19). For example, I “read” my surroundings one way when I drive my car to the university, but “read” them in a very different way when I run down that same street as part of my morning workout. That is, when driving down Harney Street on my way to campus, I see numerous trees along the street. Running down that same street as part of my morning workout, however, allows me to identify those trees as ginkgoes. Perhaps this goes to show that I am a responsible driver and a curious runner. In any case, each way of “reading” offers a unique view of what I pass. Also, in addition to each act of looking being “threaded” with meaning, sometimes there is a felt expression of emotion. Pain, sadness, and joy are some of the emotions that might be threaded along with meaning. Perhaps I am odd in this regard, for each time I see a ginkgo tree, I feel surprise and joy. Don’t ask me why; it has something to do with helping my father plant a ginkgo tree when I was a boy.

This leads us to a new vocabulary in regards to the objects of our surroundings. Another way to phrase this “lived sense” is to say that some objects become evocative (special) for us. They are evocative because they have important meaning for us and invoke certain emotions in us when we gaze at them, hold them, or even recall memories about them (Turkle 2007). In each case, “something comes to our mind.” For example, a necktie that a colleague at the University of Prishtina took off and tied around my neck while I waited in line at a branch office of

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<sup>15</sup> Civic nationalism asserts “that the nation should be composed of all those... who subscribe to the nation’s political creed. This nationalism is called civic because it envisages the nation as a community of equal, rights-bearing citizens, united in patriotic attachment to a shared set of political practices and values” (Ignatieff 1994: 6–7). For a discussion of American nationalism, see Pei (2003).

Raiffeisen Bank is evocative for me. It was and still is a token of friendship, and wearing it reminds me of the wonderful experiences I had as a Fulbright Scholar in Kosovo. The holding power of this necktie is strong for me because of its place within a particular cognitive and emotional nexus of mine, one that relates a myriad of evocative objects with one another, including those experienced during my stay in Kosovo. The colorfulness of my lived world is a direct result of how my life is entangled with these objects. Consequently, I am not willing to give up my tie.

None of us have a totally unique set of evocative objects, however. There is some overlap. For example, my red and orange necktie is evocative for at least one other person — i.e., my colleague in Prishtina, though this does not mean that the tie is evocative for both of us in exactly the same way. Note, too, that there are some objects in my home and university office that are evocative for larger groups of people. For instance, there is an oil painting of my father's hanging in my flat that is evocative for my *group of siblings*, albeit a group of three. This painting, to which my siblings are attached, is exhibited in my dwelling (Heidegger 1971a: 145–61), a very private space within which I feel at home physically, emotionally, and spiritually. So private, in fact, that few have been to my flat. Consequently, few have seen my father's painting of a blue vase.

But many objects are evocative for a great number of people because the objects occupy public space. For example, a photo of mine taken of post-war Sarajevo, if displayed on my department's hallway bulletin board, would probably be evocative for a number of people. And just think how many more people would find that photo to be so if it were posted on my Facebook timeline. I believe the number of Likes associated with that photo would prove me right. More importantly for this essay, there are evocative objects that form parts of cityscapes that are cognitively, affectively, and conatively informing in unique ways for members of certain groups. Groups are formed based on a wide range of identities, such as class, religion, gender, and sexual orientation. In many parts of the world, peoples' dominant identity centers on their ethno-nationalism, a

nationalism that "is based on descent. The true nation is a solidarity grounded in what its adherents understand to be primordial ties, not any instrumental or accidental connections" (Hollinger 1995: 133). As noted previously, for many in the Balkans, one's ethno-nationalist identity is a very important part of who they are, often much more socially salient than being a Bosnian or Kosovan, which is about being a citizen of a country and not about being a member of a nation defined in terms of ethnicity, culture, and language (Conces 2005: 143–62).

Taking our cue once again from the Balkans, the concrete, material reality of ethno-nationalism is visible to the naked eye. Members of an ethnic group that dominates within a region of a country may see some objects as evocative insofar as these objects are "wrapped in" meaning that harkens back to a time when this group fought for the creation of their own state, which they largely rule today. Flags, murals, and graffiti are all empowered to stir pride in members of that ethnic community. However, the ethnic group that had the territory wrestled from them and that is now just another minority may see these same objects as reminders of their being victims of past atrocities, stirring in them seething hatred and desire for retribution. The one and the same object is evocative in very different ways depending on who is viewing it; in other words, object evocativity is observer-sensitive.

For that reason, one would never expect evocative objects that positively reflect the ethno-nationalism of one's rivals to be found within their own house. Again, this is because one's house is usually not just a place to inhabit or occupy, but a place to dwell as Heidegger rightly points out. Perhaps 'home' is a more common term. For the die-hard ethno-nationalist, the day begins and ends in a place adorned with evocative objects that reflect his ethno-nationalist identity. Moreover, when all the homes that he has ever lived in — not only those of adulthood, but also those of his childhood and his adolescence — have been adorned in a similar way, it is not far-fetched to think that those homes have had an effect on the inhabitant's identity complex. Why would we expect a person who woke up

every morning to a nationalist flag above his bed, eats breakfast on a kitchen table littered with nationalist pamphlets, and grabs his coat and boots from a closet adjacent to a portrait of a nationalist leader, not to have taken his ethno-nationalist identity seriously wherever he goes?<sup>16</sup> Indeed, we should expect him to be intolerant of the ethnic other.

Do these ethno-nationally charged objects ever exist outside of the immediate home environment, perhaps in settings that are more public? Do they ever form parts of cityscapes? They most certainly do. They are found while strolling through the streets of Sarajevo and Mostar in Bosnia, and Prishtina and North Mitrovica in Kosovo, with some places having a preponderance of publicly situated objects, evocatively informing in relatively well-defined ways for members of different ethno-nationalist groups. Flags are a commonly used marker illustrating the so-called cult of the flag. In Sarajevo, one can occasionally find the flag of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992–98) with its Fleur-de-lis, as well as minarets flying the flag of the Islamic Community of Bosnia — the green flag with a white crescent and star.<sup>17</sup> These objects resonant favorably with much of the Bosniak community. In Mostar, it is not unusual to find the flag of Croatia with its red and white checkerboard dangling from lamp posts in the western part of the city dominated by ethnic Croats. Travelling south to Kosovo, one finds the Albanian flag flying in many parts of the country, with the state and civil flags of Serbia showing up only in areas dominated by ethnic Serbs.<sup>18</sup> Murals and photos, as well as monu-

ments and shrines, are also found in abundance throughout the country, again reflecting an ethnic group's dominance in those locales. A short car ride can take you from standing in front of a large mural in Prishtina of the first President of Kosovo, Ibrahim Rugova, to gazing at a calendar photo of Slobodan Milosevic on a bakery wall in North Mitrovica, each being viewed as either a hero or a war criminal depending on who is doing the viewing, an ethnic Albanian or an ethnic Serb. Perhaps another way of highlighting the importance of this identity is to say the following: "If you want to know a people's ethno-nationalist sentiments, don't ask them, just look at their surroundings." Of course, many people do not live by themselves, but live in neighborhoods surrounded by others.

Locales reflecting these differing dominances are no surprise, given that evocative objects have both centripetal and centrifugal effects on people. For instance, objects favored by a dominant ethnic group can encourage members of that group to congregate in a particular place. These objects are centripetal for them; they elicit in the members of the dominant group a *feeling of being welcomed* in that place and prompt them to behave in certain ways, including ways that help build cohesion among members of that group. These same objects, however, are centrifugal for members of the once powerful ethnic minority. The objects elicit an *unwelcoming feeling* in them and discourage them from being in that place, from interacting and establishing relationships with members of the dominant group (Conces 2013b: 10). In this case, interethnic cohesion is sacrificed for the

<sup>16</sup> I am grateful to Riley Ruzicka for offering a similar discussion in a paper he submitted in my spring 2017 Social Philosophy class at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

<sup>17</sup> This raises two interesting points about religious objects. First, the practicing of one's religion is a personal matter, so the thought of eliminating evocative objects of a religious nature will raise an uproar. Second, this essay focuses on physical objects, but what about the sound that an altar boy makes when he rings the church bells before Sunday mass or the ezan—the Islamic call to worship—that is recited by the muezzin from the minaret of a mosque? These are also evocative but in different ways, and their range is not limited by eyesight. Of course, some physical objects can be seen as far as one can hear a church bell, such as the large cross on Mount Hum overlooking the Bosnian city of Mostar. Straying from the strictly religious, popular music is also something that may distinguish ethnic communities, e.g., hearing the music of Thompson, a Croatian rock band, being played on the Croat (west) side of the Neretva River in Mostar as compared to the music of Amira Medunjanin, a sevhah singer, coming from the Bosniak (east) side of that city. And let us not forget the sense of smell; the aroma of bacon curling up from a grill is informative in this regard as well. In a way, the arc of one's ethnic identity extends far and wide.

<sup>18</sup> Although I am not sure whether these are instances of the appropriation of flags, I have witnessed this phenomenon in Belfast, Northern Ireland, where I have seen the Palestinian flag in Catholic neighborhoods (e.g., Falls Road) and the Israeli flag in Protestant neighborhoods (e.g., Shankill Road).

sake of intraethnic cohesion. Whereas the message to members of the dominant group is "You are welcome!" the message to those of the minority (now non-dominant) group is "Go away!"

Perhaps the degree to which an individual moves (orientates) toward an object or the area that surrounds an object (centripetal movement), or moves (orientates) away from an object or its area (centrifugal movement) is not simply a matter of having one kind of feeling versus another kind of feeling, feeling good versus feeling not so good. It is also a matter of believing, if we agree with the American philosophers W.V. Quine and J.S. Ullian that believing is a "disposition to respond in certain ways when the appropriate issue arises" (1978: 10). For Quine and Ullian, believing that Hannibal crossed the Alps is to be disposed to respond in one of a number of ways, including simply saying "Yes" when asked. More important for this essay is their example of frozen foods: "To believe that frozen foods will thaw on the table is to be disposed, among other things, to *leave* [my italics] such foods on the table only when one wants them thawed" (ibid.). This example helps us to grasp how believing is relevant to objects and enclaves in the Balkans. Perhaps to believe that to live my life as an ethnic Serb will preserve the Serb nation against its rivals is to be disposed to respond by only *living and interacting* with fellow Serbs. That is to say, to respond as a Serb ethno-nationalist in this case is to *leave oneself* in a particular neighborhood, with a certain group of people who surround themselves with a certain kind of object. After a while this sort of behavior erodes diversity by excluding members of other ethnic groups from those areas in which Serbs are congregating. Again, for those strongly tied to their ethno-nationalist sentiments, the messages are "loud and clear" and the behavior follows suit; hence, a place becomes a sanctuary for some and a wasteland for others. The enclave has arrived whether by intentional design or by an "invisible hand" mechanism (Nozick 1974: 18–22).

To be clear about the magnitude of the impact of these objects, an activity as ordinary as dog walking provides a person with an op-

portunity for "contact and conviviality" with others, a chance to share ideas and concerns with strangers on the path (Macaulay 2007: 105). However, that opportunity may not arise if the path is within eyesight of objects that trigger terrible memories and stir sadness or anger in the dog walker. In the walker's mind, then, that path is "off limits." There are many objects along a walking path, most of which a person is unaware of or indifferent to. But it may only take a few antagonistic objects along the path for the path itself to be badly stigmatized. It is the thoughts and feelings connected to those antagonistic objects that become associated with the walking path as a locale and that puts it out of bounds. Perhaps there is a direct correlation between the size of an out of bounds locale and factors such as the number of antagonistic objects in that locale, the degree to which the person finds them antagonistic, and the distribution of those objects throughout the locale. Perhaps entire countries and regions can become off limits in the same way.

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### Should We Decolorize Evocative Objects?

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Revealing evocative objects as signposts that color or inform the landscape in which people go about their everyday lives raises an important question. Should we *only* think and talk about evocative objects in ways that highlight their color (i.e., identities, history, and emotions) and, thus, their seductiveness? Or should we at some point revert to more abstract discourse in the hope of making these objects "black and white" (or generic), thereby reducing their attractiveness? I believe there are two reasons for decolorizing or genericizing objects. First, seduced by the colorfulness of the evocative objects of others may lead us to think that we are just like the others because we too immerse ourselves in the colorfulness of our own objects. Someone may say, "I think many people in Sarajevo or Prishtina won't want their flags or murals replaced. I know I wouldn't if I was in their shoes." Worse than this willy-nilly "comradery," the seduction may lead people to be disinclined to take seriously the dynamic between evocative

objects and ethnic enclaves, as well as measures proposed to address that dynamic. Second, what happens if the concrete, descriptive language of another group's evocative objects resonates with my own identities, including my ethno-nationalist prejudices and biases? Feeling a strong kinship with another group may again diminish the importance of both the dynamic and the counter-measures. What I am advocating here, then, is the "removal of color" so that we neither adopt the primacy of a colorful landscape of evocative objects nor align ourselves with certain groups of people through their evocative objects. In a sense, I am proposing irreverence towards some objects that matter to people, grasping the dynamic on *dispassionate* grounds by means of a heuristic device that uses the language of abstract mathematics.

The empirical underpinnings of this device are found in recent work in the social sciences, particularly in the work delineating two different thinking processes or cognitive systems (Kahneman 2003 and 2013, Stanovich and West 2000). The key features of what has come to be known as System 1 and System 2 types of cognitive processes are that "the operations of System 1 are typically fast, automatic, effortless, associative, implicit (not available to introspection), and often emotionally charged..." whereas "operations of System 2 are slower, serial, effortful, more likely to be monitored and deliberately controlled; they are also relatively flexible and potentially rule governed" (Kahneman 2003: 698). Examples that are indicative of faster System 1 operations include understanding simple sentences and solving the addition problem  $2 + 2$ , while examples of the slower System 2 operations include filling out a tax form and searching one's memory to identify a surprising sound (Kahneman 2013: 21–22). The significance of System 2 thinking for this essay's heuristic device becomes clear once we realize that the mental events that the

heuristic looks to set aside are related to System 1 thinking. Recognizing an object as evocative in an ethno-nationalist way fits well with the System 1 examples. This recognition is essentially a "learned association" between object and idea (with emotional content) that has "become fast and automatic through prolonged practice" (22). When a Serb nationalist, born and bred in North Mitrovica, sees the Albanian flag flying in Prishtina, he may think "occupier"; when he hears persons speaking Albanian, he may think "Muslim." He is disposed to respond in such ways when confronted with certain images and sounds. There is nothing quick or slow about it; it just happens. But working through more complicated expressions of mathematics related to the heuristic in Figures 1–3 squares with Kahneman's System 2 examples, with thinking that is more deliberative and devoid of the emotional baggage. System 1 thinking cannot easily comprehend the matrix and the various numerical manipulations, so System 2 thinking navigates through this world of numbers.

With this in mind, the approach taken here is to present evocative objects in an abstract and mathematized form through System 2 thinking, so that the connection between evocative objects and ethnic enclaves is more "black and white," and less susceptible to System 1 thinking with its emotional charge and bias.<sup>19</sup> The abstraction is formed by filtering the information of these objects and selecting two variables that are relevant for understanding the dynamic between evocative objects and ethnic enclaves: dominant and non-dominant group membership and how an object is valued (i.e., as a protagonist, neutagon, and antagonist).<sup>20</sup> The abstraction is bound to mathematization as expressed by a matrix, pushing the abstraction and impartiality even further.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Perhaps what we need is something like "theory-induced blindness" (Kahneman 2013: 277).

<sup>20</sup> This abstraction process used to address disconnection and impartiality is neither a matter of increasing the number of examined perspectives (à la Adam Smith's [2009] "impartial spectator") nor does it include a hypothetical viewer in a state of partial ignorance and who tries to arrive at an outcome (like the person created by John Rawls's [2000] "veil of ignorance"). Instead, the situation is abstracted so that it makes it more unlikely that a person's preferences, which they are well aware of, will "distort" their understanding of the situation. The matrix "deadens" the influence of various orientations without a Rawlsian veil.

<sup>21</sup> Whether this matrix and the associated understanding of the dynamic holds true is a matter of empirical study. If this

## Evocativity Matrix (e-matrix)

The dynamic presented in the dominant group/ non-dominant group two-observer situation within an ethnic enclave can be redescribed, generalized, and mathematically formalized by an evocativity matrix (e-matrix) — a 3x3 matrix that presents how the viewings of the same evocative object by two observers, one from the dominant group and the other from the non-dominant group, interact in ways that give rise to the centripetal and centrifugal effects of these evocative objects and in ways which then give rise to ethnic enclaves.<sup>22</sup>

The e-matrix shows the evocative outcomes (cloud values), represented by dyads, for every possible combination of three kinds of objects that are cognitively and affectively evocative: protagonists, antagonists, and neutagons. Protagonists are objects that are positively evocative; antagonists are objects that are negatively evocative; and neutagons are objects that are evocative only insofar as the observer is cognizant of their presence as devoid of positivity and negativity. As an example of an e-matrix, Figure 1 is a possible set of outcomes for how one evocative variable (dominant or non-dominant group membership) is related to the value variable (the different kinds of evocative objects).<sup>23</sup>

In the 3x3 matrix of Figure 1, the dominant (d) group's three categories of evocative objects —

protagon (Pd), neutagon (Nd), and antagon (Ad) with their particular

Evocative Object	Pd 1	Nd 1.5	Ad 3
Pnd 1	1/1=1 Pd==Pndv	1.5/1=1.5 3/1=3 Nd(Nd0→Ad)Pnd	3/1=3
Nnd 1.5	1/1.5=.66 1/3=.33 PdNnd(Nnd0→And)	1.5/1.5=1 Nd==Nnd	3/1.5=2 3/1=3 AdNnd(Nnd-0→Pnd)
And 3	1/3=.33	1.5/3=.5 1/3=.33 Nd(Nd-0→Pd)And	3/3=1 Ad==And

Figure 1. Evocativity Matrix (e-matrix) and Its Cloud Values and Transformations

The likelihood of transformations increases with protagonist-neutagon dyads (0→, "likely to yield") and decreases with antagonist-neutagon dyads (-0→, "not likely to yield").

evocativity values<sup>24</sup> — form the columns of the matrix. Similarly, the non-dominant (nd) group's three evocative categories (Pnd, Nnd, and And with their particular values) form the rows of the matrix. Each cell of the matrix shows a cloud value (cellular evocativity), that is, the evocative value of an object viewed as evocative by two observers *who are aware of how the other views the object*. It is called a cloud value because it goes beyond how each observer individually assesses the evocativity of an object by identifying it in terms of a protagonist, neutagon, or antagonist. It is calculated as the quotient of the value associated with a particular kind of object viewed by a member of the dominant observer group (numerator) divided by the val-

is to be pursued, however, the matrix offers an additional benefit. It makes the essay vulnerable to Popperian falsifiability: "...a theory that is mathematized [is preferable] to a theory that is not. This is due to the fact that it is generally much easier to obtain falsifiable conclusions from clearly stated propositions than from vague and informal claims" (Hartmann and Sprenger 2010: 4).

<sup>22</sup> We can also think of this in terms of a field, a confined area within which there are numerous objects. These objects become evocative when a person inhabits the field. It is only at that point that evocativity makes sense, that there are centripetal and centrifugal forces at work, and that measurements can be made.

<sup>23</sup> The communities in which people actually live are populated by multiple antagonistic groups and exhibit multiple evocative variables, thereby inflating the number of possible cloud values.

<sup>24</sup> The evocativity values given to each of the three categories of object are part folk/commonsense psychological and part informed intuitive judgement assignments. Oddly enough, the category values and mathematics here seem to best capture the psychological intuitions of how we think and feel about evocative objects. The protagonist, an object construed positively, is given a baseline value of 1. The neutagon is given a value of 1.5, which is slightly removed from the baseline but far removed from the antagonist. It is not much different from a protagonist — we are not much bothered by it — but it is very different from an antagonist; compared to the antagonist, the neutagon is "not all that bad." The antagonist is given a value twice removed from the baseline, the value of 2, since it is just the opposite of the protagonist being negative in nature. Given how these evocativity values are formulated, I treat them as "plausible initial hypotheses" (see Gopnik and Schwitzgebel 1998). These hypotheses are ready to be tested.

ue associated with a particular kind of evocative object viewed by a member of a non-dominant observer group (denominator). Each of the nine cloud values is associated with a specific dyad of evocative objects, one from each observer group. Thus, for example, when an object is viewed as a protagon by a member of the dominant group, as well as by a member of the non-dominant group, then the PdPnd dyad has a cloud value of 1. On the other hand, if an object is viewed as an antagon by the dominant group but as a protagon by the non-dominant group, the AdPnd dyad has a value of 3.

When the nine cells are examined, we notice some interesting relationships as shown in Figure 2. First, whenever members of the dominant group and the non-dominant groups view the evocative object as being of the same kind, the cloud value is 1, which represents equilibrium (=) or harmony between how members of the two groups view that object. You can find equilibriums descending diagonally across the matrix. Second, the cloud values are the highest when the dominant group views an object as an antagon or a neutagon and the non-dominant group views that same object as either a protagon or a neutagon. Third, the cloud values stray from equilibrium the least when the dominant group views the object as either a protagon or a neutagon

Dyad	Cloud Value	Difference from Equilibrium (1)
AdPnd	3	2
AdNnd	2	1
NdPnd	1.5	.5
PdPnd AdAnd NdNnd	1	0
PdNnd	.66	.34
NdAnd	.5	.5
PdAnd	.33	.67

Figure 2. E-Matrix Rankings

The effect of group dominance is reflected in the disproportionate movement above equilibrium as compared to below it.

and the non-dominant group views the same object as a neutagon or an anatagon (see Fig-

<sup>25</sup> Whether the country-wide demographics are more like Bosnia or more like Kosovo (see fn. 12) may have an impact on this as well.

ure 3). What these last two points show is that the difference from equilibrium increases more dramatically when the dominant group is “antagonized” and increases less dramatically when that same group is “protagonized” regardless of the non-dominant group’s viewing. Perhaps the significance of these different rates of increase is that the prevalence of AdPnd and AdNnd clouds is indicative of what might be found in more homogeneous ethnic enclaves, whereas the prevalence of NdAnd and PdAnd clouds is indicative of a less homogeneous enclave that exhibits a high degree of tolerance on the part of the dominant group.<sup>25</sup> Last, by making a couple reasonable assumptions about human behavior results in some interesting claims about the likelihood of certain

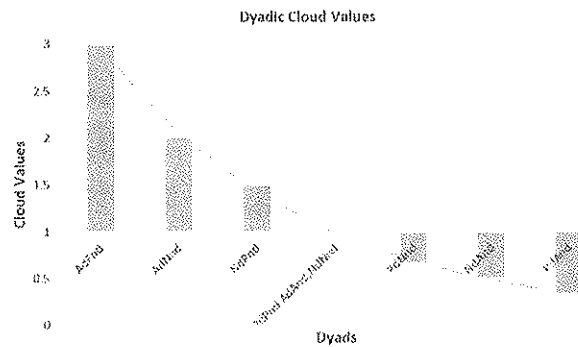


Figure 3. Distribution of Dyadic Cloud Values

Cloud values of dyads tend to be driven farther from equilibrium when the dominant group sees the object as an antagon rather than as a protagon regardless of how the non-dominant group sees the same object. There is drastic decay followed by subtle growth in cloud values as shown by the curve.

transformative processes (boldfaced in the PdNnd, AdNnd, NdPnd, and NdAnd cells in Figure 1). The first claim arises from the assumption that some identities, like ethno-nationalism, are inherently combative, such that one ethno-nationalist might say to another of an opposing “ism,” “What you like, I dislike.” The result is that when a neutagon and a protagon form a dyad, there is likely to be a dramatic shift in the cloud value away from equilibrium once the neutagon becomes an antagon as shown by Nd(Nd $\leftrightarrow$ Ad)



$Pnd\ 3/1=3$  and  $PdNnd(Nnd\ \diamond\ \rightarrow\ And)\ 1/3=.33$ . The second claim is based on the assumption that even with the inherent combativeness of some identities, the likelihood of a neutagon becoming a protagon when faced with the other's antagon, may be remote because the required investment in a neutagon to make it a protagon is too great as shown by  $Nd(Nd\ \diamond\ \rightarrow\ Pd)And\ 1/3=.33$  and  $AdNnd(Nnd\ \diamond\ \rightarrow\ Pnd)\ 3/1=3$ . How many people will say, "I am no longer indifferent towards what you dislike; in fact, I now like it because you don't like it"? Perhaps not many.

It is important to reiterate that the e-matrix, as well as the assumptions and subsequent transformations, are used as a heuristic device to help us think about how the viewings of evocative objects by members of dominant and non-dominant groups reflect the degree to which these objects are thought to be harmonious or antagonistic but only in the abstract. This discussion has placed into black and white terms the possibility that tension between members of different ethno-nationalist groups (dominant and non-dominant) may be manifested through the objects with which people populate their cityscapes.<sup>26</sup>

The upshot of the e-matrix and its various relationships of antagonism and centripetal/centrifugal effects have much to do with the larger canvas of post-conflict society. With democracy and peace building on the line, it is no wonder that certain evocative objects take center stage.<sup>27</sup> The proliferation of evocative objects

that stir animosity within a country can greatly affect whether its society is multiethnic or plural monoethnic, as well as the prospects for democracy and peace building. How could all this building be achieved if evocative objects carve out space in ways that limit the interaction and integration of different ethnic peoples within a country's urban and rural areas? The e-matrix helps us to think about these objects, albeit in the abstract.<sup>28</sup> Insofar as there is an urgency to figure out what to do with ethnic enclaves, a return to more concrete language describing the world we live in is required.

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#### Hypothesis Four (H4): Ethnic Enclaves

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H4: Whereas multiethnic societies reflect and promote further interaction and integration of different ethnic peoples, thereby furthering the pursuit of democracy and peace building in post-conflict settings, plural monoethnic societies composed of ethnic enclaves do just the opposite.

The multiethnic society is one that is ethnically plural (diverse). This is true of Bosnia and Kosovo.<sup>29</sup> The demographic fact of pluralism is not enough for these two countries to each have a multiethnic society, however. Although pluralism allows for the possibility of interethnic interlocutors, without interaction between the ethnic groups it makes no difference whether one lives in an ethnically heterogeneous soci-

<sup>26</sup> My work proceeds at a fairly abstract level. But questions remain: Is it useful to explore whether the e-matrix and the rest reflect our lived reality? Is the theoretical framework responsive to demonstrable findings by social scientists? Is an equilibrium here like the Nash equilibrium, one in which participants have no reason to stray? Could participants actually be guided towards an equilibrium by rearranging one's built environment? These are crucial questions, but not answered now and not here.

<sup>27</sup> With social media being the global phenomenon that it is, it is common for political and cultural theorists to stress the importance of imagery for political struggles. For example, the sweeping changes that have taken place in the Middle East and North Africa, including those of the Arab Spring, are in part the result of people seeing murals, banners, posters, billboards, photos, and monuments as manifesting a revolutionary visual culture (Khatib 2013; Saber 2014; Bayat 2010). Political struggles are struggles "over presence, over visibility," so being seen is part of the dynamic of political and social change (Khatib 2013: 1).

<sup>28</sup> This may even lead to a geometry (or even a topology) of evocative space and how objects populate (even distort) that space.

<sup>29</sup> According to the CIA World Factbook 2009, the ethnic breakdown of the population in Bosnia is as follows: 48% Bosniak, 33% Serb, 14% Croat, and 5% other. See <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bk.html>. The same source gives the following breakdown for Kosovo: 92.9% Albanian, 1.6% Bosniak, 1.5% Serb, and 4% other. However, these figures may underestimate the Serb and Roma populations because they are based on the 2011

ety or in an ethnically homogeneous society.

Perhaps a good way of getting clear about what is needed for there to be a multiethnic society is to imagine the absence of interaction. Suppose the absence of interaction in a heterogeneous society means that members of ethnic groups do not know the existence of the other ethnic groups within their society. What would be the significance of calling that society multiethnic? None that I can think of. To be fair, perhaps those who adopt a minimalist definition of multiethnic society understand a plural society to be one in which its members know the existence of the ethnic others but nothing more. Again, what would be the significance of living in such a "multiethnic society"? I am afraid not much. So what is also needed for there to be a multiethnic society is interaction and integration between the ethnic peoples.<sup>30</sup>

Without interaction and integration, life would amount to living in an ethnic enclave, one in which there would be evocative objects of the dominant group that would be attractive to members of that group but repulsive to members of the non-dominant groups. What the e-matrix in Figure 1 suggests in this regard is that equilibrium is difficult to achieve and maintain

in societies that include dominant and non-dominant groups. As to be expected, the flags, murals, and monuments of the dominant group serve not only as boundary markers of the enclave, but also as warning signs to the non-dominant groups. Fortunately, these "markers" and "signs" do not make up the sort of hard and fast "border walls" (e.g., the Israeli "separation barrier")<sup>31</sup> that are proliferating around the world, but rather something soft, porous and permitting of the possibility for exchange. Nonetheless, as clear markers of domains of ethnic dwelling, these objects make group identity more visible, particularly ethno-nationalist identity, which in turn is about claiming political power, control, and agency.<sup>32</sup>

Even with it being divided into two entities, each with differing demographics, Bosnia appears to be in a stronger position to be labeled a multiethnic society than Kosovo. In terms of diversity and integration, the percentages of the second and third largest ethnic groups are much greater than those of the ethnic minorities in Kosovo (see fn. 25), and they are much more dispersed and integrated across the country than the minorities in Kosovo, which is essentially composed of a large Albanian enclave peppered with

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Kosovo national census, which was boycotted by some Serb and Roma communities in southern Kosovo and which excluded northern Kosovo (a Serb dominated region). See <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kv.html>.

<sup>30</sup> This conception of a multiethnic society is accepted by many within diplomatic circles. For example, it served as the foundation of a sweeping critique of Kosovan society by Tim Guldemann, head of the OSCE mission in Kosovo. In September 2008, Guldemann stated that Kosovo is "not what we could call a multi-ethnic society.... Different communities live in Kosovo, but a multi-ethnic society means integration, mutual understanding, tolerance and cohabitation. We do not see this" (Beta News Agency 2008). Skimming through OSCE documents gives one a sense that integration is a cornerstone of how the OSCE frames multiethnic societies. See also "Recommendations on Policing in Multi-Ethnic Societies" (OSCE 2006), "Human Rights, Ethnic Relations and Democracy in Kosovo" (OSCE 2008), and "The Ljubljana Guidelines on Integration of Diverse Societies" (OSCE 2012). Although I separate diversity from interaction, there are those who do not and who find the value of diversity in the openness, exposure to other cultures, and the possibility of personal expansion (Gutmann 1994: 9).

<sup>31</sup> I recognize that the "separation barrier" is just one material component of Israeli rule that is manifested in space. As the architect Eyal Weizman states, the frontiers of the Occupied Palestinian Territories are "deep, shifting, fragmented and elastic territories" (2012: 4). Thankfully, Kosovo is very different from the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

<sup>32</sup> Another way to think of an enclave and its boundary is offered by Heidegger (1971a). The ancient meaning of the word 'Raum' is "a place cleared or freed for settlement or lodging. A space is something that has been made room for, something that is cleared and free, namely within a boundary, Greek *peras*" (154). In the case of the ethnic enclave, then, the place within the enclave boundary has been cleared of members of certain ethnic groups to the extent that the salient evocative objects of the remaining ethnic group stand out. Heidegger's unique twist on the boundary of the enclave is that "a boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing" (ibid.). So as one draws near to the boundary of the North Mitrovica enclave, one is made away of the presence of the Serb. One sees, hears, and smells the Serb — one feels the presence of the Serb.

smaller minority enclaves. Furthermore, when you take into account some major indices like student demographics at the national university and the degree to which there is ethnic exogamy (the practice of marrying outside one's ethnic group) in urban centers, once again Bosnia is favored as having a multiethnic society. Whereas the University of Sarajevo has ethnic diversity in its student body and the capital has a relatively high degree of exogamy, the University of Prishtina has no Serb students<sup>33</sup> and ethnic endogamy (the practice of marrying within one's ethnic group) is the norm in Kosovo. This suggests the degree to which Kosovo exhibits a multiethnic society is decidedly lower than that of Bosnia.<sup>34</sup>

Regardless of the degree to which Bosnia and Kosovo exhibit or do not exhibit the characteristics of a multiethnic society, both countries can surely benefit from increased interaction and integration if for no other reason than it enhances the likelihood of democracy and peace building through increased deliberative engagement. To be sure, democracy (especially deliberative and participatory democracy) and peace are predicated on a continuing exchange of ideas, without which increasing amounts of uncertainty and mistrust are created, pushing people farther and farther apart. Emotions are also important here. Fear, for example, often contributes to pushing people apart, whereas those associated with empathy (including sym-

pathy and compassion)<sup>35</sup> help us to develop an appreciation of how other people experience their own situations.<sup>36</sup>

The more one emphasizes what Bosnia and Kosovo need for democracy and peace building to become much more of a reality, the more one realizes how much of a threat ethnic enclaves are for those countries. Indeed, Cass Sunstein's (2002) work connecting the phenomena of enclave deliberation with group polarization helps us to grasp the *realness* of that threat to the exchange of ideas and, subsequently, to democracy and peace building. On the one hand, there is what Sunstein calls "enclave deliberation," which is a process involving "deliberation among like-minded people who talk or even live, much of the time, in isolated enclaves [a state of social homogeneity]" (82). Surprising as it may seem, Sunstein finds enclaves to possess a potential benefit: the role they may play as "a safeguard against social injustice and unreasonableness" by sustaining views that often do not get the time of day in heterogeneous groups (ibid.). This benefit may exist for certain shared identity communities in Bosnia and Kosovo, such as very small ethnic minorities (e.g., the Romani in Bosnia; the Gorani, Ashkali, Romani, and Egyptians in Kosovo;) and sexuality- and gender-based communities (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer [LGBTQ] in both Bosnia and Kosovo). The same would not hold true for

<sup>33</sup> This is based on first-hand knowledge of having taught at both universities, as well as interviews with university administrators.

<sup>34</sup> According to the OSCE mission in Kosovo, "divisions between communities, between Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs in particular, persist" (OSCE 2015: 6). This conclusion is based on an ethnic distance survey (see Bogardus 1925 for the concept of social distance) that was carried out from February 1 to March 1, 2014 by the Youth Initiative for Human Rights in Kosovo (Jović 2015). This general conclusion is arrived at even though when it comes to whether the respondents would accept the other as someone living in their neighborhood, there was markedly less distance. This, to me, is surprising, given that the neighborhood would be a likely meeting place to begin relations of close kinship (spouse, son/daughter-in-law) which were marked by great distance. Also, past surveys of the former Yugoslavia indicate that the ethnic distance in Bosnia was generally lower than that found in Kosovo (Gligorijević 2015).

<sup>35</sup> It should be noted that Paul Bloom (2016) argues that it is compassion and not empathy that is the key to being a moral person. In fact, Bloom agrees with Nussbaum (2013: 146) insofar as empathy is a tool that can be used by good people as well as bad.

<sup>36</sup> Of the factors of ethnic distance that Jović cites, structural and psychological factors are most supportive of this essay. Structurally, living separately "does not contribute to the frequent contacts which would generate both the interest-based and friendly relationships" (2015: 270). Psychologically, there is the fear and distrust between members of both communities, and these feelings are generated by the other factors of ethnic distance, including the structural factor (ibid.). The plan to reduce or eliminate certain evocative objects figures into Jović's connecting the psychological with the structural, for by increasing the likelihood that people will interact and integrate with one another, there is decreasing fear and distrust of the other.

the ethnic Croat and Serb communities in Bosnia and the ethnic Serb community in Kosovo because of the proximity of their supportive ancestral heartlands. On the other hand, there is the phenomenon of group polarization, a process whereby "members of a deliberating group predictably move toward a more extreme point in the direction indicated by the members' pre-deliberation tendencies" (81). Polarization leading to radicalization, violence, and terrorism, however, becomes a concern when (1) ethno-nationalism, with its xenophobia and chauvinism, is the dominant shared identity of a group (2) that engages in enclave deliberation. It is the insularity of the enclave that allows a group to deliberate on a regular basis without having sustained exposure to views that compete with theirs, which then allows the factors that lead to increased polarization to run wild, thereby moving their views to the extreme as indicated by their pre-deliberation tendencies. Although group polarization does not necessarily mean a movement in a normatively wrong direction, Sunstein is correct to note that it all "depends on what extremists are arguing *for*" (92). In the case of a salient shared ethno-nationalism identity, the sort of extreme views that come in the wake of its xenophobia and chauvinism will be extremely antagonistic towards out-groups, thereby making it unlikely that any of the groups will rush towards collective life.

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### Where Do We Go From Here?

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What, then, should be done? Sunstein's recommendation is to create institutional designs that "ensure that when individuals and groups move [their views], it is because of the force of the arguments, not because of the social dynamics..." (82). He continues:

It is important to ensure social spaces for deliberation by like-minded persons, but it is equally important to ensure that members of the relevant groups are not isolated from conversation with people having quite different views. The goal of that conversation is to promote the inter-

ests of those inside and outside the relevant enclaves, by subjecting group members to competing positions, by allowing them to exchange views with others and to see things from their point of view, and by ensuring that the wider society does not marginalize, and thus insulate itself from, views that may turn out to be right, or at least informative. (91)

I agree with Sunstein that this deliberative process (what I call "deliberative engagement") is important, especially because of its role in democracy and peace building. However, I disagree with Sunstein's assumption that engagement can be effective even while the enclaves remain intact. I find this to be overly optimistic, not only because of what he expects deliberation to accomplish, but also because ideas and arguments are "bounded" to a spectrum of emotions. Indeed, the role of emotions is enormous given that enclave collapse is connected to the building of sustainable and peaceful relationships, which, in turn, is connected to the deconstruction and reconstruction of identities, all of which have much to do with emotions. Consequently, an effective way for Sunstein's *promoting, subjecting, exchanging, seeing, and ensuring* to take place, as well as peace building's transformation of identities and relationships, is through proximal or face-to-face contact. This is the situation within which Sunstein's deliberation by like-minded and not so like-minded persons takes place. So the more a society is composed of discrete, non-interactive ethnic groups, some of whom have a history of antagonism with one another, the more there is a need for close interaction and integration. It will be through increased interaction and integration and the demise of ethnic enclaves that Bosnia and Kosovo can make progress as multiethnic societies.

As I am arguing here, we must resist the tendency to think only in terms of diversity, as if the mere presence of ethnic others in close proximity will alone be enough to bring about a vibrant multiethnic society. This is simply not the case, as noted by Robert D. Putnam, who pulled together a great deal of the literature

concerning the impact of immigration and diversity on social connections (2007). In short, he contends that empirical research supports three incongruent hypotheses. The contact hypothesis argues that increased contact with an ethnically diverse group of people promotes both interethnic tolerance and social solidarity — “diversity reduces ethnocentric attitudes and fosters out-group trust and solidarity” (141–42). The conflict hypothesis, supported by most of the empirical studies, argues that “diversity fosters out-group distrust and in-group solidarity” (142). Last, the constrict theory, based on Putnam’s own work on American communities in 2000, confounds matters even more by arguing “for the possibility that diversity might actually reduce *both* in-group *and* out-group solidarity...” (149). In other words, “diversity seems to trigger *not* in-group/out-group division, but anomie or social isolation” (ibid.).

What all this goes to show is that the often stated benefits of diversity, the benefits of solidarity, trust, and tolerance that are important for a multiethnic society, are often not present. This might tempt us to abandon the very project of a multiethnic society. But it need not; indeed, it should not. Remember, a multiethnic society is one that is both diverse and interactive/integrated. The sort of “contact” that promotes enclave collapse and the creation of a multiethnic society often begins with simple communication like conversation, but gradually moves to the more complicated forms of dialogue and deliberative engagement. Moreover, there is also the transformation of identities that plays a role in creating and sustaining multiethnic societies, which makes diversity more expansive and dynamic. The upshot is that the evolution of communication and the creation of new identities (and relationships) does not happen overnight, but is often generational, so looking at any one “time slice” might support the conflict hypothesis, but comparing a number of “time slices” over decades could well support the contact hypothesis. And this is the pace of progress when it comes to democracy and peace building in post-conflict societies, especially those with ethnic enclaves.

The question, “Where do we go from here?” needs asking, particularly since the disappearance of ethnic enclaves and the creation and maintenance of multiethnic societies are not wished into existence. These will unfold through the creation of collaborative environments that are largely inclusive, integrated and interactive, peaceful, and respectful of difference rather than simply tolerant of it. Of course, national and municipal governments with international support (from intergovernmental organizations [IGOs] like the UN and its agencies, for example) can work towards sustainable livelihoods by removing some of the obstacles to the return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) to areas from which they were forced to leave. Revitalizing local economies, increasing meaningful employment opportunities, establishing public services, providing legal recourse to reclaim land, making grants available to rebuild homes, and providing increased policing in neighborhoods are just some ways to make those returns a reality. Using institutional means to arrive at that reality is often the first step to stimulating the growth of a vibrant multiethnic, post-conflict society. However, other measures are extremely useful as well, including an assortment of approaches to create built environments and, thus, persons who are more inclined to work towards civic improvement rather than their sectarian interests. In the case of Bosnia and Kosovo, for example, it includes the elimination of public evocative objects that are likely to be divisive along ethnic lines. Dealing with those objects would help to make some places more hospitable to members of locally non-dominant ethnic groups. The hope is that at some point changing the physical landscape — making evocative jungles into evocative savannas (perhaps even deserts) at least when it comes to divisive objects — will allow more people to dwell in the same neighborhoods, and feel at home with one another in much deeper ways. It is by tinkering with the physical objects that there is an increase in the porosity of the social environment, and perhaps the formation of good neighbors and even good citizens, though being a good neighbor and a good citizen are not one in the same (Rosenblum 2016).

The possibility of creating neighborhoods with good neighbors in them is both hugely inspiring and intimidatingly difficult. But in order to turn the possible into the probable, we need to think about what it means for a person to become a good neighbor. Given that this essay is interested in bringing about change in neighborhoods as a means to collapsing ethnic enclaves in the Balkans, persons are loosely or minimally neighbors insofar as they are in close physical proximity to one another.<sup>37</sup> Those who live within and are a part of a neighborhood are, in the clearest sense, neighbors to one another. They will know and interact with some of their neighbors, while having very little knowledge and interaction, if any, with many others. With each new day, however, comes another opportunity to get to know and to interact with a stranger in the neighborhood. Although close proximity may lead to conflict, even violent conflict due to antagonizing ethno-nationalist identities, it may also lead to the sort of face-to-face interactions that allow neighborliness “to cross tribal, religious, and ethnic boundaries” and to make one more open to being sympathetic, compassionate, and caring (Margalit 2002: 42–43). It is hoped that over time that person will become a neighbor in a much deeper sense, and may even become a good neighbor, i.e., “someone with whom we have a history of a meaningful positive, personal relationship” (45) (and, perhaps, a beneficent neighbor promoting the good of the others). Consequently, here, good neighbor is understood as a much desired transcendent identity that will supplant the ethno-nationalist identity, and maybe even the identity of citizenship.

If it is also important to create a certain type of neighbor and to build a certain type of neighborhood in order to deal with ethnic enclaves, then what means are at our disposal? The enclaves and the divisiveness that they sow throughout the social, political, and economic landscape may tempt some to call for a legal

remedy. However, this approach makes a shambles of the law, thus leading some to rely on mass education, mass engagement, and attrition. Unfortunately, this approach has the drawback of being too sluggish. Thus, we are faced with a dilemma.

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### The Dilemma (D)

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D: Either swift legal means are used to eliminate evocative objects that are ethno-nationally provocative in order to break up ethnic enclaves but at the expense of violating constitutional and human rights law; or constitutional and human rights law are adhered to in favor of slowly eliminating the provocative objects through education, deliberative engagement, and attrition but at the cost of the continued presence of these objects for the foreseeable future.

We are caught on the horns of a dilemma. The first horn can be depicted in the following way. If legal measures are taken to prohibit the public display of objects that are evocative along ethno-nationalist lines, objects that help to create and sustain ethnic enclaves, then the degree to which different ethnic peoples interact and integrate with one another will be enhanced, thereby increasing the efficacy of both democracy and peace building. Such “meat axe” interventions, however, are questionable because they are contrary to constitutional and human rights law in both Bosnia and Kosovo.<sup>38 39</sup>

In the case of Bosnia, there is no explicit prohibition of the public display of such objects. However, three points need to be raised. First, the Criminal Codes of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Article 163), the Republika Srpska (Article 390), and the Brcko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Article 160) already

<sup>37</sup> Avishai Margalit (2002) reads Kant’s *The Metaphysics of Morals* (1991), pt. 2, sec. 30, as rendering an extremely expansive understanding of neighbor, so expansive that it means “being on the same planet with other humans is enough to make them neighbors” (42). I neither read that portion of Kant’s work that way nor understand neighbor in such broad terms.

<sup>38</sup> Ajna Avdispahić Donko, and Kushtrim Istrefi and Agim Zogaj were kind enough to help me work through the legal issues of prohibiting evocative objects in Bosnia and Kosovo, respectively.

<sup>39</sup> Some may regard such legal measures as indicative of ends paternalism, in which they would say such measures are unacceptable. Granted, as an ends paternalist, I might find the display of some evocative objects to be inconsistent with

make it a crime to publicly incite national, racial, or religious hatred, discord, or hostility.<sup>40</sup> Thus, the display of evocative objects would be unlawful if they publicly incited such behavior. Second, the display of a particular object could be made unlawful by a special law or it could be prescribed as a crime within one of the aforementioned Criminal Codes, both of which are permitted by the Constitution of Bosnia. It is important to stress that these two points make it clear that there are already legal means by which evocative objects of a sort could be dealt with in the way that is suggested by this essay. Third, although legal mechanisms are in place, it would be a difficult path to take given the identity politics of Bosnia. Moreover, the Constitution of Bosnia lists human rights guaranteed to all persons within the territory of Bosnia (Article II.3), which include freedom of thought, conscience, and, religion [Article II.3. (g)] and freedom of expression [II.3. (h)]. In addition, the Constitution also states that the rights and freedoms set forth by the "European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its Protocols [ECHR] shall apply directly in Bosnia and Herzegovina" and that the ECHR "shall have priority over all other law" (Article II.2).<sup>41</sup> Moreover, Bosnia is a contracting party to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), with Article 19 and Article 27 of the UDHR covering the right to freedom of opinion and expression, and the right to participate in the cultural life of the community, respectively, and Articles 1 and 18 of the ICCPR covering the right to self-determination and the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, respectively.<sup>42</sup> This suggests that

the path to legally prohibit evocative objects is even more difficult to achieve.

Nevertheless, these protections are not absolute; there are exceptions. For example, Article X.2 of the ECHR states that the right to freedom of expression "may be subject to...restrictions... as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime,..." Article IX.2 of the ECHR stipulates restrictions for the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion as well. Furthermore, Article 18.3 of the IC-CPR makes explicit limitations on the "freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs..."<sup>43</sup> Unless the display of evocative objects rises to the levels of concern that these articles cite, current laws prohibiting the public display of evocative objects are problematic at best.

As for Kosovo, its Constitution does not have specific provisions that permit prohibitions of the use of ethnic symbols/objects. However, Article 40.2 of the Constitution does permit the freedom of expression to be "limited by law in cases when it is necessary to prevent encouragement or provocation of violence and hostility on grounds of race, nationality, ethnicity or religion."<sup>44</sup> Yet, such limitations, if prescribed by a statue, would have to be "proportionate" and "necessary in a democratic society" (the test of the European Court of Human Rights, which Article 53 of the Constitution obliges Kosovo to follow when interpreting human rights). As in the case of Bosnia, it will be difficult to prohibit the public display of evocative objects given the current legal apparatus in Kosovo.

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the well-being of the ethno-nationalist qua person or qua member of a democratic community, and so recommend the prohibition of such displays. Again, it is ends paternalism because these prohibitions forbid people from engaging in a certain activity, i.e., "decorating" their space with certain objects of their choice that support their ethno-nationalism. However, it is not an obvious case of paternalism because it is unclear whether the display is self-regarding conduct instead of other-regarding conduct (Conces 2016: 82).

<sup>40</sup> See [http://www.ohr.int/?page\\_id=68240](http://www.ohr.int/?page_id=68240).

<sup>41</sup> See [http://www.ccbh.ba/public/down/USTAV\\_BOSNE\\_I\\_HERCEGOVINE\\_engl.pdf](http://www.ccbh.ba/public/down/USTAV_BOSNE_I_HERCEGOVINE_engl.pdf).

<sup>42</sup> See <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html> and <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/ccpr.aspx>.

<sup>43</sup> European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. [http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention_ENG.pdf).

<sup>44</sup> See [http://www.gjk-ks.org/repository/docs/Kushtetuta\\_RK\\_ang.pdf](http://www.gjk-ks.org/repository/docs/Kushtetuta_RK_ang.pdf).

Two points need to be clarified. First, given that courts at times fall under the influence of what the people want, citizen activists not only directly impact the courts through cases, but “it is their hard work that sets up a background in politics and public opinion against which constitutional change (through interpretation of the law) begins to seem sensible” (Waldron 2016: 45). So there is at least the possibility that the prohibition of certain objects may be more favorably looked upon by the courts in Bosnia and Kosovo in the coming years.

Second, the present constitutions of Bosnia and Kosovo can be revised. Here again, citizen activists, among others, can play a role in trying to amend their constitution through influencing the legislative branch of their government. The constitutions of these countries each incorporate a legislative amendment procedure. In the case of Bosnia, Article X of the Constitution stipulates that the Parliamentary Assembly makes the decision, which includes a two-thirds majority of those participating in the 42 seat House of Representatives — composed of 28 members from the Federation and 14 members from the Republika Sprska; and that there can be no amendment that eliminates or diminishes the rights and freedoms cited in Article II: “Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.” In the case of Kosovo, Chapter IV Article 65 stipulates that there must also be a two-thirds majority of participating representatives of minority communities. What this means for agents of constitutional change in both Bosnia and Kosovo is that change will be difficult to come by. The formal procedures are easily exploited within a political landscape that is more or less controlled by identity politics, including ethno-nationalist politics. Whether it is identity politics taking hold of the institutional arrangements created by the Dayton Agreement (e.g., the proportional ethnic representation of the constituent peoples in the Bosnian Parliamentary Assembly) or simply

being manifested by the ethnic demographics of Kosovo (92.9% Albanian), the possibility for the sort of constitutional change that would bring about a reduction in certain evocative objects is extremely slim.

If there is neither legal means to prohibit the public display of certain evocative objects because of current constitutional and human rights law, nor a will to rewrite constitutions and laws, then what is to be done to bring about a multiethnic society, and, thus, to stimulate democracy and peace building? Is there a viable alternative? There is another approach, but it is the other horn of the dilemma, which is educating and deliberately engaging the population as a whole to give up those evocative objects that are divisive, and by allowing the number of enclave supporters to be reduced naturally through attrition due to death, identity resignation, or relocation.<sup>45</sup> Ways need to be found to educate people in reason-giving and emotionally (empathetic) situated dialogue, and eventually to participate in engaged deliberation. Although it might be difficult to imagine enclave stalwarts adopting the values and principles that promote enclave collapse and that support a multiethnic society, perhaps a more likely approach is to persuade those stalwarts that a multiethnic society could be a means for them to pursue their own values. “It’s hard to change other people’s ideals. It’s much easier to link our agendas to familiar values that people already hold” (Grant 2016: 140). In the case of Kosovo, for example, ethnic Serbs harboring strong nationalist sentiments might balk at the value of a multiethnic Kosovo with its incursions of the ethnic other into their enclave. On the face of it, such incursions could threaten their ideal of cultural self-determination and sustainability. Those same incursions, however, might be acceptable to ethnic Serbs if they promote increased economic activity and employment opportunities within their fading enclave, es-

<sup>45</sup> The goal of eliminating evocative objects that create and maintain ethnic enclaves, however, may not necessitate the purging of all those objects from the environment. Perhaps there are “keystone” objects whose removal from an environment could go a long way in furthering enclave collapse. For example, flags that are flown from flag poles or displayed on elevated billboards, can be seen from far away, thereby enlarging the space considered to be “off limits.” The hilltop billboard brandishing the civil flag of Serbia in the Serb enclave of North Mitrovica, Kosovo illustrates this visual.



pecially if an economic uptick supports their cultural livelihood. Whatever the mechanism, the hope is for a self-imposed censorship by those who would like to display enclave-making objects. Such censorship would respect difference in order to create a more lived sense of equality of dwelling and the opportunities that emerge from such equality. Also, let us not forget the impact that reducing a society's ethno-nationalist ranks through attrition may have on changing the ideological demography of Kosovo and, thus, the physical landscape as well.<sup>46</sup> However, the disadvantage of this approach is the slow pace at which it tackles the dynamics of objects and enclaves.

This should not come as a surprise. Educating people, in general, requires effort, and deliberative engagement will be laborious as well because it will be used to challenge some of the ethno-nationalists' beliefs. Some of these beliefs will be trivial, others will be fundamental. Examples of the latter include the belief that as the heart of the Serb nation, Kosovo is a place only for Serbs; and the belief that the state flag of Serbia should dominate the sky over the land of its people. These and others constitute part of the bulwark of belief that will conflict with beliefs that support a multiethnic society. Moreover, attrition obviously has a timeline of its own. Because of these issues, progress will be slow in coming. Indeed, it is an illusion to believe that dealing with the populace in this way could, on its own, bring about the much needed change in countries like Bosnia and Kosovo. Rather than abandoning this approach due to its sluggishness, I propose supplementing it with an approach that is more expeditious — a path between the horns. Where do we look for help?

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### The Third Path between the Horns

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I propose that the field of civic design is a good starting point for thinking about the path between the horns of the dilemma. In particular, one can see the work of the landscape architect Christopher Tunnard as offering both connect-

ing and guiding points to this essay's corrective regarding evocative objects. Three points arise from his early "Cities by Design" (1951). First, civic design is "a combination of architecture, [city] planning principles and landscape design and a method of coordinating all the creative arts ...to achieve an integration of art and life" (142-43). The point here being that civic design is an integrative approach to changing the built environment that people inhabit. Second, "our cities are ugly, congested and unfunctional because we have neglected the visual aspects in our attempt to make the city work...This brings in the social basis of planning...[one] that has a real social basis, deeply rooted in the social instinct for cooperation, organization and individual expression" (143). Tunnard's understanding of civic design clearly connects functionality, appearance, and man as social animal. Civic design as such resonates with this essay insofar as it takes the functioning of the city as a built environment with a particular appearance and extends it to the functioning of the process of democracy and peace building, which has much to do with cooperation. Last, Tunnard finds that the civic designer's "approach and the results of his approach will actually condition the life that goes on in cities" (ibid.). To be sure, this essay relies on an approach that will "condition" the lives of people by tweaking the built environment, thereby promoting democracy and peace building.

This brings me to what I see as one of the most important ways in which civic design can be utilized to spur on democracy and peace building: the creation of "shared objects" of positive evocativity that bind (and bridge) people and that eventually displace the boundary markers and warning signs of provocation on their way to dismantling ethnic enclaves. The creation of these shared objects can occur in a number of ways, some more overbearing than others. By commandeering the machinery of development, for example, a loose coalition of civic designer-developer-zoning board-landlord-neighbor association can prohibit certain provocative objects through zoning regulations and lease

<sup>46</sup> Attrition will only make such a difference if the practice of two schools under one roof is discontinued.

arrangements, thereby making it easier to turn a space into a shared place, a space filled-in with an object that had been off limits to some, such as a market. Another though less imperious way is by creating a two-way corridor by which peoples can cross boundaries to access gateways or entrance points, such as a market place and café, into another community. This could be done simply by making a gravel road between a small ethnic Serb enclave and the larger Albanian enclave more inviting by grading and smoothing it, and by making it well-lit. By working on the appearance and functionality of the built environment, the fostering of more frequent and meaningful contact between members of different ethnic groups would be decidedly improved. Again, these shared objects could be a market place, a hair salon, or a restaurant. The first visit of an ethnic Albanian housewife to a market place in a Serb neighborhood in North Mitrovica may amount to a wordless exchange with the shopkeeper, but over time may lead to conversations and dialogue that makes the market a shared object that serves as a bridge.

Although calling a market place a shared object makes sense insofar as the object to which it refers has a certain physicality that allows me to point to it, calling it a place will capture the complexity of the market. Prior to its construction, there was only undifferentiated, general space at that location. At some point, a person or persons did what it took to “fill-in” and to particularize that space with a market, hence the term ‘market place’ (Geddes 2013: 44–48). What was a space has now become a place with a structure possessing meaning and value related to peoples’ biological, social, and economic needs. Another way to think about this is to say that space “is that which allows movement” (Tuan 1977: 6). Sometimes we pause on a sidewalk to smell the scent of some unseen flowering tree or to look at the beautiful sky. Each of those pauses denotes a place in localized space. Other times we pause before a built structure, for example, a market place (4–6).

Although places like a market, a hair salon, and a café can instigate boundary crossing, engage-

ment, and solidarity among people with antagonistic or competitive identities, they are primarily business entities that engage in transactions providing goods and services to customers. A pound of apples, a haircut, or a cup of coffee and maybe, just maybe, the meeting of persons and not just customers. Yet it is the fact that each is a *place of business*, in the same location from one day to the next, which makes each an important part of people’s everyday lives — part of the routinization of human life.

Of course, there are *organizations* whose mission includes some of those outcomes. Take, for example, the Nansen Dialogue Centres. The Nansen Network is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that focuses on the use of dialogue in reconciliation and peace building, with offices in various cities in the Balkans. Always keen on carving out safe space and the use of communication to break down enemy images and to bring people closer together, much of what the Network does now is centered on integrated education in divided schools and divided communities. Regardless, the Network has never utilized civic design as a way of breaking up ethnic enclaves through a frontal assault on provocative physical objects in the hope of transforming identities and relationships.

Of course, this does not rule out the Nansen Network adding civic design to its mission statement and programming. However, even if the Network branched out in this way, it would still be “out of place” compared to the market, hair salon, and café. To clarify this point, the Network is not like these businesses, which are places intimately connected with the lives of many people. Why is this? Because the Nansen Network is an *organization*, and not a *place*. In fact, offices are not as important to it as are the sorts of programs implemented by its staff in various communities throughout the Balkans. The location of Nansen Sarajevo has changed over the years. Last time I was in Sarajevo, I called the program manager to get directions to the office. It was located in a place different from the one that I remembered from past years. But that was to be expected, given its nomadic existence as an NGO. And it is not as if many people need to be continuously

informed of the location of its offices. For those who need to know, a quick glance of the Network webpage will suffice. The market is different, however. We do expect the market to be just around the corner, where it was last month and last year, because it's vital to peoples' everyday lives. And unlike the Network, most markets in the Balkans are small, family businesses having no webpage.

The approach advocated above is more about places and less about peace building organizations; more about physical objects and less about institutions and their mission statements and metrics. But there is another approach, one that remains oriented towards places but that requires a modest organization. It focuses on built structures whose sole purpose is to bring about these outcomes, and sometimes in a not so genteel way as suggested by "spaces of constructive provocation." Take, for example, present-day Sarajevo. I can imagine a project, perhaps called the "Space for Creative Entanglement" (SCE), housed at a place along the Miljacka River, in a couple of those three-story Austro-Hungarian buildings on Hiesta Ulica that were severely damaged during the 1990s war. Rather than tearing down the old and replacing it with the new, preserving two war relics makes a powerful statement about the buildings own evocativity—as a constant reminder of Bosnia's Habsburg era and its recent genocidal past, the place will use its past to help rescue Bosnia's future. This "space" would be a public place where enclave maintaining objects would be relocated from highly visible neighborhood locations so as to constructively provoke through dialogue about histories, memories, and identities.<sup>47</sup> In a way, the SCE would serve as a "magnet for the objectionable." It would also be a place where people could create works that continue the dialogue (eventually leading to deliberative engagement) without eliminating dissent or op-

position. To be sure, it would neither be a museum nor a white-walled gallery, but more like a studio or a laboratory. The unconventional would be valued and promoted. Paintings, even over-scaled paintings; sculpture; text-and-video installations; photographs; graffiti; mixed media; and poetry would find their way into the SEC. But there would also be experimentation with many forms of expression, both indoor and outdoor (rooftop and courtyard sculpture and graffiti — maybe even space for land art [à la Robert Smithson, for example]), and an openness to and acceptance of all sorts of themes — matters of ethnicity and nationalism, even trauma; issues of religion, class, gender, sexual orientation, climate change, and much more.

Like the horns of the dilemma, the path between would result in a hollowing out of the ethno-nationalist vibrancy of neighborhoods. Yet the livability of neighborhoods for all their inhabitants would be promoted through shared objects and space, which would transform identities (and maybe alternative, transcendental identities) and relationships. The hope is that focusing on objects that provoke animosity and violence and eliminating them through self-censorship and the creation of shared objects and spaces that are evocatively positive or that tap into the dialogical, critical, and creative capacities of people will collapse ethnic enclaves that hold back societal progress.<sup>48</sup> And there is more: collapse will be achieved without compromising those parts of cultures that are not very antagonistic towards other cultures or that are but that are confined to the more private space of the dwelling. This is what also accounts for how the path between the horns values cultural diversity.<sup>49</sup>

The third path is similar to Placemaking, a trendy approach to urban planning that builds communities around places (Schneekloth and Shib-

<sup>47</sup> David Rieff (2016) is correct to note that keeping alive the memory (which would fall under the categories of Lederach's "lived history" and "remembered history" [2005: 141]) of genocides and the like provides us with no immunity against future atrocities. He may even be partially correct in arguing that perpetuating such memories may perpetuate revenge (he cites the Bosnian war of the 1990s as an example). However, his treatment of history has not much to do with this essay's reference to history.

<sup>48</sup> For an interesting discussion of enclaves in the United States and Kosovo, see Conces 2018a and 2018b.

<sup>49</sup> I am not concerned with the preservation of cultural particularity of minority groups against intrusions of dominant

ley 1995). By recognizing and working with the physical, social, cultural, emotional, and spiritual qualities of places, planners and inhabitants alike can enliven neighborhoods (Project for Public Spaces). Placemaking works well in North America and parts of Europe, but it is only an ideal for countries like Bosnia and Kosovo because Placemaking is a collaborative process and there is too much trauma, antagonism, and mistrust currently stifling that process in those Balkan countries. The hope is that the path that I have laid out will lead to something like Placemaking.

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## Postscript

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H1-H4, the e-matrix, and solutions presented here are tenuous and deserve scrutiny. Some of it will provoke fierce criticism, even hostility. Perhaps I have torn the envelope rather than pushed it. Whatever, no assent is required; just “take it in” and see what happens. It is a work of integrative philosophy, a praxical assemblage of an empirically informed conceptual tapestry with many of its “theoretical threads” taken for granted. Such philosophy is visceral, experiential, and personal. This essay was written in Grbavica (Sarajevo) and Torsted (Horsens) during the BREXIT summer of 2016 and in Omaha during the summers of 2017 and 2018. I wish to thank my mentors John Kultgen and David A. White, as well as my colleagues Curtis Hutt, Jack Heidel, and Per Bauhn for reading and commenting on an early draft of the manuscript, and Kathy Schwartz for her continued editorial assistance. Finally, I am indebted to Mia Nielsen for that Danish summer and for her skepticism of the e-matrix that forced me to make sense of it.

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cultures within post-conflict societies as much as I am with the preservation of minority culture by way of maximizing its exposure to others. Gutmann (1994) makes this same distinction in terms of protecting diversity, a core value of liberal democracy, and lays out my preference when she writes: “the democratic value of diversity” [can be connected]...with the value of expanding the cultural, intellectual, and spiritual horizons of all individuals, enriching our world by exposing us to differing cultural and intellectual perspectives, and thereby increasing our possibilities for intellectual and spiritual growth, exploration, and enlightenment” (9). Although my preference for preserving diversity reflects my worry about the instability of ethnic enclaves, I do not dismiss the possibility that some groups may “need a secure cultural context to give meaning and guidance to their choices in life” (5).

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