
WHEN TWO PLUS TWO DOES NOT MAKE FOUR. FROM THE STATISTICAL TO THE ETHNIFIED MAP IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA ¹

Esma Kučukalić

Abstract

In order to know the results of the first population census in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war, it took more than two decades in which political disagreements have undermined any attempt to carry out standardized update of the statistical data, anchoring them in a politically ethnified debate. Predictably, behind the ethnopolitical barricades lies the fear of losing the current balance of power based on representation quotas of each constituent nation (Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks), but what has uncovered the new census that has finally been known in 2016, it is a reality that is still hard to face; ethnically homogenous territories, those that were marked in the execution plans of the so-called ethnic cleansing, the disappearance of the population due to forced migration and civilian casualties, but above all, the fact of confronting the data regarding the failure of the policies of return of refugees and displaced persons, an obligation undertaken by all the signatories of the Dayton Peace Agreement under Annex 7, and whose lack of implementation leaves the perfect scenario for the implosion of the State open.

Keywords: Census, population, Serbs, Croats, Bosniaks, Muslims, Christians, ethnic cleansing, ethnicity, territory, war, displaced, refugees, ethnified map, nationalist discourse, corruption, religion, language, nationalism, Balkans, Western Balkans, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

¹ The bulk of this article comes from the research carried out by the author for her doctoral thesis "Rights and freedoms in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The political model intervened from Dayton and its consequences for the citizens" defended in September 2017 at the Faculty of Law of the University of Valencia. The broad version of this text can be found in the book (in process of publication) *Freedoms and ethnicity in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Kucukalic, 2018).

1.- Introduction.

That the population census is a statistical question is a truism if what is intended is to know the number of inhabitants, their standard of living, the education level, the composition of urban or rural areas. In politics, they are a crucial tool for obtaining votes, but in the politics of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), statistics have proved to be a crucial ally in not breaking the Gordian knot in which the country has been tied in since the end of the war. The whole system of checks and balances on which the institutional engineering of this country is built is based on the design that left the Dayton Peace Agreement. The one of a state without a defined form, a hybrid, fragmented between the Bosnian-Croat Federation, divided in turn into ten cantons, with their corresponding governments, and Republika Srpska, ethnically populated almost entirely by Bosnian Serbs, in addition to the Brcko Autonomous District.

In this network of government sub-levels, the State is governed by the Constitution, which also emanates from Dayton, with contextual framework representing the paradigmatic case of a nation without its people, since it is not composed of citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but Bosniaks, Serbs, Croats or others, making the totality of state sovereignty fall on the three major ethnic groups instead of citizens (See more in Šarčević, 2010; Sarajlic, 2010; Seizovic, 2005; Keil, 2008). The power quotas of these constituent sovereigns are based on population figures dating from the year before the outbreak of the war, with the hope that once the conflict ended, the refugees and displaced people would return to their homes. The same is included in Annex 7 of the Dayton Agreement as one of the guarantees of the return of refugees and survivors to which all parties to the conflict have committed themselves.

In 2011, the European Union demanded that the countries of the region, potential candidates for the Euroclub, updated their population census. Orchestrating a census campaign to comply with the European acquis communautaire has not been easy on the territories that emerged from the war in which ethnicity, language, religion, or even the place of residence further complicate the delicate system of ethnic counterweights, whose imbalance can lead to the loss of rights or political influence, and which, it seems, was underestimated by the EU itself, which gave the census a purely technical nature (Hoh, 2016). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the campaign resulted in an almost surrealistic ethno-political battle that delayed the publication of the final data for a full five years.

Since the topic is of recent research, this analysis has been built on the use of primary sources of the statistical agencies themselves, their comparison with the data prior to the war, and through the monitoring of political controversies covered

by the local and regional media. A theorization of the question is established through the questions that open new figures for future policy making (Perry, 2013; Bieber, 2014; Cooley and Mujanovic, 2016) but, in particular, the issue reveals the failure of return policies, which have not been carried out as agreed in the Dayton Peace Agreement (Valledor Álvarez, 2015) as one of the pillars of peacemaking². In this ethno-nationalist game, the Serbian entity permanently promotes secessionism with practically Serbian territory - see the 2016 Referendum attempt - and strategic alliances - military agreements with Serbia and Russian support³ - while the Federation is presented as a dysfunctional and expensive entity, with high number of government levels, and the disagreements between the Croatian claims of a third entity and the Bosnian refusal, have already opened a debate about making it disappear, thereby further ethnifying the territories. The new population census brings to light this internally disfigured map that reflects little of that multiethnic country, but a horizon of ethnically homogeneous territories, see "clean" in the worst sense of the word. Reconciliation depends on the return with guarantees, and on this, the survival of a united country, despite the scars. Furthermore, the stability in the region in which twenty years of international efforts have been invested, with doubtful success, it should be said.

2.- From the demographic census of 1991 to the ethnic map of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In 1991, Bosnia and Herzegovina, as one of the Yugoslav republics, had 4,377,033 citizens within its 1,537 km of borders. According to this census, 43.5% of the inhabitants were Bosniaks, 31.2% Serbs, 17.4% Croatians, 5.5% Yugoslavs and 2.4% "other" or "minorities", made up of 17 ethnic communities, mainly Roma and Montenegrins, but also "historical or native minorities"; Jews, Slovenians, Czechs, Bulgarians or Italians. Regarding the creed, there was no official religion but the

² At the end of the 2017, a former member of the BIH presidency, and Foreign Minister, Haris Silajdzic, specified in a TV interview that the system of state conception of BiH is that of a unitary country although highly decentralized, and that one of the main factors that slows down its transition is the failure to comply with Annex 7 of the Dayton Peace Agreement on the return of refugees, especially in the Republika Sprska entity. See: "Haris Silajdzic: Ja sam bosanski unitarist" [I am a Bosnian Unitarist] on N1, 06.12.2017 Available at: <http://ba.n1info.com/a231021/Vijesti/Vijesti/Haris-Silajdzic-Ja-sam-bosanski-unitarista.html>

³ Regarding the Russian influence in the RS Entity, read more in the conclusions of the report 'Bosnia on the Russian Chopping Block: The Potential for Violence and Steps to Prevent It' by the Foreign Policy Research Institute, which refers to *El Pais* (2018) in the article "Bosnia en el desfiladero", available at: https://elpais.com/internacional/2018/05/04/actualidad/1525452286_303181.html ? id_externo_rsoc = FB_CC.

coexistence of all monotheistic religions, as well as other religious minorities (Council of Ministers of BiH, 2003:2).

On the demographic map of 1991, the mixture of interethnic communities predominated on all the territories where the presence of a single ethnic group never exceeded 66% of the population. The mixture is obvious, especially in the main urban centers such as Sarajevo, Mostar or Banja Luka but also in other municipalities. The country's population structure changes drastically since April 2, 1992, the date of the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina from what was then left of Yugoslavia, but also a moment that marks the beginning of a conflict that will last three and a half years.

The war will move more than 2.2 million people from their homes, representing 55% of the population. Of this figure, 1.2 million people will become refugees in more than 100 countries, while another million will be displaced internally. According to the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina data, the conflict will leave 250,000 dead (Council of Ministers, 2003:7), which the Criminal Court of The Hague for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) will determine at 105,000, and tens of thousands of disappeared persons, of which 7,000 are still not located today (International Commission for Missing Persons ICPM, 2017).

The murders, forced migrations, exoduses, persecutions will give rise to a demographic catharsis that will cause the total number of births and deaths to be reversed completely. Some examples are brought to light by the author of the 1991 census, Hasan Zolic, who explains that in addition to the serious loss of population, the new territorial structure left by the Peace of Dayton signature completely modifies the map with a new ordering of town halls and localities. Sarajevo and its metropolitan area, for example, goes from 525,000 inhabitants to 291,000, while its districts will be reduced from six to four, one of them annexed to the Serbian entity. Also the Mostar metropolitan area, where the East Mostar area does not reach 208 inhabitants, in Kurpres in Republika Srpska, with 380 inhabitants, or Petrovac with 367, all areas whose economic development is difficult to sustain due to a territorial policy that has divided the regions into micro-councils which, as Hasan Zolic indicates, can in some cases have fewer neighbors than a residential building in Sarajevo (Sandić-Hadžihasanović, 2013a).

According to the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2003:6), the return of refugees, but especially of internally displaced persons, began as soon as the conflict ended. According to its calculations, in the year 2001, more than 822,779 people had returned to their usual place of residence, 628,705 to the Federation, representing 75.41% of the total figure, and 183,604 persons to Republika Srpska, that is to say , 22.32% of the population. In the case of the Breko

District, 10,470 people registered as returnees. However, this same document points out that of the 1.2 million refugees, 800,000 had not returned to the country as of 2003, and were still in the host countries. A tendency that in these years has not been modified, since according to the data of the year 2017, Bosnian Diaspora has more than two million citizens⁴. Economic development plummeted. According to the World Bank's data, 40% of the inhabitants were living in poverty in the year 2001. This figure would mainly affect semi-urban nuclei, being higher in Republika Srpska than in the Federation (World Bank, 2001). In later years, the data would remit up to 17% of the poverty rate according to UNDP (2017) but they will continue to place the country as the poorest in the region and with higher rates of illiteracy (UNA, 2017). The economic situation currently represents the main factor of emigration, especially among young people throughout the region.

3.- 20 years of waiting for a demographic census. Three readings for the same statistics.

Political disagreements in Bosnia and Herzegovina will make it not only impossible to pass a census rule in time, they will even make a mock census fail in the year 2012, and until the year of 2013, Law 14/12⁵ will not be approved, completed with the modification of the Law on the demographic census, of households and dwellings in Bosnia and Herzegovina 18 / 13⁶.

The controversy centered around three questions: the declaration on religion, ethnicity and the use of the language, bearing in mind that, in the Bosnian case, national belonging ties in with ethnicity (Sarajlic, 2010), which in the Constitution itself, it grants maximum sovereignty to 3 majority ethnic groups, even over individual or citizenship rights. Hence, the census was clearly incisive with respect to ethnic and religious belonging, all and that, the U.E. did not require the collection of these data (Perry, 2013), and moreover, the observers of the EU statistical agency, Eurostat - who had to monitor the entire process - proposed to put the census with open-ended questions that would not restrict the citizen.

⁴ The data considered here have been collected by the Council of Ministers in 2003 in a study called "Studiji humanog razvoja Bosne i Hercegovina" [study of human development in BiH], based on the data of the state agencies of the two entities (Council of Ministers, 2003: 6), as well as the Report of the Ministries of Human Rights and Refugees of BiH (2010); of UNHCR (Al Jazeera Balkans, 2015); and the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, (2001).

⁵ See the law: in Zakon o popisu stanovništva, kucanstva i stanova u BiH 2013. Godine, Sluzbeni Glasnik Bosne i Hercegovina, 7. februar.2012. <http://sllist.ba/glasnik/2012/broj10/Broj10.pdf>.

⁶ See the law: Zakon o izmjenama o popisu stanovništva, kucanstva i stanova u Bosni i Hercegovina, Sluzbeni Glasnik BiH, bar. 18/13, March 11, 2013. www.bhas.ba/census/Izmjene_zakona_o_popisu.pdf.

From the beginning, the formulation of these questions was not liked by the Conference of European Statisticians for Population and Housing Censuses of 2010, an initiative of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), in cooperation with EUROSTAT - among whose recommendations, information on the use of the language, for example, was resolved by two separate questions: mother tongue or primary language, and knowledge of the official language or languages or others, and was encouraged to have the opinion of minorities at the time of writing of these questions, as well as the collection of responses (Ramljak, 2013; Perry, 2013). The case of issues related to ethnicity and confession, the ESC pointed out that ethnic and national affiliation had been put at the same level, different scientific concepts, and no open formulations had been given that would be more suitable for people from mixed marriages or minorities. The same thing happened with the option related to the question on religion where the formulation "agnostic or atheist" had been included as a religious option, but not the possibility to contemplate other minority confessions as a possible answer.

In spite of the recommendations, the options for answers in the census were delimited to hermetic form and in the following way:

Questions 24 and 25, in accordance with Article 12. of the Census Law, the citizen may answer:

- Ethnic or national declaration: Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, I do not answer.

- Religious declaration: Muslim, Catholic, Orthodox, agnostic or atheist, I do not answer⁷.

Next question about the mother tongue:

Mother tongue: Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian⁸.

In the first two questions, the non-declaration box was added to the different options. In the case of the language issue, there was only one of the three answers. Privacy added to controversies, since Article 11 of the Law (2013) contemplated the possibility of answering on behalf of other members of the family unit older than 15, if they were not residing at home. It was interpreted by many sectors as a possibility to manipulate the data, with an aggravating circumstance that the body of officials who carried out the census came from local administrations of each region, which meant that the anonymity of citizens was not guaranteed, since in most of the cases, the questions were asked by a neighbor⁹.

⁷ The copy P1 of the Population, Household and Housing Census in BYH, 2013 can be found here: www.bhas.ba/Popis%202013/BOS%20P1.pdf.

⁸ Ibid

⁹ See: Art. 11. Zakon o izmjenama o popisu stanovništva, kućanstva i stanova u Bosni i Hercegovina, Službeni Glasnik BiH, br. 18/13, March 11, 2013, www.bhas.ba/census/Izmjene_zakona_o_popisu.pdf.

a) The results of the 2013 census. Once the field data collection was completed, in which three statistical agencies participated - the Federation, Republika Srpska, and the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina -, the reading of the data will become the workhorse of the same, and of the politicians, who will block the publication of the definitive data for no less than three years. The subject of the discord on this occasion, was the question number 40 of the census in which the respondents had to answer if they are permanent or temporary residents of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was a question posed by Republika Srpska, and, when processing the data, this entity demanded that the number of inhabitants taken into account was only of those who answered that they were permanent residents, while the Federation insisted that, under that assumption, they would lose almost half a million inhabitants in the diaspora, most of them Bosniaks who left as refugees. The issue itself was not clearly specified in the Census Law 18/13, as it did not leave any statistical criteria to be applied, so it was necessary to request the support of a group of international observers (International Monitoring Observators - IMO) to supervise the entire process, to which the three agencies also failed to agree on until the deadline for the expiration of the data on July 1, 2016.

The three-way meetings with the U.E., with the European Statistical Agency EUROSTAT and with the IMO were long. As an example it can be said that the IMO carried out more than 47 missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina to supervise the process, and the only thing it achieved was that in February 2014, after the general elections, the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina announced preliminary results of the census that would not have any binding effect at a political or administrative level but that brought to light the first figure: Bosnia had more than half a million fewer inhabitants than in 1991 (Agency for Statistics of BiH, 2014)¹⁰, the fifth part of the pre-war population.

On June 29, 2016, on the eve of the expiration of the deadline, the Agency for Statistics of BiH made public the final results of the 2013 census. They had achieved the consensus of three statistical bodies taking as reference the recommendations of the IMO, and taking into account 190 thousand doubtful answers that, finally, were going to be considered as permanent residents.

The new census shows a completely different reality to that of 1991, which remains the official record for the practical operation of the State. According to the 2016 data, Bosnia and Herzegovina currently has 3,531,159 inhabitants, by 845,874

¹⁰ The Statistical Agency of Statistics of BiH published preliminary results in 2014, which gives a lower figure than the final one in 2016, which places the loss of inhabitants at more than 800,000. In this census, the publication of the ethnic composition of the census territories, which would have been known in 2016, had been avoided.

fewer inhabitants than before the war. A population loss of 24% compared to 1991.

Internal changes on the map are also apparent. Of 109 city councils in 1991, it has gone to 141. Regarding the 1991 census where 91 corporations were multi-ethnic, at present, there are only two areas with mixed population, Mostar and the Brcko District (of the first it can be said that, in any case, it is a largely binational territory -Croats and Bosniaks- that is not multiethnic), while two thirds of the country are ethnically homogeneous territories (see data analysis conducted by ANU, 2017).

As for the ethnic composition, Bosniaks account for 50.11% of the total population; Croats 15.43%; Serbs 39.78%, "others" 2.73%; 0.77% did not know how to define their origin, and 0.18% did not want to answer. According to entities, in the Federation of BiH, 70.40% are Bosniaks; 22.44% Croats; 2.55% Serbs; 3.6% others, and 0.82% did not answer. In Republika Srpska: 81.51% are Serbs; 13.99% Bosniaks; 2.41% Croats; 1.25% other and 0.65% did not respond. In the Brcko District: 42.36% defined themselves as Bosniaks; 20.66% as Croats; 34.58% are Serbs; 1.65% others; and a 0.63% did not answer.

In ten cantons into which the territory of the Federation of BiH is divided, the ethnic composition is also striking. It replicates the same phenomenon as in Republika Srpska, and is that of ethnically homogeneous territories. The ten cantons are as follows:

1. UNA-SANA CANTON: Bosniaks 90.04%; Croats 1.85%; Serbs 3.09%; Other 4.21%
2. CANTON POSAVINA: Bosniaks 18.9%; Croats 77.3%; Serbs 1.8%; other 1.05%
3. CANTON TUZLA: Bosniaks 88.16%; Croats 5.3%; Serbs 1.9%; other 4.1%
4. CANTON ZENICA DOBOJ: Bosniaks 82.33%; Croats 11.92%; Serbs 1.37%; others: 3.64%
5. CANTON BOSNIA PODRINJE: Bosniaks 94.01%; Croats 0.01%; Serbs 3.72%; another 1.7%
6. CANTON BOSNIA CENTRAL: Bosniaks 57.6%; Croats 38.3%; Serbs 1.19%; Other 2.05%
7. CANTON HERZEGOVINA NERETVA: Bosniaks 42.79%; Croats 53.28%; Serbs 2.89%; another 1.37%
8. CANTON HERZEGOVINA OCCIDENTAL: Bosniaks 0.75%; Croats 98.76%; Serbs 0.1%; Other 0.13%
9. SARAJEVO CANTON: Bosniaks 83.79%; Croats 4.23%; Serbs 3.21%; others 6.7%

10. CANTON 10: Bosniaks 9.5%; Croats 76.7%; Serbs 12.9%; other 0.3%

In the table of ethnic population of the cantons, there are territories such as Herzegovina-Neretva where 101 Serbs live out of a total of 94,898 inhabitants and 718 Bosniaks. In the case of the Bosnia-Podrinje canton, 24 Croats live out of a total of 23,734 registered, of which 22,313 are Bosniaks (Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013).

Regarding Sarajevo, Mostar and Banja Luka, as the main cities, the ethnification of what were multi-ethnic cities is also clear. Thus, in Sarajevo 222,457 Bosniaks live today; 10,422 Serbs and 13,607 Croats. The statistics for 1991 shows that the municipality has lost 40% of total population, namely that the Bosniaks have increased by 39,952 inhabitants, while the Serbian population has fallen by 60,000 citizens, and the Croatian population is reduced by half. In Banja Luka, the same thing happens. 185,042 inhabitants are Serbs while only 7,681 are Bosniaks and 5,104 Croats. In 1991, Banja Luka, today the de facto capital of Republika Srpska, had 106,000 Serbs, 28,000 Bosniaks and 30,000 Croats (Sandic-Hadzihanovic, 2013a). As for Mostar, the Croatian population is the majority with 51,216 inhabitants, compared to 43,037 in 1991, while Bosniaks descend from 46,752 to 43,856, and Serbs go from 19,425 to 4,421 inhabitants (Ibid).

The most revealing when it comes to the failure of return policies is the fact that some municipalities have lost the exact number of people belonging to the ethnic groups persecuted in that area. Milovic (2013) points out that:

In the center district of the canton of Sarajevo, in 1991, the Serbs and Croats accounted for 22,059 inhabitants. Today there are 20,048 fewer inhabitants here. In Bileca, the Bosniaks and Croats accounted for 1,986 inhabitants, and today the municipality has 1,748 fewer inhabitants. The numbers match perfectly in Brod (it had 18,081 Muslims and today has 16,195 fewer inhabitants), Breza (with 2,973 Serbs in 1991 and 2,753 fewer in 2016), Cajnice (from 4,029 Muslims in 1991 to 5,449 fewer inhabitants in 2016), Celinac (drop from 1,522 to 1,839), Derventa (with 29,038 Croats in 1991 to 26,312 fewer inhabitants), Donji Vakuf (10,215 Serbs in 1991, today there are 9,805 fewer people), Foca (20,884 Muslims in 1991, of which 18,489 disappeared), Han Pijesak (2,550 Muslims in 1991 disappeared 2,504), Jablanica (2,795 - 2,111 Muslim population), Kakanj (21,485 - 17,013 Serbian population), Kalinovik (1,733 - 2,427 Muslim population), Kladanj (3,988 - 3,029 were Serbian), Konjic (18,133-17,497 were Serbs), Ljubinje (371 - 416 were Bosniaks and Croats), Prnjavor (8,864 to 8,656 were Muslims and Croats), Rogatica (13,228 - 10,375 Muslims and Croats), Rudo (3,135 - 2,737 Muslims and Croats), Teslic (22,327 - 17,950 Muslims and Croats) and Vares (12,660 - 12,647 Serbs).

In global computations, Croats currently account for slightly more than half a million inhabitants, from 17.38% in 1991 to 15.43% of the population. In the central part of Bosnia they have remained in micro-communities while their population movement has gone towards Herzegovina, especially towards the area of Mostar, Capljina and the border with Croatia. In the case of Serbian population, in the Federation Serbs today account for 2.55% and they are concentrated in Republika Srpska with 81.51% as a reflection of ethnic movement programmed by political tendencies of this entity. In municipalities such as Foca, Rudo, Rogatica, Pale or Visegrad, the Serbian repopulation almost completely supplements the Bosnian or Croatian population resident in 1991 (Cvitković, 2017).

The Muslim or Bosniak population is concentrated in the Federation as there are areas of eastern Bosnia that today belong to the Serbian entity, where Bosniaks have disappeared from the map, as in cities of the Srebrenica enclave, through Visegrad to the southeast areas like Foca (Ibid). It should also be noted that the decrease in the total number of population is mainly embodied by the Bosniak ethnic group, which was the one that registered the highest number of civilians and refugees¹¹.

In the case of the Brcko District, the figures place it as the only multi-ethnic territory. The trend until 1999, when the district was constituted as such and separated from Republika Srpska, was that of Serbian predominance, especially in the vicinity of the Sava River, but the economic position of Brcko, more favorable than the rest of the country has also made Croats and Bosniaks return.

b) Once again, the "others" and diaspora without equal opportunities in the census. Since 2009, the country has still not complied with the ECHR Sejdic-Finci Judgment –now also with Pilav and Zornic, which requires modifying the articles of the Constitution and the laws that prevent access to the main organs of power to citizens who do not belong to the three constituent nations. Despite this jurisprudence, the design of the census campaign once again imposed ethnic categories over individual or citizen ones. The question regarding ethnic / national affiliation offered four possible answers: "Bosniak, Croat, Serb or I do not answer".

If the respondent did not define himself as such, he would have no option to answer other than to leave it blank. Once again the "others", whether national

¹¹ The data from the ICTY indicate that the main victims belong to the group of Bosniaks with 68,000 deaths, followed by Serbs with 23,000, Croats 9,000 and 5,000 deaths counted as the "others".

minorities or citizens who do not define themselves based on an ethnic key were marginalized from the census¹².

Media campaigns perpetrated from the majority ethnic factions asking the members of their group to clearly define themselves as such were obviously detrimental to those who did not want to do so. There were thousands of complaints received by the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the citizens who said they felt restrained by the corps of officials in charge of the census, who urged them to answer questions about their ethnic and religious affiliations (IWRP, 2013).

Political pressures on citizens began months before the census, and focused primarily on minimizing a latent wave of young people who refused to be pigeonholed and asked to be considered simply as Bosnians. Some political statements are worthy of reproduction. From the Bosniak side, Sulejman Tihic, the spokesman at that time of the Bosniak nationalist SDA party, based on the legacy of its founder, the first president of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegovic, said (Arnautović, 2013): "I perceive among the Bosniaks that wandering around which we need to explain to the citizens that they are not less Bosnian if they declare themselves to be Bosniaks, it is not that they want Bosnia less because they are Bosniak than non-Bosnian". The president of Republika Srpska, Milorad Dodik, of the nationalist Serbian party SNSD said: "Here in Bosnia there are clear tendencies to carry out the census without specifying national, religious and linguistic belonging, and on top they promote a new nation, that of Bosnians (Ibid)". The Croats also rushed to their ethnic slogans. Dragan Covic, leader of the nationalist party HDZ, declared: "Some will try to take advantage of (the census) so that groups consisting of fewer people remain in an insignificant position in the structure of counts, (...) to treat us as a national minority (Ibid)". These types of statements were followed by campaigns of corresponding religious communities that directly asked their faithful to declare themselves as members of their ethnic group.

Parallel to political pressures, in the months prior to the census, there appeared a citizen movement called the Initiative for Self-Determination that brought together about thirty NGOs, and called citizens to declare themselves as Bosnia and Herzegovina's citizens, that is, Bosnians. Some sources pointed out that in the 2012 test census, 35% of the population declared themselves as citizens, that is, as Bosnians, thus rejecting all possible options for the census response. Far from

¹² See: Popisnica P-1, Popis stanovništva, domaćinstava i stanova u BiH 2013 [copy P1 of the Population, Household and Housing Census at BYH, 2013], at www.bhas.ba/Popis%202013/BOS%20P1.pdf.

being so, in the final calculation of 2013, only 2.7% opted for the category of "others" that would be the non-ethnic, something predictable if we take into account that all initiatives seeking to raise the ethnic category to an identification with supranational or political identities are a risk for ethnonationalist elites (Mujkić, 2010), but they also open a complex question of who really makes up that group, and how to fit it into the current institutional system (Bieber, 2014; Kucukalic, 2009). Without full representation in the main organs of power, and without political will to give them the same status as the three constituent nations, it seems understandable that many citizens did not opt for the category of "others" in the census.

On the other hand, Article 11¹³ of the Law that allowed any member of a household to give the data of another of its members older than 15, supposed the possibility of misrepresenting and manipulating the data. Some proposals, such as that of the Zolic analyst, aimed at making a distinction between "permanent and present" population because in this way the number of real inhabitants of the country could be computed, but also of those who are nationals and who have assets and real estate within the State. The final formula was that of a digital ballot that would not count within the global number of registered citizens, or the possibility of traveling to the country within the census date.

While Bosnia did not provide any solution to its large diaspora, Croatia developed a media campaign on the census of the neighboring country through the website of the Official Department for Croatians outside the Republic of Croatia, and urged Bosnian Croats residents outside Bosnia and Herzegovina to come to the census on the date on which it was organized, and clearly state that their ethnicity was Croatian, their religion Catholic and their language Croatian. After different pressures by the NGOs, the Department modified the circular "recommending to define itself as Croatian, a Catholic who speaks Croatian", but did not withdraw it.

The final census in any case, has a more than considerable mismatch of population data. In total, from the preliminary census of 2013 with 3,791,622 total inhabitants, to the definitive one with 3,531,159, there is a difference of 260,463 fewer citizens. The explanation of the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina is that these ballots did not meet the required criteria. However, given the lack of information prior to the process, an important part of this data may come precisely from the diaspora.

¹³ Point 2 of article 11 says that the personal data of the absent members of the family unit can be provided by the adult who knows the situation of the members of this unit older than 15 years. See: Art. 11.2. Law of the Population Census 18/13 of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

4.- With data on the table.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has taken more than three years to publish a census of just three and a half million inhabitants, which is a good example of political intentionality reflected in figures in complex multi-ethnic societies and even more in those arising from conflicts where the representation in political decision-making, but also in access to the public sector, depends on the assigned quotas (Cooley and Mujanovic, 2016).

The questions that are now open are many. From the use of the data, that is, how they will be applied to the current institutional structure, the composition of the main governmental bodies, the quotas in the public sector, the updating of the current legislation that in many cases appeals to the last census, making reference to 1991 (Perry, 2016), the reform of the electoral law, plus all the challenges to which these figures are added, such as the application of the Sejdic-Finci ruling of the ECHR and its replicates Pilav and Zornic, up to the possible abuses of the same (Bieber, 2014) in an election year in sight. What the data have shown at the moment is that post-war population movements in the words of Cvitkovic (2017) have made disappear that multiconfessional and multiethnic country that resembled the skin of a tiger, and that today the 1991 figures they continue validating in the institutional structures. In more than a quarter of a century after the war, the return of refugees and displaced people has only taken place on paper, while a clearly hostile climate towards the returnees is being promoted on the ground (Valledor Álvarez, 2015) that has made them and makes them desist in their efforts to return.

This policy of hostility that has nothing to do with the guarantees of return to which all parties have committed to, has turned out to be the best tool to comply with the tendentious implosion of a unitary State. Despite the end of the conflict, the domination of ethno-nationalist elites prevails with the demand for citizenship of permanent identification with them, and regardless of others. And the question that remains is if segregation will definitely tear the striped tiger skin. That would undoubtedly be the worst of the endings for Bosnia and Herzegovina, for its neighbors and for the EU, which has a delicate scenario in the region if it pursues stability. But it would be above all the final triumph of the plans for the execution of ethnic cleansing that began at the end of the last century, and against which we plotted so that it would never be repeated.

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