



## Bosnia in Berlin: German Postmigrant Memory Culture

### Description

On February 25th, Emina Haye and Thomas Schad had the occasion to present our project at the annual Scientific Advisory Board Meeting of the Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft (SOG) in Berlin. The public symposium was titled *30 Years After the Beginning of the War in Bosnia and Herzegovina: What Does It Mean to Rely on the Young Generation?* In this contribution, we post the first part of our joint presentation, by Emina Haye.



Screenshot: Aldina ?emernica

In late 2020, 25 years after the end of the Bosnian war and the Srebrenica genocide, the initiators of our book project — Nadira Musi?, Aldina ?emernica, Sabrina Halilovi?, Snežana Stankovi?, Thomas Schad and Emina Haye — participated in a panel-discussion at the Berlin Science Week @ Humboldt

University that focused on how even 25 years after the war, these events can shape and determine personal lives, one's personal choices, and even academic careers. The event was organized by Prof. Christian Voß from Humboldt University Berlin, and moderated by Thomas Schad.

We, the participants, women from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Germany, and Serbia, discussed our own perspectives and experiences. We found that all of us, despite our different ages, different heritage, and backgrounds, had a very personal story to tell and to share. A story of the pre-war period, the war per se, our life in the diaspora, and our individual engagement and processing with this issue. Our perspectives are first-handed and authentic: Perspectives of women who were young children or youngsters when the Bosnian, the Yugoslav, war started; Women, who have experienced the war directly or indirectly through their families and relatives, and who know very well what trauma and traumatic experiences mean. A trauma of transgenerational extent.

After this initial discussion, we received consistently positive feedback that encouraged us to continue and to share our stories. That was the moment, when the idea was born to get together and start writing a book. At the first glance, writing a book sounds exciting, of course. Yet, our leading question and the whole organization of the book writing process was still to be discussed. We wanted to present this idea and this possibility to a broader audience and, in the first step, we looked for potential contributors for our anthology. A call in form of an exposé followed, where the idea and the background of the book project were described. A wide variety of professional profiles came forward: linguists, artists, writers, and academics. We can proudly say that all the people we have contacted and asked to contribute have responded positively to our project and agreed to participate.

We are taking this opportunity to make it clear that our book project is *not* exclusively about Srebrenica — although the initial event and getting together had precisely this in focus. We, *Bosnia in Berlin*, are concerned with a broader reading of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the question of how personal migration history can become part of a larger migration history. The title of our book is „Bosnia in Berlin“ — but it goes beyond that. We are open to other perspectives, other experiences, backgrounds, and our entire framework is rather open. For instance, our geographical focus extends to the entire German speaking region, and even beyond that. We have authors coming from Austria, Italy, Germany, or Serbia. We come from different disciplines and are offering space to different profiles to express their experiences on this topic: for instance, our author Snežana Stankovi?, an anthropologist, is a native of Serbia, who will describe her perspective on the subject of the Bosnian, Yugoslav war in the 1990s. We strongly believe that the multi-perspective processing of the war is of huge relevance to present-day societies.

In the summer of 2021, Thomas finally developed *this*: our homepage, which wasn't planned from the very beginning, but by the time, it became really big for us. Right now, everything is kept bilingually, in German and Jezik\*, but it is planned to translate the whole content into English, as well. We regularly post abstracts from our contributors, and use this way to introduce them to our followers and readers. In addition, we have created an Instagram profile and a Facebook page, where we keep our followers up-to-date and inform them about new content on our homepage. It is important to say that all our work on this book project is absolutely voluntarily, and that so far, we didn't receive any funds, yet.

It is planned to publish our anthology by the end of this year in Germany for the German speaking public, Peter Lang publishing house, and in 2023 in Bosnia-Herzegovina, too. We want to take this opportunity and publicly thank Prof. Christian Voß once again. He has been supporting us from the very beginning, and will be supporting us in future and across the publication process. Thank you.

### **Category**

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