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Cultural diplomacy in war-affected societies: international and local policies in the post-conflict (re)construction of religious heritage in former Yugoslavia.

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Abstract:

The paper sets out to examine the international community's cultural diplomacy in war-affected societies as a means for prevention of regional and global conflicts in today's interdependent world. The study will analyze one particular aspect of the international cultural policy in the Western Balkans: the reconstruction of religious heritage in the post-conflict societies of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo as part of the broader process of conflict prevention and state-building and will take into account local responses towards externally-imported reconciliation mechanisms.

The issue of state-building and externally promoted reconciliation between ethnic and religious groups in war-affected societies gains particular importance today in the light of the ever increasing regional conflicts and the threats they bring to global peace and security. The paper will examine two levels of developments in Southeast Europe in the light of the paradoxical simultaneousness of some processes which at first sight appear mutually exclusive: *First*, the re-emergence of delayed national questions in the Balkans in a period marked by a global tendency towards "reducing" national states and transferring many of their functions to international actors and *second*, the intensive efforts of the international community to enhance the importance of culture as identity-builder in war-affected societies at a time when the role of culture as main source of identity has been significantly undermined by worldwide processes of globalization.

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1. Common culture: a catalyst for unity or division in the Western Balkans?

The Balkan region with its various ethnic and cultural groups coexisting on relatively limited territory was often perceived as a micro-projection of the concept of culture as bridge between societies. That projection was justified by the post-war creation of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia: a state entity comprising four republics (Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia) and two autonomous provinces (Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo) within a loose federation. The notion of the Balkans as "bridge" between cultures found convenient material embodiment in the rich and diverse cultural heritage of the federal state - a legacy from Roman, Byzantium, Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian presence in the region.

However, the role of culture as uniting factor appeared fragile in view of the fact that in the Balkans culture had served as "traditional" manipulation tool identity building, political purposes and nationalistic propaganda. Besides, although speaking the same language, the six ethnic groups constituting the Yugoslav Federation had followed different historical trajectories and their cultural identities were shaped by different influences and traditions (Belloni 2008: p.18). Consequently, with the re-emergence of ethnic nationalism among the political elites of the Yugoslav republics culture easily shifted from unifying factor to dividing force among the Yugoslav society.

The process of re-evaluation of national identities that took place in the 1980's was co-related to the newly liberalized policy of the Yugoslavian communist party aiming at rapprochement with religious (and opposition) elites, and the opening of new churches and mosques provided good occasion for nationalist demonstrations and massive politicization on religious basis (Bougarel 1996: 94-96). Thus culture and religion became a catalyst for the mobilization of the different cultural groups on ethnic and religious basis.

The rise of ethno-nationalism in the late 1980's and the inability of the central federal authorities to respond to the challenges of the new world order culminated in bloody ethnic wars, which marked the developments in Southeast Europe for more than a decade and pre-defined international associations of the Balkans with atrocities and violence.

Each ethnic group involved in the 1990's Yugoslav wars sought to justify its own existence and to (re)define its territory by demolishing or suppressing the identity of "the other". That led to a process of massive and intense ethnic cleansing, unknown in the post-modern world. Culture as main bearer of collective identity became primary target of each fighting side, and the destruction of cultural heritage was used as an operational ethnic cleansing tool.

As a result, throughout the 1990's historical and cultural sites on the territory of former Yugoslavia came under a process of massive and deliberate subversion. The wars in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo destroyed nearly 75% of the common heritage and evolved as a cultural catastrophe for all the communities involved in war (Baumel 1993)

Consequently, the post-conflict reconstruction of the common heritage was extensively prioritized by the international community in its efforts to stabilize the region by reversing war effects and promoting ethnic reconciliation.

2. International community's cultural diplomacy in war-affected societies: "bridging" the Western Balkans.

It has often been claimed that the Yugoslav wars brought to the Western Balkans global public attention, disproportional to the region's geo-political importance[2]. In fact, the dissolution of Yugoslavia coincided with a process of profound changes in world affairs when policy fields traditionally dominated by national governments were taken over by international governmental and non-governmental actors.

That process facilitated the international community's presence in Southeast Europe through actions that transcended traditional peace-keeping. The threats for the global peace and security emanating from the ever increasing cases of state-failure made *externally imported state-building* key element of international post-conflict policy-making. The global process of reducing national states' functions enabled the international community to assume responsibility not only for institution-building, but also for the construction of a social symbiosis to hold war-affected societies together. The methods used for achieving the latter goal varied from elaboration and implementation of massive programs for refugee return to carrying out projects on cultural heritage reconstruction as important incentive for inter-ethnic reconciliation.

As analyzed above, the Yugoslavian wars rapidly subverted the common notion of shared history and peaceful coexistence between the different ethnic groups of Yugoslavia. Hence, *main priority of international community's cultural diplomacy in the Western Balkans became the (re)creation of the collective memory of common cultural past*. The cultural policy of numerous international actors in the Balkans was marked by an increasing tendency towards new interpretation of the common Yugoslavian (and Balkan) history through the concept of region's multicultural past. Global (UN, UNESCO) and regional (EU, the Council of Europe) international organizations tended to refer to historical and religious sites in Southeast Europe as

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clear evidences of the Balkan "traditional" multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism. Primary attention was paid to "ethnic" cultural heritage (religious institutions) due to its central role in identity-building and issues of reconciliation.

The international community's efforts to recreate the notion of common cultural past was hampered by factors different in each war-affected society: immaturity of local institutions in terms of minority rights and freedoms (Slovenia), illiberal governance models and unconsolidated state territory (Croatia) and the absence of an actual state (Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo). The next part of the essay will address these particular case-studies in an attempt to reveal the interactions between local and domestic politics on the (re)construction of *religious heritage* as main bearer of individual and collective identity.

3. (Re)Construction of religious heritage in war-affected societies: case-studies from former Yugoslavia.

Slovenia

Slovenia was the first country to secede from the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia by declaring independence on June 25, 1991. The promulgation of sovereignty was followed by the intervention of the Yugoslav People's Army, which Slovenian military forces defeated within four days. The relevant ethnic coherency of the Slovenian population defined both the short duration of the war and the low degree of war-time destruction of properties and cultural heritage. Unlike Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia was saved from massive ethnic cleansing and the accompanying flows of refugees and intentional destruction of the heritage of the "other".

However after the end of the violence in 1991 Slovenian ruling party attempted to maintain nationalist antagonism towards non-Slovenes by repressing minority rights (Bowman 2003:54). Thus ethnic minorities in Slovenia, which constituted around 17% of Slovenian population, faced limitations deriving from their cultural and religious distinction similar to those in other former Yugoslavian states. Exemplifying is the 30 year long struggle of the Slovenian Muslim minority to obtain a permission to build a mosque and a Muslim cultural center in Ljubliana. Despite the fact that Slovenian Muslim population constituted the second largest religious group in the country, Ljubljana remains the only European capital which doesn't have a mosque. The denial of the Slovenians authorities to provide a permission for the construction of

a mosque has been justified with fears of Islamization of the country and destruction of the capital's architectural heritage (Boduszynski 2009: 215)

The fact that Slovenian state and society was relatively slightly affected by the Yugoslavian wars made a massive international intervention in terms of peace-keeping and state-building unjustifiable. Thus, the international community did not elaborate an adequate policy to address the manifestations of Slovenian intolerance and the country was integrated in the major European and transatlantic structures without having resolved two important minority issues: *first*, defining the status of the so called "erased minorities" - people from Bosnian or Serbian origin who failed to register for Slovenian citizenship in 1992 and whose status remains unresolved until today and *second*, granting a permission for the building of a Muslim religious institution and cultural center in Ljubljana (Boduszynski 2009: 215).

Currently Slovenia supports various international programs aiming to bring together or re-connect nationalities and ethnic groups from former Yugoslavia. In 2010 the Ministry of Culture of Slovenia established two institutes for the protection of ethnic minorities and other vulnerable groups: an Institute of Special care and an Institute of Integration. The minority cultural policy at governmental level is aimed at integration of minorities in all spheres of public life. Slovenia will have to successfully implement the adopted policies in order to re-image international perceptions of nationalistic and xenophobic behavior over the last twenty years.

Croatia

Croatia declared independence together with Slovenia in June 1991, but President Tudjman's nationalist campaign for independent Croatia which would expand to Croatian "historical borders" - borders encompassing most of Bosnia and Herzegovina - turned the war into long and traumatic experience (Bowman 2003:52) The so called Homeland war marked political, economic and social developments in Croatia for several years until the complete military (1995) and politically (1998) reintegration of the state territory. (Kasapovic 2009: 217).

Main arenas of war activities became the ethnically divided Eastern Slavonia, Baranya and Krajina where mixed ethnic population (e.g.in 1991 43% of Slavonia's population were Croats, 36% - Serbs and 14% - other) fostered both Serbian and Croatian claims over the region. The contested areas suffered the highest losses in human lives, infrastructure and cultural heritage.

The Croatian and Serbian policy in the region sought to create ethnically homogenous areas and to include them into Croatian and Serbian territory, respectively. In that process the massive expel of population and the accompanying intentional destruction of religious heritage served as a tool for inscribing a Croat or Serbian identity to the contested area. The highest degree of violence and deliberate damages befell the Serb Orthodox monuments and works of art.

In the first half of the 1990's several international investigation missions in Croatia reported massive reprisals against Serbian cultural heritage (both monuments and religious art works), and the total number of damaged church buildings was estimated at more than 350[3]. In the 1994 Council of Europe *Information Report on War Damage to the Cultural Heritage in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina* it was confirmed that "both ethnic and cultural cleansing had taken place on a significant scale against the Serbs of Croatia"[4]. The most intensive destruction of religious institutions was reported to have taken place in Slavonia and Baranya, where more than 120 church buildings were damaged or completely demolished[5].

After the end of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina Slavonia and Baranya were placed under international administration and a *United Nations Transitional Authority for Eastern Slavonia (UNTAES)* took over the governance of the two regions until the final defining of their status. Over the next two years the international community tried to imply policies aiming at stabilization and reversal of war effects by prioritizing refugee return programs and the co-related reconstruction of religious and cultural monuments.

The latter process was mandated to the *Cultural Heritage Division of UNTAES,* whose activity was seriously hampered by the lack of political sponsors willing to invest in a region whose status was unclear and most of the destroyed cultural sites remained unattained. In 1997 a team of European cultural experts visited Slavonia in order to identify a blueprint for overall cultural development and once more registered "low interest" among local and international authorities to engage in cultural policies[6].

An important step towards stabilization of the region came in 1998 when Eastern Slavonia and Baranya were officially reintegrated in Croatian state territory and the international administration ended its mandate. The same year local and international institutions undertook important initiative for the improving of Croatian policy in the sphere of culture. Croatian

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[3] War Damage to the Cultural Heritage in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Council of Europe 4th Information Report. 19 January 1994. Available from:
http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc93/EDOC6999.htm#II.%20Croatia
[4] Ibid
[5] Ibid
[6] Eastern Slavonia (Croatia), Summery Report on Cooperation with UNTAES in the field of education and culture, Council of Europe, 2 July 1997, available from: https://wcd.coe.int/wcd/ViewDoc

Ministry of Culture together with the Council of Europe elaborated a *Framework for Croatian cultural policy* suggesting two main development steps: *first*, integration of Croatia policy into international cultural strategies and *second*, implementation of initiatives aiming at overcoming the consequences of the Homeland war. The overall aim of the framework was to re-image Croatia in the eyes of the international community and to change the perception of Croatia as a country that was exclusively nationalistic. (Landry 1998: p. 39)

As part of the framework Croatia elaborated a special "theme" titled "*Cultural crossroads"*, which foresaw promotion of interethnic cooperation through three main lines of action: stimulating and supporting multicultural understanding, providing a focus for community identity and breaking down barriers between communities, religions and geographical areas. The project *Cultural Crossroads* envisaged the creation of *Museum of Reconciliation and Peace* and an educational *Reconciliation center* based in Slavonia (Landry 1998: p. 39-41). The declared willingness of the local authorities to work towards reversal of war effects was an important step towards reconciliation and prevention of Orthodox heritage destruction - a process that had continued despite international community's presence in the country.

The positive trends in Croatia cultural policy deepened after the 2000' coming to power of pro-Western parties which made further commitment to Croatian will for European and transatlantic integration.

However, a critical analysis of the cultural policy of Croatia during the 1990's shows that, apart from the old town of Dubrovnik, whose international popularity and importance for the economy of Croatia guaranteed strictly implied reconstruction policies, the genuine reconstruction of cultural heritage and religious monuments in the country was hampered by international and local reluctance for investments and followed much modest pace than the process implied in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina was an ethnically heterogeneous area inherited by three major ethnic groups (Serbs, Croats and Muslims) and enjoying autonomous status within the Yugoslavian federation. Although diversity in culture and religious allegiances was a substantial ingredient of social life, ethnic exclusiveness among Serbs, Croats and Muslims remained strong. With the collapse of the federal state the very foundation for the existence of a multiethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina was seriously undermined and the area suffered three years of bloody interethnic war (Burg 1997: 125). Between 1992 and 1995 Bosnia and Herzegovina became the

most contested area in the nationalistic programs of Serbs, Croats and Muslims and experienced levels of destruction and ethnic cleansing that shocked the world.

Bosnia and Herzegovina suffered the most severe and systematic destruction of cultural heritage with an estimated 1,200 Mosques, 150 Catholic Cathedrals, 10 Orthodox Churches, 4 Synagogues and more than 1000 other monuments of culture demolished within three years of war (Riedlmayer 2002: 98) Other important common cultural institutions situated in Sarajevo (the National and University Library, the Oriental Institute and the National Museum) survived the war but suffered substantial losses with more than 1 million volumes of their collections burned or destroyed (Riedlmayer 1995: p.1).

That proves that destruction of cultural heritage in Bosnia contained one element that differentiated it from the processes in Slovenia and Croatia. In Slovenia prevailing motive for religious discrimination was social fear of Islamic fundamendalism, while in Croatia (mainly Slavonia and Baranya) the destruction of religious monuments aimed at creation of homogeneous areas and their future integration in the state territory. In Bosnia apart from ethnic cleansing motives, the destruction of cultural heritage meant to erase the collective memory of peaceful coexistence of Serbs, Croats and Muslims. According to Riedlmayer (1995: 8) "*throughout Bosnia libraries, archives, museums and cultural institutions have been targeted for destruction, in an attempt to eliminate the material evidence that could remind future generations that different ethnic groups and religious traditions once shared a common heritage in Bosnia*".

That explains the special emphasis that the international community attributed to the reconstruction of the collective memory of common Bosnian cultural past. The massive demolishment of religious institutions during the 1992-1995 war had deep repercussions for the Bosnian society. Once the war was ended in 1995 the reconstruction of mosques, churches and cathedrals became main instrument in international community's policies towards promotion of reconciliation and recreation of multi-ethnic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The basis for the international involvement in the post-conflict reconstruction of cultural and religious heritage in Bosnia became *Annex 8* of the *Dayton Peace Agreement* which constituted the establishment of an independent *International Commission to Preserve National Monuments* in the newly built state. Its main task was to make decisions on the designation of properties having cultural, historic, religious or ethnic importance as national monuments[7]. The Commissions' effectiveness was burdened by the fact that it was entitled only to determine a site as a national monument, while its reconstruction remained responsibility of the entity in whose

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[7] The General Framework Agreement: Annex 8, art. V, line 5. At: www.ohr.int/dpa

territory the property was situated[8]. Nevertheless, Annex 8 and the constitution of the Commission postulated an important first step towards the elaboration of proper legal tools for the reconstruction of religious heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the next years numerous UN and EU programs entered Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to assist in ethnic and religious reconciliation trough *simultaneous* restoration of different cultural and religious sites[9]. The financial and technical support in that process was usually provided by different member-states and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The fact that leading Muslim countries like Turkey, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and Jordan appeared as main "political" sponsors of mosques' restoration, while churches' reconstruction was usually supported by European governments like Italy and Greece, triggered various speculations on politicization of the process and national governments' cultural diplomacy targeting purely political goals.

The genuinely high degree of involvement of national governments in the post-conflict (re)construction of religious institutions in Bosnia was another feature that distinguished the Bosnian case from the developments in Slovenia and Croatia. The unhidden and generous support offered by Muslim governments worldwide has often been interpreted as a cultural diplomacy aiming at promoting Islam and Islamism in Europe. Such speculations were triggered by the unexpectedly high level of post-conflict (re)construction of mosques in Bosnia: according to data of the Center for Islamic Architecture of the Bosnian Islamic Community, by 2008 3/4 of the destroyed or damaged mosques had been renovated with the help of the international community and various national (Muslim) governments[10]. Moreover, there had been plenty of cases of *newly constructed* mosques whose architecture and size resembled more the environment in the rich Muslim countries like Dubai and Saudi Arabia rather than the traditional Ottoman heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

To the contrary, the restoration of churches on the territory of Bosnia followed much more modest pace. Exemplifying was the case of the fully destroyed Orthodox Church of the Holy Trinity in the town of Mostar - one of the most important Orthodox monuments in the Balkans, which remained internationally unattended for more than 16 years after its destruction in 1992[11].

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[8] Ibid

[9] UNESCO 144th Session: The Situation of the Cultural and Architectural Heritage as well as of Educational and Cultural Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Paris, 19 April 1994. Available from: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0009/000969/096973Eo.pdf

[10] https://thebosnianwarfactstimelinehistorygenocidecriminals.wordpress.com/tag/remembering-over-1000-destroyed-and-damaged-mosques-in/

[11] http://www.crkva-sv-trojice.ba/

These tendencies prove that the post-conflict reconstruction of religious institutions in Bosnia transcended its cultural dimension both on macro and micro political level. In a global context, the process served as a tool promoting national states' policies through methods that conventional diplomacy could not apply. On domestic level it was used as a means for marking political presence (and domination) of the respective religious groups in one area. According to A. Aksamija (2008) "in the post-Dayton period mosques and churches in Bosnia have, in effect, replaced any national flags that might have marked an ethnicity's territorial control immediately after the war" (p.4).

Another level of analysis related to the intensive (re)construction of religious heritage in Bosnia should consider the international community's policy towards the building of a new, supra-ethnic Bosnian identity. In fact, what was achieved was consolidation of the Bosniak nation, whose identity-building was triggered mainly by the Bosnian war. Aksamija (2008) further argues that the construction of mosques became a catalyst for the Muslim quest for national identity and states that "those who survived ethnic cleansing built or rebuilt Mosques as means of asserting material evidence of their existence while simultaneously recovering from traumatic experience" (p.7). Unfortunately the international community's attempts for building new supra-ethnic Bosnian identity failed and the Bosnian society has remained highly divided in ethnic and religious terms.

Both the political and social aspects of the post-conflict reconstruction of religious institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina need further international attention. The international community is still intensively involved in the process and continues to underline the importance of the *simultaneous* renovation of religious institutions of the three ethnic groups. In 2010 the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) decided on the first joint project envisaging simultaneous reconstruction of the Ferhadija Mosque in Banja Luka, the Orthodox Cathedral of Mostar and the Franciscan Monastery of Plehan and tried to emphasize the meaning of the three sites as "powerful symbols of multiculturalism and diversity"[12]. Some measures have been taken on local level by the adoption of the first Bosnian *Law on Cultural Heritage* and a state-level framework strategy for the cultural sector titled "*Cultural Policy Paper of Bosnia and Herzegovina*". The elaboration and implementation of adequate Bosnian cultural policy will continue to be of particular importance in the light of today's instable political situation and increasing tensions between governing elites, which are usually based on ethnic divisions and experiences of war.

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[12] UNDP Bosnia and Herzegovina, available from: http://www.undp.ba/index.aspx?PID=7&RID=623

Despite the complex and rather controversial political and social aspects of the post-conflict reconstruction of religious institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the process can be evaluated as successfully implemented international cultural diplomacy which, at least partly, contributed to the stabilization of the new state.

Kosovo

Kosovo was a constituent entity of Yugoslavia and the second autonomous province which enjoyed self-governance within the federation. Situated on historically Serbian territory, the area consisted of predominately Albanian population - in the 1991 census 94% of Kosovo's population declared themselves Albanians, 5.3 % Serbs and 2.7 % others (Bosniaks, Turks, Roma, Egyptians).

Ethnic tensions between Albanians and Serbs in Kosovo had dominated social life ever since the death of Tito in 1980's. However, Kosovo attained international attention hardly after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement in 1995. Until then, international policies were focused on the ongoing war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia itself considered Kosovo as an area of entirely internal affairs and was unlikely to allow any foreign involvement.

The clashes between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo intensified in 1997-1998 after the emergence of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) - a paramilitary organization using violent tools to secure rights for the Kosovo Albanians. Several attempts on internationally introduced agreements failed and the conflict culminated by the 1999' NATO military intervention against Serbia. After the end of the war in June 1999 the *UN Security Council Resolution 1244* postulated the establishment of an international administration in Kosovo (the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, UNMIK), which governed the province for nearly 10 years. NATO led peace-keeping forces (KFOR) were mandated to secure peace and maintain stability.

A distinguishing feature of the Kosovo conflict was the fact that the most systematic destruction of religious heritage (mostly Serb Orthodox sites) occurred not during, but after the war of 1999. In that sense it took the form of political revenge rather than of a means for ethnic cleansing as was the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The international debates on post-conflict reconstruction of religious heritage in Kosovo opened up in the autumn of 1999 by the promulgation of a Serbian booklet titled "*Crucified Kosovo*". The booklet presented detailed information about destroyed and desecrated Orthodox religious institutions and monuments in Kosovo and Metohija and was aimed at attracting the international attention towards the Serb-problem in Kosovo. According to the booklet, in the first

4 months after the end of the war (between June 1999 and October 1999) Kosovo Albanians had destroyed 76 religious monuments through acts of vandalism and intentional burning[13].

The post-1999 deliberate destruction of Serb Orthodox heritage can be explained by two main factors: *first*, Albanian perceptions of Orthodox monuments as "political churches" built by Milosevic as a pro-Serbian propaganda seeking to secure full Serbian control over Kosovo, and *second*, presumptions that the Serb Orthodox monasteries were originally Albanian catholic, but were eventually "colonized" by the Serbs[14].

The divergent practice of vandalism and intentional destruction of Orthodox heritage in the months immediately after NATO ended its campaign against Serbia triggered the necessity of internationally organized protection of cultural heritage and apart from its main peace-keeping functions, KFOR was granted mandate to protect certain religious sites.

This turned out even more necessary in the light of the fact that the end of the 1999 war didn't bring end of violence. In March 2004 interethnic clashes in Kosovo intensified again and led to the damage of another 35 cultural and religious monuments. The international community reacted immediately by sending two sequent UNESCO missions to evaluate the situation. Based on the information reports of the missions, UNESCO elaborated a *Plan for Restoration of Kosovo's Religious Monuments* prioritizing the reconstruction of both Albanian and Serbian religious institutions in Kosovo and aiming at improving reconciliation between local communities through the awareness and respect of cultural heritage[15]. In the next years the project facilitated the reconstruction of 48 Orthodox and 14 Islamic religious institutions in Kosovo. [16]

After the 2004 ethnic clashes the international community introduced one more cultural strategy suggesting *legal sanctions* encouraging inter-communal tolerance in Kosovo. The Council of Europe assisted the local Albanian authorities to elaborate a *Law on Cultural Heritage*, which was adopted in December 2006. The law addressed issues of vandalism and intentional destruction of cultural property. Its adoption was an important step enhancing the process of state-building and maturing of local institutions responsible for the preservation of

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[13] Exemplifying is the Monastery of the Holy Trinity-an Orthodox monument built in the 14th century and housing a valuable collection of manuscripts from 14th until 18th century and a collection of icons from the 19th century. One month after the end of the war in June 1999 Albanian extremists dynamited the Monastery church. The collection of manuscripts and icons was destroyed in the flames. In:"*Protection of the Cultural Heritage in Kosovo*", Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly Information Report, Committee on Culture, Science and Education, 5 April 2004: http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/WorkingDocs/doc04/EDOC10127.htm

[14] That conclusion is drown from the "Protection of the Cultural Heritage in Kosovo", Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly Information Report, Committee on Culture, Science and Education, 5 April 2004: http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/WorkingDocs/doc04/EDOC10127.htm

[15] Ibid

[16] http://www.unpo.org/article/3329

cultural heritage. It should also be pointed out that after Kosovo's declaration of independence in February 2008 the Albanian authorities have been trying to secure more sustainable image of the province in order to increase chances for international legitimation and the Serbian cultural and religious heritage did not suffer additional losses due to Kosovo' secularization move.

However, as has been the case in Bosnia, the international presence in Kosovo has created a dependency syndrome and the local authorities and society still don't share international community's enthusiasm and commitment to the promotion of culture and cultural heritage.

Conclusion:

One of the most important impacts of globalization has been the legitimation of international taking-over of affairs, traditionally dominated by national governments. The high level of international commitment in the processes of state and society building in war-affected societies was a direct repercussion of that process. The international community's intensive attempts on reversal of war effects on the territory of former Yugoslavia represented a significant innovation in world politics despite the fact that they were only partly successful. The uniqueness of the Western Balkans' case-studies remains in the fact that the policies on reconstruction the collective memory of multicultural coexistence were initiated and implemented by international rather than national actors. The presence of the international community in the countries of former Yugoslavia (direct or indirect) resonated on their cultural and social policy and the level of involvement gradually escalated from low (Slovenia) to medium (Croatia) and high (Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo).

The analysis of the co-relation between international and local policies in terms of reconstruction of religious heritage in former Yugoslavia proved that the process was successful and contributed, at least partly, to ethnic reconciliation and cooperation. Moreover, the presence of international actors in the Balkans has been of vital importance for the introduction of more "neutral" cultural diplomacy and for the maturing of local institutions dealing with preservation of cultural heritage. It should be noted however that the cultural policy of the most Southeast European states has long been dominated by ethnic trends and nationalistic sentiments and it will surely take some time before culture and cultural heritage can be addressed and treated separately from political propaganda and considerations of power.

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