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Examining the Challenges of Teaching for Social Justice in Sarajevo

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by

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Education is essential to a democracy's success because schools are where children learn the rights and responsibilities of citizenship (Apple & Beane, 2007; Beane, 2005; Carnegie Corporation, 2003; Dewey, 1916; Dreeban, 1968; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Social justice is the central concept of all democracies because with it citizens learn to value the rights of others and to think critically about solutions to social issues and problems in their communities (Westheimer & Kane, 2004). Schools reflect social justice pedagogy when their classroom teaching methods use justice and peace as the framework for student learning. In some schools in the United States, for example, issues about race, socioeconomic status and language diversity serve as the contexts for social justice teaching (e.g., Ayers, Quinn & Stovall, 2009; Cochran-Smith, 2004; Darling-Hammond, French & Garcia-Lopez, 2002).

Social justice pedagogy needs to be situated in the specific needs of each country. Eastern European countries, for example, might use the rights of the Roma people (gypsies) as the context for teaching school children about social justice. In some Western European countries where there are increasing numbers of Islamic immigrants, such as Switzerland, teachers might use the civil rights of these new groups as the context for their students' learning activities. But in this paper we examine whether social justice teaching is occurring in Sarajevo - we define this as the extent to which issues about the 92-95 war are used as the context for students' learning.

Many have argued that schools and their teachers have the responsibility for teaching children about social justice (Darling-Hammond, French & Garcia-Lopez, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Nieto, 1992; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). In recent years social justice has received increasing attention in Western teacher education literature (e.g.,

Ayers, Quinn, & Stovall, 2009; Cochran-Smith, 2004; Darling-Hammond, French & Garcia-Lopez, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Zeichner, 2009); this contrasts with other teacher education movements, such as the professionalization of teaching as seen in the national accreditation efforts (e.g., National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education) and the deregulation of the teacher induction process where content knowledge and verbally ability are considered sufficient for classroom teaching (e.g., alternative certification programs). Social justice models of education see teaching and learning as inherently a socio-cultural endeavor in which students are taught to think critically and to become agents of change in their own schools and communities (Zeichner, 2009).

Although few in number, social justice is an essential component of some teacher education programs in the United States (McDonald & Zeichner, 2009; Sleeter, 2009; Cochran-Smith, Barnatt, Lahann, Shakman, & Terrell, 2009). In these programs teacher candidates learn needed pedagogical knowledge and skills, and they acquire an awareness and sense of activism as to how their schools and communities might be improved and made more equitable (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Darling-Hammond, French & Garcia-Lopez, 2002).

Social justice education is evidenced in curricula topics pertaining to issues such as multiculturalism, inclusion and minority rights. In some U.S. schools, for example, children become actively involved in service projects such as serving the homeless in soup kitchens, helping the elderly, participating in cross-age tutoring, studying issues about community drug use, working in community garden projects, clothing and other efforts to benefit the poor and powerless. While service projects of this kind are key

components of social justice teaching, they are not sufficient because an equally essential element is teaching students to think critically about the forces that actually produce the social problems and inequities.

The findings in this paper may inform those interested about the challenges people in post-conflict countries encounter when attempting to transform their societies into ones that are socially just, and the paper may contribute to educational reform in Sarajevo. Theories supporting the manuscript flow from the recent literature about teaching for social justice (Ayers, Quinn, & Stovall, 2009; Christensen, 2000; Cochren-Smith, 2004; Darling-Hammond, French, & Garcia-Lopez, 2002; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004; Zeichner, 2009). Three questions relating to social justice in Sarajevo were examined:

1. What are the characteristics of public education in Sarajevo, and in what respects does it support social justice?
2. What kinds of educational reforms pertaining to social justice education have occurred since the 92-95 war?
3. What contextual variables are influencing social justice education in BiH?

Method

This is a descriptive study that took place in Sarajevo during the fall of 2008. Two researchers conducted the study. One researcher taught at the University of Sarajevo's Pedagogical Academy and the other at the Faculty of Philosophy. The Pedagogical Academy enrolls students in early childhood and elementary teacher education, while the

Faculty of Philosophy offers coursework in general and specialized education to undergraduate and graduate students in librarianship, counseling and secondary teaching.

In addition to their university teaching, the researchers observed classroom lessons in Sarajevo's elementary and secondary schools and conducted formal and informal interviews of public school directors, classroom teachers, university faculty and students, an NGO director, and one ministry official. A senior faculty member at the University served as the study's primary informant and facilitator of school visits and interviews.

Data Collection

Other researchers (Patton, 1990; Yin, 1994) have recommended multiple data sources in qualitative inquiry. The primary data sources for the current study consisted of (1) formal interviews, (2) classroom observations, and (3) written reflections of the researchers' teaching and daily interactions in the city.

Formal Interviews

Our richest data source (Agar, 1994) proved to be formal interviews of university faculty (N=3), a school director (N=1), an NGO administrator (N=1), and a public official (N=1). Many of these interviews were audio recorded, and field notes were made of each of them. In several cases, transcripts of the interviews were also made. Most of these interviews lasted 60 minutes in length. Both researchers participated in four interviews and each independently conducted one additional interview. The researchers developed their interview questions by first independently brainstorming items that they believed would be pertinent to discovering respondents' thoughts about democratic education and social justice. The researchers then compared and contrasted these items

until reaching consensus on 20 items, which we subsequently collapsed into eight core question items (see Table 1).

Table 1: *Interview Questions*

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1. What are the successes of education for democracy and social justice in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)?
 2. What are the current challenges to democracy and social justice in BiH?
 3. What reforms are necessary for promoting education for democracy and social justice in BiH?
 4. What could have been done differently in the past to better promote democracy and social justice in BiH?
 5. What changes to teacher education are needed to promote democracy and social justice in BiH?
 6. How are educators and social service professionals connected in BiH?
 7. What education more democratic and socially just before the war?
 8. What are the benefits and challenges of multiple international NGOs being involved in promoting democracy and social justice in BiH?

Six respondents participated in the formal interviews. Each of these interviews were scheduled beforehand and held in quiet locations where it would be unlikely that the sessions would be interrupted. Field notes and audio recordings were made of these formal interviews. A laptop computer using Audacity, a digital audio recording program, was used for recording. Table 2 identifies the dates and sources of the formal interviews (pseudonyms are used throughout).

Table 2: *Formal Interview Sources Used in Study*

<i>Date</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Pseudonym</i>
14 November	Faculty	Esma
2 November	Faculty	Mirza
13 November	Faculty	Sandra
21 November	NGO official	Dina
21 November	School Director	Lada
12 December	Public official	Emina

Classroom Observations

The second data source came from observations of classroom lessons in Sarajevo's schools. These observations provided a background context for comparing and contrasting what was learned from the formal interview data. Several of these observed lessons were from the Civitas curriculum, which is currently being used throughout the city. The researchers categorized journal entries into observational and interpretative notes; this kind of field note system has been shown to be efficacious for the many challenges of data retrieval and analysis involved in qualitative research (Hubbard & Power, 2003). Table 3 identifies the dates of our school visits. Non-participant observation served as the research strategy used. To remain unobtrusive, researchers sat in the back of each classroom and did not share their analyses until all of the lesson observations were completed.

Table 3: *Scheduled Classroom Observations*

<i>Date</i>	<i>Grades</i>	<i>Subject</i>
26 September	Primary	Language arts and math

3 October	Secondary	Bosnian language
8 October	Secondary	Civic education
8 October	Secondary	History
9 October	Secondary	English language
9 October	Secondary	Civic education
20 October	Primary	Language arts
20 October	Primary	Language arts
20 October	Secondary (8 th)	Biology
22 October	Middle school	Language arts
22 October	Primary	Language arts
22 October	Primary	Student Council
24 December	Kindergarten	Civics Education

Written Reflections about the Researchers' Teaching and Daily Interactions in Sarajevo

The third data source derived from the researchers' reflections of their teaching experiences at their host universities and their daily interactions with university faculty, students, and residents of Sarajevo. Data from these professional and informal interactions often confirmed and contextualized inferences the researchers had made from formal interviews and school observations. Each researcher maintained reflective journals of their professional activities and posted electronic blogs of interactions in the city.

Data Analysis and Representation

Data analysis occurs as a process of 'examining, categorizing, tabulating, or otherwise recombining the evidence' (Yin, 1994, p.102). It aims to generate useable

information about the areas of interest and ensure high-quality accessible data while generating documentation of the analysis as well as retention of the data and the associated analysis after the study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data reduction is used to ‘make sense of massive amounts of data, reduce the volume of information, and identify significant patterns’ (Patton, 1990, p. 371). The researchers searched for recurring patterns and themes in the data. They hypothesized and tested predictions until they could be triangulated with several data sources—a process similar to Glazer and Straus’s (1967) ‘constant comparative’ method.

The trustworthiness (Kreftings, 1991) of our interpretations are based on the following: 1) we lived and taught in Sarajevo for four months and nine months respectively; 2) we used multiple data sources and (3) after independently analyzing it, we crosschecked our interpretations with one another.

Personal Filters for Interpreting Events and Ideas in Sarajevo

We are aware that our personal histories shape our observations and interpretations (Heath & Street, 2009; Patton, 2002). Our cultural backgrounds and identities are the following: We are United States citizens, and the project took place through a U.S. State Department grant (Fulbrights) for sharing civic education and democratic methods of teaching in Sarajevo. Both of us are male, hold doctoral degrees in education and have studied and taught multicultural issues in teaching and learning in their home institutions. Our interest in teaching in Bosnia generated from varied personal experiences of teaching Bosnian refugees in the United States and working with teacher educators in emerging democracies in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Africa. The

researchers' interest in civics and participatory methods of teaching served as a resource for what we saw and interpreted in Sarajevo.

Results

Our findings are presented in the following sequence: First, we examine textbooks that are used in Sarajevo. Second, we describe a lesson that serves as evidence for pedagogical change in Sarajevo; that is, instead of a teacher-centered lesson relying on lecture, students were actively involved in small group discussions and classroom presentations. Third, we present evidence that was taken from a student council meeting and the small inclusion movement that exists in Sarajevo. Fourth, we discuss contextual variables influencing social justice and school reform; here we discuss the inability of government to implement school reform, the long-lasting emotional trauma of the war, and the lack of statesmanship in the county in which leaders come forward with a broad vision to represent the needs of all of the people in Bosnia & Herzegovina.

Textbooks in Sarajevo

Civitas International textbooks are widely used in Sarajevo and serve as the textbooks used in civics education classes, kindergarten through grade 9. Formed in 1996, Civitas International has provided training and materials for students at the K-10th grade levels for thousands of teachers and students in all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). As part of the Center for Civic Education, Civitas International works in more than 50 countries. It is funded by the US Department of Education under the Education for Democracy; additional support for Civitas is provided by the US Department of State, the US Agency for International Development, and other sources. Children are taught differing versions of Civitas' International's 'Foundations of Democracy' curricula.

Eighth grade students study 'Foundations of Democracy,' which is part of the nationwide 'Project Citizen.' At the tenth grade level, students are taught the 'Democracy and Human Rights' curriculum.

The Civitas materials serve as the official civics curricula in all of Sarajevo's elementary and secondary schools. In addition, its materials have been adopted by all thirteen cantons in the federation and the Republika Srpska. Civitas materials are designed to promote the acquisition of civic dispositions as defined by the Center of Civic Education's 1994 National Standards for Civics and Government, which include civility, individual responsibility, self-discipline, civic-mindedness, open-mindedness, willingness to compromise, toleration of diversity, patience and persistence, compassion for others, generosity, and loyalty. These materials present the content and skills needed to facilitate the development of democratic dispositions in developmentally appropriate ways. For example, the kindergarten 'Foundations of Democracy' curriculum introduces the concept of authority through the use of cartoons, movies, and classroom activities as basic as electing classroom leaders. Similarly, tenth grade students in the 'Democracy and Human Rights' are exposed to the nuances of democracy through classroom discussions; they are then required to make assessments of rules and/or law as democratic or non-democratic based on their understandings. The curriculum requires students to submit these opinions and assessments for peer review.

However, as good as these materials may seem, there is one glaring omission - the 1992-1995 war. Sarajevo's schools do not teach the war because, according to informants (Field notes, November 2, 2008; November 14, 2008; November 21, 2008), teachers are conflicted about 'what should be presented.' In addition, some school textbooks are

biased and discriminating against other ethnic groups. In smaller cities Christian children are being taught that the Muslims caused the war because of their desire to form an independent BiH after Tito. Meanwhile, Muslim children are being taught that the Christians were the war's aggressors.

Although Civitas is officially being used, some of BiH's other textbooks reveal the deep ethnic divisions that exist within the country. The following quotes were reported by Alic (2008), a senior analyst for International Relations and Security Network. One Bosnian Serb geography textbook contained the quotes 'Republika Srpska is an independent state' and 'Orthodox Christianity is the most important religion...Muslims are Islamic Serbs while Croats and Serbs [are] Catholics.' A Bosnian Croat geography textbook included similar quotes: 'Zagreb is the Croat capital' and 'Muslims are an ethnic group and not a religion.' A Bosniak geography textbook included misleading information 'Islam is the best religion' and 'All the Serbs did aggression and genocide on Bosnia and Herzegovina.' Such statements are incorrect in content and politically divisive. Sadly, these textbooks limit hope for reconciliation and recovery.

Multicultural education—or, rather, its absence—is an issue of frustration for many Bosnian educators. Under Tito, all Christian and Muslim children learned about one another's cultures. The country has a long history of multicultural education, but this is no longer true. The citizenry is more fragmented and segregated in its understandings about one another than they were before the war. One faculty member said, 'Before the war education was more multicultural...it was part of the socialist tradition to look at what people had to offer the system so that would become good workers' (Field notes,

November 17, 2008). Three informants said that today's children are not learning about other religious groups as they did before the war. One interviewee said, 'The parents don't want it and the politicians play on those fears for their own self-interests.' Fifty schools exist in the country, where children attend schools segregated via religion. Another faculty member explained that, 'Before the war education was more multicultural and democratic.' She said that, although the former socialist education system was recitation based and did not encourage critical thinking, children learned about other people's traditions and heritages. For example, under socialism, all children learned both the Cyrillic and Roman alphabets, but now they only learn one or the other. 'It was part of the socialist tradition to look at what people had to offer the system so that they would become good workers' (Field notes, November 21, 2008).

Some parents of young children are uninterested in having the schools teach about the other ethnic groups. One of our interviewees said, 'The parents don't want it and the politicians play on those fears for their own self interests' (Field notes, November, 17 2008). Another informant shared an anecdote about how ethnocentric and parochial some of the schools have become. She described a preschool in which the building principal in Sarajevo allows the teaching of Islam during the day but not Christianity. When asked why not, the principle defensively said, 'None of the Christian parents asked me for this' (Field Notes, November 17, 2008).

Classroom Teaching

Some of Sarajevo's teachers are using contemporary methods of teaching that require student interaction and critical thinking. Since 1996, the Civitas program has trained thousands of Bosnian teachers in regard to democratic methods of teaching, and

its civic education curriculum has been mandated for kindergarten and tenth grades. Although a mandate does not necessarily mean that something is well done, the researchers observed good lessons in which students were encouraged to think critically about forms of government and democracy in particular. An exemplary lesson was observed in one of the city's high schools. The lesson was taken from the secondary course, Democracy and Human Rights (Field notes, October 8, 2008), which is a new course that is part of Civitas curriculum. The school's director explained that the US Embassy paid for the teacher to participate in the Civitas' workshops. The lesson exemplified an interactive model of teaching because it was student-centered with students' voices valued and elicited throughout it. During at least half of the lesson, students participated in small group brainstorming activities and reported their opinions to the full class. This lesson contrasts with others that we observed in which teacher presentation represented the primary method of instruction.

Student Councils and Inclusive Schooling

We observed children participate in at least one discussion about school change. It took place during a student council meeting (Field notes, October 22, 2008)—the council's first meeting of the year. Classroom teachers had selected 14 children to serve on the council. Two school counselors ran the meeting, which took place after school. The meeting took place in an unused classroom on the first floor of the building. The counselors began by displaying posters about children's rights (right to an education, expression, safety, etc.). Then the counselors directed the children to brainstorm in small groups a list of things they would like to change about their school. The children brainstormed ideas in small groups and then reported their desire to have more social

events, more school picnics, and less homework.

Although there have been some efforts at bringing inclusive teaching practices to Sarajevo, especially through the University of Pittsburgh, most of the city's schools still send children with disabilities to separate buildings with segregated programs (Field notes, September 15, 2008). In some schools, parents of means are allowed to hire additional teacher assistants to shadow their children throughout the day. Faculty at the school and others displayed knowledge of inclusive practices, although each of the classroom teachers pointed out the inclusion students as if they needed to be showcased to visitors. Since the war, the University of Pittsburgh and many international NGOs have generated awareness and the need for reform in the education of children with disabilities. One of the school buildings reconstructed since the war has an elevator for children with physical disabilities. The same school has one teacher assistant to help the classroom teachers with children's learning needs (September 29, 2008). The Norwegian Embassy has sponsored ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers to learn how to accommodate children with learning disabilities.

Contextual Variables Influencing Social Justice Education

Many contextual variables are limiting teaching for social justice in Sarajevo. Overall, a general sense of anxiety and pessimism exists when Bosnians think about social change. During one of our lessons, for example, one of the university students explained, 'Whenever change has occurred, it has been an unhappy one for Bosnia' (Field notes, October 3, 2008). In another lesson, a university student responded to a question about social reform in Bosnia by saying, 'We have no hope for reform in Bosnia' (Field notes, December 4, 2008). In addition to this overall sense of anxiety and

pessimism, what follows is a review of specific issues and their negative influence teaching for social justice in Sarajevo.

Many university students believe that the system is stale and that its faculty have not changed since Tito in their thinking about the world. ‘Old teachers grew up in the socialist era and they are stuck in those methods’ (Field notes, December 4, 2008). ‘Their dream,’ the university student explained, ‘was to get a teaching position and live their lives. They never consider social change and they don’t work for change’ (Field notes, December 4, 2008). When asked about teacher education, university students often said the same: ‘Unfortunately, many of the university teachers were trained under socialist times’ and education has changed very little (Field notes, December 4, 2008).

At one of the ambassador’s receptions (Field notes, September 22, 2008), a journalist privately shared his opinion that the university system was corrupt and that little research was taking place. The journalist explained that he examined the publication record of faculty at one of Bosnia’s universities. He said that little research was being conducted because the faculty were too busy teaching over-load courses at other university campuses—sometimes even canceling classes at one location to teach at another to earn additional money. Rumors persist that some faculty members do not read student examinations, and cases have been reported in the media where students pay faculty with money or sex. Of course, this is not true with most of the faculty, and the researchers heard laudatory evaluations about some of them—particularly those at the Faculty of Philosophy. Yet, a pattern emerged that the university system has changed little since socialist times with students often complaining that they have no voice or process for presenting their concerns.

Furthermore, school directors expressed dissatisfaction about the quality of teacher education. One school director explained that she provides a mentor for all of her new teachers because many of the new university graduates do not know the new teaching methods (Field notes, November 21, 2008). When a mentor cannot be found, she finds them in other city schools. Another director said that the canton was imposing a curriculum on the schools, but the new teachers were not being prepared to teach it. He complained about new teachers' lack of preparation in theories of teaching and learning (October 20, 2008). Teachers in the lower grades have more professional development than those in the upper grades, he explained. He further argued that it would be better if the 'university was more selective in the candidates they graduate.' He received 20 applicants for every open position, but he complained about their quality.

A teacher educator in an outlying city explained that most faculty members perceived their positions as career accomplishments. Consequently the faculty have not changed their pedagogy and accomplish little research after their initial appointment. There are few incentives to change because of few educational reforms have successfully touched the university system. As a result, university students are not learning contemporary methods of teaching and are largely being lectured in their teacher education coursework (21 December 2008). One school director, Lada, explained that new teachers in her building were learning and using newer methods of teaching (Field notes, October 3, 2008), but they were only acquired these methods after being hired. Lada said the 'older teachers were harder to change.' She thought, 'there were problems with the Bologna process' and that many university faculty 'don't teach the newer methods of teaching' (Field notes, October 3, 2008).

Classroom teachers, university faculty and school administrators believe Sarajevo's educational system is in desperate need of reform. Esma said reform has not occurred at all at the university level and noted that ideas from the former socialist system still have great influence: "I'm still seeing authority in education, and education faculty are transmitting that" (Field notes, November 21, 2008). Esma felt that even teachers at a recent education conference were reluctant to think critically and speak up when asked to do so. 'Fear of authority is still present among faculty here.'

At a citywide conference, the Norwegian Ambassador publicly announced that Bosnia had made little commitment to educational reform; consequently, the country was in danger of being refused admission to the European Union (Field notes, December 11, 2008). He explained that the country's leadership has neglected education and that it was 'the least reformed sector in this country....' He further stated that, 'Education is under-prioritized in Bosnia, but it is necessary for BiH's integration into the EU...Membership in the EU will not occur without priority given to education' (Field notes, December 11, 2008).

In order to lay a foundation for entrance into the European Union, BiH is seeking accreditation of its teacher education programs. Known as the Bologna process, it is challenging Bosnia's university system to reform, however the implementation of its standards has created more distrust and resentment among students. Last spring, for example, students expecting to graduate with their master's degrees from the Faculty of Philosophy suddenly learned that an entire year of study was added to their degree program because of Bologna (Field notes, October 3, 2008). The students did not understand why this happened, and most were upset with it. Consequently, the Bologna

process is often maligned by students and questioned by faculty (Field notes, December 12, 2008). BiH's university system seems overwhelmed with meeting the standards set by the Bologna process, and its administrators are imposing it on the faculty with little or no input and discussion.

Esma presented our most revealing finding. She explained that people have not healed from the emotional trauma of the war. People were so relieved to have the conflict end that they never considered what would happen afterwards. The government has not addressed the social and emotional damage that the war caused families. 'What is really bothering people are the unsolved traumas,' the informant explained. 'The country is still struggling with the past and we're losing a generation. People are afraid to open-up because of the past—reconciliation and justice should have come before education' (Field notes, December 17, 2008). 'We have not been able to have justice, so many can't heal' (Field notes, November 14, 2008). Consequently, although many of the physical structures of the city have been repaired from the war, the government has not addressed the emotional damage that the war caused to people and their families. 'What is really bothering people are the unsolved traumas—this happened to some extent in special programs, but never in the public schools' (Interview, November 14, 2008). She added that, 'The International Tribunal for Justice has provided some satisfaction in bringing war criminals to justice; it has helped move the country forward, but much more needs to be done.' The 1992-1995 war is not taught in Sarajevo's schools, and its effects are never discussed with children. Another interviewee said the country is 'still struggling with the past, and we're losing a generation' (Field notes, November 14, 2008). Other interviewees believe that the politicians are not promoting education (November 21,

2008). Esma explained that “people are afraid to open-up because of the past [and] reconciliation and justice should have come before education.’

The country lacks statespeople with the authority to reform its educational system. According to BiH’s constitution, each ethnic group has the right to educate its children in their mother tongue and have a locally developed curriculum. Due to the structure set by the Dayton Accords (US State Department, 1995), separate sets of education laws exist—one set for each of the two entities (BiH and the Republika Srpska) and another set for each of Federation’s ten cantons as well as one for the self-governing District of Brcko. None of the 13 different sets of laws is enforceable nationally. In response to pressure from the international community, legislation was passed in 2003 to provide a structure for a national educational governing body; however, the government has been incapable of agreement on various issues related to ethnic bias and local control of curriculum. As a result, the legislation has never been implemented.

Lada shared her frustration with what she believed is a fragmented education system (Field notes, October 21, 2008): ‘We don’t have a national curriculum and this is a problem. The ministers of education at each of the cantons report to their political parties...It is a catastrophe. That is why we don’t have money to return to schools.’ She further explained that everything that takes place in a school depends on the commitment and quality of the building principal, which varies across schools. It is up to the individual schools to find their own financial resources. She said educational reform is a national issue. Currently, each canton has its own way of implementing civics. There is no national curriculum; as a result, education is suffering. No state plan exists—it is ‘improvisation.’ The federal ministry of education has no authority; it can offer

recommendations, but cannot implement them. The federal authority does give some money for textbooks, but even here agreement is lacking in regard to how the 1992-1995 war should be taught (Field notes, October 2, 2008).

Informants repeatedly explained that the national government had no power and the local politicians had a strong hand in the quality of education in each of the cantons. No national curriculum or standards are in place. One of the school directors bluntly said, 'There is no state plan—it is all improvisation,' further stating that the Federal Ministry of Education has not authority (Field notes, October 5, 2008). Yet an official at the Ministry of Education deferred blame because she said there was little the ministry could do because the local politicians have their own ideas that often interfere with social and educational reform (Field notes, December 12, 2008). Legislation was passed in 2003 to address the lack of national curriculum standards, but the government has been incapable of agreement on various issues related to ethnic bias and local control. Consequently few educational reforms have taken place.

Discussion

Teaching for social justice is an elusive and untaught concept in most of Sarajevo's schools. Emotional wounds from the war have not healed, and many families are only vaguely interested in multicultural curricula or in developing children's critical thinking skills to produce social reform. Sarajevo's schools are not teaching about the war, and children are not learning constructive lessons about it. Instead, politicians play to people's fears by arguing for reactionary models of education in which social justice values are not taught in schools. The schools do not teach the causes of the war because it is too sensitive a topic, and the public has not agreed on how to present it. Many teachers

and students, for example, lost family members during the war, and almost all of them have relatives who fled the country during the conflict and have never returned; many of the refugees lost their houses and possessions with no compensation from those who acquired the properties.

There is no national curriculum. In smaller cities and rural areas Christian children are taught that Moslems caused the war, but simultaneously Muslim children are learning that the Christians were its perpetrators. There are fifty schools in the country where children attend public schools that are segregated by religion, with Christian students on one side and Muslim on the another.

Although the university system is adapting the Bologna accreditation process, students believe it has changed little since socialism. That is, students feel they have no voice in curriculum requirements or the scheduling of classes, nor do they have any process for appealing unfair grading of their work. There remain persistent rumors that some faculty do not read student examinations, and the media have reported cases where students pay faculty with money or sex for passing grades.

There are a few bright spots in an otherwise stagnant educational system. The light comes from the few faculty who believe social justice and non-violent change can still occur in Sarajevo. Faculty who teach comparative education, for example, use it as an opportunity to teach youth how peaceful social reform occurs in other countries. Some faculty who have studied in the West have returned to Sarajevo to challenge the status quo. In addition there has been successful education reform through the efforts of the NGO's, such as Soros's Open Society Institute, Save the Children Foundation and the

Education for Peace program (Clarke-Habibi, 2005). These individuals and efforts offer a glimmer of hope for the future. Yet we believe that until there is systemic educational reform, the current generation of children will not be taught to think and act for social justice, and the old ethnic disputes and rivalries will continue.

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