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Dario Spini
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War, Community, and Social Change

Collective Experiences in
the Former Yugoslavia

 Springer

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Acknowledgments

TRACES (the *Transition to Adulthood and collective Experiences Survey*) is a scientific research programme that is intended to compile information on the collective experiences of young adults from the 1990s until the present day. TRACES was developed in two phases. In the first phase, which was financed by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF fund No 101412-103664; Dario Spini, main applicant; Rene Levy, co-applicant), different exploratory analyses were undertaken to prepare the main TRACES study. These analyses were partially a continuation of the research programme on human rights as social representation, directed by Willem Doise (Doise 2002; Spini and Doise 2005), and they included analyses of the data from the *People on War* survey (Greenberg Research Inc. 1999) conducted during and following a collaboration with the *International Committee of the Red Cross* (Elcheroth 2006; Spini et al. 2008). On this basis, a pilot study in four countries from the former Yugoslavia was conducted in December 2004 in collaboration with Dino Djipa and his team from *PRISM Research* in Sarajevo (see Spini et al. 2011). All of these studies clearly indicated that attitudes towards rights were related to contextual factors that include both temporal dimensions (e.g., life trajectories and historical time) and collective dimensions (e.g., collective experiences and collective vulnerability) and that both types of dimensions should be innovatively incorporated into our theories and methods.

As a consequence, a new application was submitted to the Swiss National Science Foundation, which, on the basis of this preparatory work, chose to finance the main TRACES study (SNF fund No 10012-109623; Dario Spini, main applicant; Guy Elcheroth, project coordinator) described in this book. Rachel Fasel, who had already worked on the pilot phase of the TRACES project, was hired as a research assistant for this process and participated actively in all project developments, notably including the development of the maps using geographic information systems (see Annex 2 of Chap. 1). Christophe Hunziker also provided helpful assistance during the process of developing these maps. We should also mention the support provided by Rene Levy and Jean-Marie Le Goff, the co-applicants for this second round of SNF funding. On this basis, the main survey was designed and prepared, again in close collaboration with PRISM and especially with Dino Djipa and Marina Franic-Kadic, who advised us in determining the details of our procedures and who

organised the general logistics of the process. Marina Franic-Kadic was the PRISM project leader for TRACES and provided first-hand documentation of the fieldwork for the study's overall methodological report (Spini et al. 2011).

Moreover, as a result of new collaborations developed as part of the Scientific Co-operation between Eastern Europe and Switzerland (SCOPEs, SNF fund No 100012-109623, Prof. Dario Spini, main applicant; Guy Elcheroth, project coordinator), we were able to further develop the project together with Prof. Dinka Corkalo Biruski (University of Zagreb, Croatia), Prof. Vera Cubela Adoric (University of Zadar, Croatia), and Profs. Gordana Jovanovic and Mirjana Vasovic (University of Belgrade), who were also co-applicants in this SCOPEs project. This collaboration resulted in the integration and development of new research perspectives and led to a more thoughtful analysis of the contextual factors involved in our research.

We must also underline the role of our colleagues from the University of Lausanne. Jean-Marie Le Goff has been very helpful in designing the life calendars. We are indebted to the *Centre for Life Course and Life Styles Studies* (PaVie Center, Universities of Lausanne and Geneva) and to the Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research LIVES for their financial assistance during the project's starting and final phase respectively. We must thank Tatiana Marcacci for her continuous support with all administrative questions. Within the PaVie Center, we have benefited from the thoughtful advice and support of our colleagues Prof. Dominique Joye, Prof. Eric Widmer, Jacques-Antoine Gauthier, and Francesco Giudici. Finally, we would like to thank our colleagues Prof. Thomas David, Prof. Alain Clemence and Prof. Willem Doise for their advice and support during the course of this project. At a more advanced stage, Profs. Daniel Bar-Tal, Sabina Cehajic, and Dusko Sekulic further enriched the project's international network with their experience and expertise, as reflected in their more theoretically oriented contributions to the present book.

This book is not a research text intended for researchers only. The scholars who were involved in the making of this book are committed to conducting research that is relevant to society, and our work together has generated a dialogue with individuals from the media as well as the political and humanitarian arenas. This dialogue has supplemented our academic work with direct, on-the-ground experience and attention to practical issues. This willingness to discuss applied and contextualised issues publicly was visible in the diverse public lectures and exhibition activities that were financed by the *Anthropos* fund at the University of Lausanne and co-ordinated with a great deal of commitment by Sabina Rondic first, and then by Anne-Romaine Favre Zuppinger. Some participants in these dialogues were also willing to write down their thoughts as privileged witnesses of the processes in which we were interested: Svetlana Broz, Ivana Macek, and Florence Hartmann. Their texts are presented here as *Voices*.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to all of the participants who devoted their time to reporting their experiences and expressing their opinions via TRACES. We dedicate this book to them: all of the people from the countries from the former Yugoslavia who survived the wars and the rapid social changes in the region and who were willing to share lessons on how communities can possibly face, resist or overcome collective violence.

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Part I
Introduction

Chapter 1

Towards a Community Approach of the Aftermath of War in the Former Yugoslavia: Collective Experiences, Social Practices, and Representations

Dario Spini, Guy Elcheroth and Rachel Fasel

By the end of the last century, people in the former Yugoslavia were forced to confront massive destruction and extreme violence that occurred in different regions between 1991 and 2001.¹ The breakdown of the Yugoslavian federal state and the brutal violence that accompanied it generated changes in the economic, political, and familial spheres as well as in the social fabric of everyday life. Dramatic social changes heavily influenced individual life trajectories, and traces of these changes remain visible 20 years after the most tragic events. One symbol of these scars is Mostar, which is a city in Bosnia-Herzegovina that was heavily targeted and destroyed, as were other cities that previously had integrated communities such as Sarajevo, Srebrenica, and Vukovar. Let us consider three different episodes that occurred in Mostar in the critical period between 1990 and 2006 as a preliminary illustration of the main issues that will be addressed in this book.

Most people who have commented on this violence and these crimes have emphasised that the events in Bosnia-Herzegovina constituted an “ethnic war”. However, as we will argue in this book, this statement was likely truer after the war than before the war. Ethnic groups for many people were emphasised as membership categories and were not central reference groups (Hyman 1942) in daily life before the war (see Chap. 3 by Sekulic). These groups became shared realities as outcomes of the nationalist propaganda and organised political violence (Elcheroth and Spini 2011). The vast majority of people were forced to endure violence and to position themselves

¹For a short description of the political events that occurred during this period, see Appendix 1, Table 1.4.

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