INTERGENERATIONAL MEMORY, LANGUAGE AND JEWISH IDENTIFICATION OF THE SARAJEVO SEPHARDIM

REFLECTIONS ON BELONGING IN BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA/YUGOSLAVIA, ISRAEL AND SPAIN

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes issues of language and Jewish identification pertaining to the Sephardim in Sarajevo. Complexity of the Sarajevo Sephardi history means that I explore Bosnia-Herzegovina/Yugoslavia, Israel and Spain as possible identity-creating factors for the Sephardim in Sarajevo today.

The main body of the dissertation consists of empirical findings from my semi-structured interviews conducted with nine Sarajevo Sephardim of three generations between 2015 and 2018. I explore how Sephardim belonging to the different generations deal with the challenge of cultivating hybrid and hyphenated identities under tumultuous regime-changes and other destabilizing conditions. The thesis moreover pinpoints my interviewees dilemma of how to call the language that they speak after Yugoslavia collapsed in the 1990s, a period that saw the beginning of the disintegration of Serbo-Croatian as a language, at least in a sociolinguistic sense.

My findings show that the elderly Sephardic generation insist on calling their language Serbo-Croatian, whereas the younger generations do not really know what language they speak – and laugh about the linguistic situation in Sarajevo, or rely on made-up categories such as 'Sarajevan.' Furthermore, only one of my interlocutor's notion of Jewish identity is based on the traditional halachic definition, a definition that hinges on matrilineal descent.

None of the interviewees emphasize the maintenance of Judeo-Spanish as a crucial condition for the continuation of Sephardic culture in Sarajevo. In this understanding, one can be Sephardic without speaking or understanding the Sephardic language. Similarly, the celebration of Jewish holidays is more important for the maintenance of identity across the generations than speaking a Jewish language. At the same time, the individuals also assert alternative forms of being Bosnian, ones that encompass multiple ethnicities and religious ascriptions. All the youngest interviewees however fear that the Sarajevo Sephardic identity will disappear in a near future.

Unique characteristics of Sarajevo Sephardim include the status of the Sephardim and minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina given (1) the discriminatory Bosnian Constitution; (2) the absence of a law in Bosnia on the return of property; (3) the special situation wherein three major ethnic groups, and not just a single, ethnically homogeneous 'majority,' dominate the country; (4) the lack of a well-developed Jewish cultural infrastructure. Despite all of this, a rapprochement between the Sarajevo Jewish Community members and their religion and tradition is taking place. This phenomenon is partly attributable to the Community's young religious activist and *chazan,* Igor Kožemjakin, who has attracted younger members to the religious services.

The wider contention of this work lies in its exploration of the role and function of ideology in creating conditions for the transformation of identity in nationalist, patriotic as well as cosmopolitan terms. Moreover, it is a field-specific contribution. What one can learn by building bridges between the different South Slavic and Sephardic perspectives is explained in my thesis because language as a key identity marker forms a central question throughout the thesis. Thus, this dissertation also speaks to scholars engaged in studying the relationship between language and ethnic and/or religious identification, including those writing about contemporary Bosnia and Herzegovina. Furthermore, my interviewees offer a constructive example to anyone engaged in studying post-conflict identity work.

Keywords: contemporary Sarajevo Jewish culture; language ideology; oral history; intergenerational memory; anti-Semitism and the Islamization in Sarajevo; a comparative and historical approach

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I. INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

Following the expulsion from Catholic Spain in the late 15th century, the Iberian Jews, now known collectively as Sephardim, settled mostly in the European part of the Ottoman Empire. The Sephardim became an integral part of the Balkan urban population. In this thesis, I describe the evolution of Sarajevo's Sephardim through Sarajevo Jewish Community members' reflections on belonging in Bosnia and Herzegovina today (and in Yugoslavia prior to 1991), Israel and in Spain.

A great deal of research on the Sephardim deals with linguistic aspects, more precisely with Judeo-Spanish, that some Sephardi communities preserve until today. Among the many topics that have been explored are phenomena of language contact, language mixing as well as attrition and obsolescence (Astrologo-Fonzi 1992; Shewmon Seitz 2008). In the present study of the Sarajevo Sephardim I shift the focus from the dominant research paradigm, that is the Romance Studies and contact linguistics; to South Slavic Studies and to the linguistic and sociolinguistic status of former Serbo-Croatian.

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The Sarajevo Sephardim have long reflected the complex relationship between language, religion and ethnicities in their own loyalties. Therefore, my interviewees seem to be uniquely positioned to offer their views on the contemporary linguistic situation in Bosnia and

Herzegovina, where the three highly intercomprehensible varieties of a single regional language have transformed into three distinct national standards (Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian). Very little to no research has been conducted on the Sephardi identity formation and their language choice after the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the simultaneous disintegration of the Serbo-Croatian language (cf. Greenberg 2004: 13, 162).

As an ethnographic and sociolinguistic work, my doctoral thesis may well facilitate an understanding of cultural minorities in Europe and of the delicate interplay that occurs in their lives between language and ethnic and/or religious identification. Furthermore, my study of the Sephardim in Sarajevo bridges South-Slavic and Sephardic cultural spheres. In other words, my subjects inhabit both, and from this perspective my work highlights the experiences of the Sephardic community in Sarajevo and its members' identity in post-conflict, post-Yugoslav Bosnia-Herzegovina as a whole. Moreover, I tell the story of Yugoslavia through a lens of Jewish history.

The Sarajevo Sephardic Jewish history is on the margins of Yugoslav area studies, at best. Nevertheless, the history of Yugoslav Jews is linked to broader questions such as Jewish history and identity; Jewish and more specifically Sephardic studies; and the Holocaust. One of the main goals of my research is to tap into an intergenerational cultural memory to tell the story of this marginal group. Many of my interviewees have lived in both former Yugoslavia and the independent Bosnia, while they also form part of the global Sephardic community. Therefore, these subjects have most probably developed ambiguous definitions of religion, language and national belonging.

Even though traumatic experiences in the history of the Sarajevo Sephardic community serve as a background to this work, I focus on what has actually remained Jewish and/or Sephardic rather than what vanished. I analyze the different South Slavic and Sephardic contexts of my

subjects' experience and bring into relief the question of language as a basis of identity. My aim, to put it differently, is to discern and analyze linguistic, ethnographic and historical data in order to describe cultural-historic paths of the Sarajevo Sephardim.

The social transformations the Jewish populations have faced and continue to face in the former Yugoslavia differ from those encountered elsewhere in Europe. This study thus elucidates a little-explored history, and, sheds light on the ways in which historical conditions have shaped contemporary, multi-layered framings of identification among the Jewish population in Sarajevo today.

Other scholars have explored related issues in different contexts. Treichel (2004) applies a similar method when writing about bilingualism and multiculturalism in Wales. On the basis of autobiographical narratives gleaned through interviews, Treichel analyzes language-use among individuals in the context of the discursive, social construction of a collective Welsh identity. Brink-Danan's (2012) anthropological study of contemporary Turkish Jewry provides meaningful parallels to contemporary Jewish identification in Sarajevo. Brink-Danan (2012: 9, 20) notes from his field studies that most Jews he met in Istanbul conceived of themselves as secular Jews and at the same time they assured him that they identify as Sephardim as well. Moreover, Naar's (2016) recent book on Salonican Jews provides avenues of similar developments within the broader Ottoman and post-Ottoman Jewry.

Regarding the structure of this dissertation, *Chapter One* addresses the intergenerational memory and theories of identity formation and sociology of language.

Chapter Two has a chronological flow and is also organized thematically. It focuses on Sephardic ethnicity as part of a larger Jewish nation. To set the stage for my analysis of contemporary data, I then draw a historical sketch of the identity-creating factors 'Spain,' 'Yugoslavia' and 'Israel.' I thereby trace the linguistic and socio-historical setting of Sarajevo Sephardim. Hence, I foreground contemporary Sarajevo Sephardim against historic events or a selected chronology so that it might be possible to grasp the changes in identification, and to pinpoint transitions in the socio-political realities that Sarajevo Jews have experienced. Further, this chapter contains narratives of Sarajevo Sephardim in regards to belonging to 'Spain,' 'Yugoslavia' and 'Israel,' which I comment and reflect upon.

Chapter Three introduces the reader to the position of Sephardim in Sarajevo today. The chapter then focuses on my interviewees' identification with present-day Sarajevo. Among other aspects, I shed light on rescue during the Holocaust in memory of my interviewees. I moreover discuss how they reflect upon the ongoing economic crisis and the phenomenon of Islamization in today's Bosnia-Herzegovina, and specifically in their hometown of Sarajevo, as well as the recurrent anti-Semitism in the city. I explore in this regard, the role of the economic crisis and of the Islamization of the Sarajevan society itself in shaping local Jewish identities.

Chapter Four provides comparisons between Sarajevo Sephardim and the Jewish communities in Belgrade, Salonica and Sofia. I provide a history of the Sephardim in these cities and compare the significance of the Sephardic language and culture to Sephardi subjects living there today.

Chapter Five discusses other cases of linguistic and ethnic identity formation in European minority groups that are drawn from recent studies. These other examples shed light on related

phenomena of the relationship between language and ethnic/religious identification that I explore among the Sarajevo Jews. I refer to these other parallel cases when I hypothesize and make conclusions regarding Sarajevo Sephardim. The idea is to see how the other cases are helpful for understanding my case study, or at least seeing its main phenomenological contours.

Chapter Six provides a summary of the main arguments made throughout the thesis. Thereby, the chapter is a continuation or an elaboration of points I have already introduced earlier. This final chapter moreover returns to the questions I explore in this thesis and draws conclusions in regard to my findings.

II. METHODOLOGY

I have chosen a qualitative approach anchored in the method of participant observation to be able to grasp more fully a wide spectrum of identity conceptions among my subjects. The purpose of my research is to seek a profound understanding of the informants' approach towards a Jewish identity and minority membership. The core of the thesis thus consists of my empirical findings from interviews with Sephardim in Sarajevo. I combine these empirical findings with the theoretic framework developed in chapter one.

My search for interviewees began when I contacted the Sarajevo Jewish Community Centre – specifically its president, Jakob Finci, and its non-residential rabbi, Eliezer Papo, in May 2013. I am aware that because I sought informants through a Jewish institution that they would most probably identify as Jews. Still, I wanted to find out how such interviewees would understand Jewish identity. Moreover, I did not assume that because my subjects presumably have Jewish roots, that they affirmed Jewish identity *a priori*.

Since I started this research in October 2014, I have carried it out on six different visits to Sarajevo, each time for one week. In addition to immersing myself in secondary literature, my arguments and conclusions are based on semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with nine Sarajevo Sephardim of different generations that I conducted between 2014 and 2018. The questionnaire is provided in Appendix B. In Appendix A, I provide socio-demographic data such as age, place of birth, occupation, and linguistic skills of my interviewees, in addition to recent population census figures. I conducted all interviews as conversations and did not collect responses to written questionnaires. Moreover, I circulated a tentative quantification (Appendix C) of the prospects for the Sephardic identification and language according to community members in Sarajevo, Belgrade, and Salonica. The purpose of my tentative quantification was

to link and compare the discussion on Sarajevo Sephardim with other Sephardic communities in the Balkans (Belgrade and Salonica).

I did not anticipate any particular research-results and did not direct my informants to select or otherwise furnish ready-made answers (Heyl 2001: 371; Kvale & Brinkmann 2009).[1] In general, I sought to test whether existing theoretical concepts regarding identity and its construction were valid or at least partly useful in light of the interviews themselves, and not the other way around (cf. Esaiasson et al. 2012)

I conducted the interviews in Bosnian, recording them with either a video camera or iPhone. A local translator and a cameraman assisted me during the interviews. Using this source material, I produced a short film, *A Sarajevo Jewish Story* (See Appendix D)[2]. When I needed clarification while conducting the interviews, I communicated with the interviewees in English. One of my interlocutors, Yehuda Kolonomos, had lived in Oslo, Norway for 12 years so we were able to speak in Norwegian and Swedish (my mother tongue), which are mutually comprehensible.

Whenever it was necessary to ask further questions, I carried out additional conversations with the subjects via Skype, e-mail, and Facebook messenger. I informed all prospective interviewees about the research and its objectives, and they freely decided whether they wanted to participate. I offered no monetary or other material compensation to the interviewees.

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[1] A challenge with narratives of the past and present, i.e., oral history, is the possibility that the researcher influences the narrative in a certain direction (cf. Niethammer 1994: 209). Nevertheless, the method offers a contribution to the relationship between individual and collective memory, to the process of remembrance and to identity constructions through historic storytelling.

[2] The reason why I made a film with the interviews was in order to get a more comprehensive experience and understanding of the interviewees themselves (by for instance capturing the interviewees' body-language). Moreover, I wanted to impact audiences beyond the academia. The film has been screened in academic as well as non-academic settings. For instance, at Goldsmiths, University of London (7.12.2017), at Bajit, the house for Jewish culture in Stockholm (1.2.2018), and at Centro Sefarad Israel in Madrid (5.3.2018). It was moreover part of the BH Film Program at Sarajevo Film Festival (August 10-17, 2018). Linda Jiménez, at the English corner of Radio Sefarad made an interview with me about the film: http://www.radiosefarad.com/jewish-history-in-sarajevo-with-director-jonna-rock/.

As Judeo-Spanish is hardly spoken among Sarajevo Jews, the interviews were not conducted in this language. Erna Kaveson Debevec, David Kamhi, Jakob Finci and Moris Albahari are the last Judeo-Spanish speakers in Sarajevo.[3] They all belong to the older generation of Sephardim in Sarajevo.[4]

It is necessary to pause briefly, in order to explain my understanding of the deceptively straightforward term 'multigenerational.' I see a generation as a group of persons whose formative years have been shaped by same or similar major experiences, big changes and events. It is therefore not about one's age per se, but about the social experiences that are decisive for certain persons. In the case of my subjects, they have all lived in one or more different political systems that were or are in force within the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Of course, the individuals belonging to the same generation can hold different interpretations of the same experiences because individuals do not necessarily comprise a homogenous group.

Brubaker (2016: 138) moreover points out that a person's ethnicity often is dependent of the history of one's parents and grandparents. This is why he defines ethnicity as trans- and multigenerational, a perspective with which I concur.

> This means that the scope for culturally legitimate change or choice of racial or ethnic identification is bounded by the range of one's socially ratified ancestry. (…) The lack of an established language for thinking about race in subjectivist terms and the authority of ancestry over racial and ethnic classifications make it more difficult for those without the requisite ancestry to choose or change their racial and ethnic identifications (Brubaker 2016: 139).

Brubaker (2016: 141) argues however, that the ethnic mixing nowadays' has made it easier to identify with more than one ethnicity, especially since ethnic mixing increasingly is understood

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[3] For comparison to the situation in Sarajevo, see Gerson Sarhon (2011) and Altabev (2003) for a discussion regarding the decline of Judeo-Spanish in Turkey.
[4] *The last of the Sarajevo* Ladinos (2018) is my 04:21 minutes long documentary with English subtitles: https://vimeo.com/286967723. In this short film Erna Kaveson Debevec and Jakob Finci are having a conversation in Judeo-Spanish, reflecting upon an ending of their lives.

in positive terms – i.e., that there is an appreciation of hybridity and mixed ancestry that in turn gives the individuals the choice to *do* and not merely to *have* an ethnicity (Brubaker 2016: 142). As Brubaker writes: *(…) all identity is performative* (Brubaker 2016: 145, emphasis mine). This indicates of course, that ethnicity is an elastic and, in some ways artificial or at least constructed category.

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A challenge with this research is that I am not 'one of them.' I am neither from Yugoslavia nor Sephardic. This can of course be an advantage as well – because I have an 'outside perspective.' While conducting the interviews, I did not introduce myself as someone who has a Jewish background, though the interviewees asked me about my identity and they were possibly less suspicious of my motives when I told them that I was indeed Jewish.

Besides, the language situation in Scandinavia (where I am from) today, similarly as in Bosnia with Bosnian-Serbian-Croatian, consists – to a certain degree – of three inter-comprehensible languages: Swedish-Danish-Norwegian.[5] In this respect, one could say that I have an 'insider feel' for the subject as well. I am of course aware that the researcher plays a

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[5] Bosnian, Serbian, Croatian, as well as Montenegrin are based on the same Neoštokavian dialect (Ekavian and Ijekavian). These languages are structurally identical and inter-comprehensible to 95%. The situation with the Scandinavian languages is different even if the languages are partly inter-comprehensible. Swedes understand almost everything in Bokmål (which is one of the standard Norwegian languages) but they have difficulties to understand Nynorsk (which is the other Norwegian standard). Bokmål is similar to 'clearly prounounced Danish.' Swedes living in the south of Sweden, in Skåne, can better understand Danish than Swedes from other parts of the country. Usually, however, Swedes understand Danish only if they are in contact with Danish-speakers. This is surprising, since Swedish and Danish are both Eastnordic languages whereas Nynorsk is a Westnordic language.

strong, shaping role in the research process, and that the interviews do not generate some totally static, transparent, and objective "Truth," but take form out of a social dynamic between the researcher and the interviewees (cf. Amit 2000: 11; Heyl 2001: 373; Lamnek 2010: 14). In other words: I acknowledge that I am part of the research-process – when I discuss with my interviewees and interpret my findings – as well. I moreover think that my 'insider feel' has affected my data-collection and my interpretation of the data in a subjective way. Gammerl (2015: 153) writes in this context,

> (...) one has to be aware of the interrelations between the feelings pertinent to the period under research and the emotions generated during the research process. These are intertwined by the intricate dynamics of memory, as well as by the (re)constructive historiographical endeavor itself. (…) Instead of pushing aside these entanglements, or empathetically reducing their complexity, researchers should, rather, reflect upon them (Gammerl 2015: 153).

When I analyze my interviews, I consider moments in which me and the interview-partners shared non-verbal feelings (cf. Gammerl 2015: 156). Moreover, as Lagerholm (2005: 55-56) points out, the environment of the interview can influence the interview situation. I have found it helpful to conduct interviews in a venue where the interviewees feel relaxed and 'at home.' For that reason, I conducted most interviews at the Sarajevo Jewish Community facilities or at the Viennese Café in the Hotel Evropa[6], also in Sarajevo. I moreover held interviews at informants' homes when this was suggested by them (cf. Heyl 2001: 370).

The narratives I analyze here aim to give voice to different experiences that the interviewees have in relation to Jewish identity and its formation in Sarajevo. I believe that the interviews successfully evoked the subjects' memories. Bridging the individual experience of identity construction and the collective history of that construction through the collection and analysis of biographical data has been one of my central objectives.

I selected data that I find meaningful in relation to the interviewees' conceptions of the various

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[6] Hotel Evropa was the place/'character' of Danis Tanović's award-winning film *Death in Sarajevo* (2016).

identity-creating factors: Bosnia-Herzegovina/Yugoslavia, Israel and Spain. My interpretations concerning these data are derived partly from the theoretical framework – explained in chapter one – that is at the basis of the present work.

III. REFERENCE GROUP AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The interviewees come from a variety of professional backgrounds. They include music students, a tour guide, a coordinator of humanitarian and cultural activities, a university senior assistant, and a counselor involved with ethnic-religious cooperation. Many from the generation of those who are 56 years and older are pensioners.

There were many persons belonging to the older generation who showed interest in participating in my study. The interviewees belonging to the younger generations however were not as easy to find. Three of my six interlocutors from the two younger generations are very active in the Jewish Community: one of them is *chazan* (cantor), another is responsible for working with the youth, and the third is working for the Jewish NGO *La Benevolencia.* The other three interviewees said that they have a strong Jewish affiliation and therefore find my work important and wanted to participate.

All three interviewees from the youngest generation gained a Bachelors' degree in music at Sarajevo University. In the second generation, one of the three had, likewise, studied music in Sarajevo while the other two had both completed a one-year Jewish studies programme at Paidea, the European Institute for Jewish Studies in Sweden. Thus, the interviewees from younger generation groups are not only small in number but also homogeneous vis-à-vis education. It is important, however, to remember that according to the latest 2013 population census, 282 people in Bosnia and Herzegovina declared themselves as Jews and in total the Jewish Community has 880 members (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 6.5.2017). Therefore, my nine interlocutors, no matter how homogenous in background they may be, make up quite a significant proportion of the Community.

Furthermore, the interviewees belong to three generations. First, there are those who had lived most of their lives in Yugoslavia. Secondly, I spoke to people who had lived in both

Yugoslavia and Bosnia-Herzegovina and, finally, to those who had lived only in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Some interviewees have lived in Israel for many years, others not.

With regard to the reference group in Sarajevo, I assume that because of the early immigration from Spain took place long ago, in the wake of 1492, the first language of my subjects is Serbo-Croatian or another ex-Serbo-Croatian language and not Castilian or some other Iberian language. I also suppose that the issue of language choice became vital for my subjects when Yugoslavia disintegrated in the 1990s and establishing one's relationship to the emergent post-Yugoslav polities became imperative. The Sephardim, who had declared themselves as Yugoslavs in Yugoslavia, had to build a new identity from predetermined labels and categorizations that the successor states presented to them. I therefore asked my interviewees what language they choose or how they choose to label the language they speak – considering the fact that they do not follow the usual language division between Orthodox Christians (who often speak Serbian), Catholics (Croatian), and Muslims (Bosnian)? Underlying this question is my suspicion that an individual's language choice is most likely a core element in his or her identity creation, and is presumably linked to the subject's notions of what it means to be both a member of a religious and ethnic minority as well as a citizen alongside members of the ethnic and religious majorities.

Furthermore, I consider aspects – such as for example religion – that may be important to the construction of the Jewish identity of my reference group. I ask the respondents how they consider themselves to be perceived by others, including fellow Orthodox, Catholic and Muslim citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina? Also, what relationship, do the younger and middle Jewish generations and the elderly generation have to Judaism as a religion, as distinct from Jewish ethnic identity?

In the process, I explore the cross-national or 'double identities' lived during the Yugoslav

period, whereby one person could claim to be a Yugoslav but also a Jew, Serb or Croat at the same time (cf. Kerkkänen 2001). I presume that the very notion of double identities remains an integral part of Jewish identity creation even in a new post-Yugoslav multinational context, and might be a crucial denominator of self-perception.

A related question I pose is, how have my subjects' identity-conceptions changed during the past 30 years, which witnessed the collapse of Yugoslavia and the emergence of an independent Bosnia-Herzegovina. I ask how have the interviewees dealt with the radical political changes that have accompanied the fall of Yugoslavia and the rise of new states in its place, and specifically how have they adapted, and how do they continue to adapt, to the new Bosnia and Herzegovina while maintaining their Jewish culture? It could be that people from my reference group who feel emotional ties with the now-dissolved Yugoslavia feel that they belong to two different systems of societies. For that reason, I probe the following questions:

- Do these persons, who have experienced a deep political transformation of their environment show signs of a split and/or double and/or shifting identities?

- What does the interaction between the three generations – the ones that experienced life in Yugoslavia and the ones that did not – concerning this particular issue reveal about their respective self-understandings and their respective patterns of identity construction?

The collapse of Yugoslavia and the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina have, I hypothesize, reformulated the content of identity creation. In that respect, it is conceivable that discussing the process of identity-building and self-conception in the Sephardic community in Sarajevo could create a model of deliberative democracy in the new formation of the ethno-political identity of the Bosnian state. The intergenerational dialogue that I explore here can help to build a greater degree of self-understanding of how individual subjects negotiate multiple possible identities in order to build a sense of individual and collective belonging, which is a crucial

prerequisite for constructive cultural diversity.

In the final part of my analysis, I evaluate whether the research may influence the Jewish community in Sarajevo – and thereby the entire multi-ethnic community of Sarajevo of which the Jews are a part – especially in terms of its future development. Questions I pose are: do the youngsters display a will and capacity to learn old and new patterns of identity? And if so, how might their self-understanding change through their engagement in the present research?

IV. EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

As mentioned previously, my analysis is largely based on data collected in semi-structured interviews with Sarajevo Sephardim of different generations. In addition, I use a variety of secondary sources, including relevant theoretical works, as well as primary contemporary newspapers sources. The analysis of the interviews aims to ascertain and describe meaning from the informants' subjective interpretations and experiences. Thus, the analysis is not about objective 'facts' – which in turn are also more or less constructed – but rather about memory and the role of memory in creating meaning (cf. Zahavi 2003: 9, 42).

In this connection, the philosopher Paul Ricoeur (1985) writes that it is by constructing narratives that people contribute to a process of culture-building and that by the same token a personal identity is a narrative of the self (cf. Ricoeur 1992). In this view, the narrative thus constructs our 'selves' in relation to and interacting with social entities, that is with communities. Therefore, I discuss how the self-conceptions of my interlocuters are constructed within macro-level-politics in the context of socio-political debates on language and ethnicity.

I interpret the identity conceptions of my interviewees in Sarajevo from a phenomenological point of view. I especially reflect upon their conscious involvement in identity construction. I ask, for example, what is the relation between the new identities that the younger and middle generations of Jews are forming and the Jewishness to which the older generation feels connected? Laying bare these concepts has the potential of clarifying the links between the different generations of Sarajevo Sephardim and of allowing us to perceive their shared reflections upon the meaning that Jewish identity has for the Jews of Sarajevo today. My goal is to narrate about how my interview-subjects actually conceive of the world around them, rather than interpolating their experience from ready-made theories, in order to produce new

knowledge.

Writing about national identity practices among Jews living in Germany today, the sociologist Judith Gerson (2001: 180) asks in what way do people experience identity formation. This question may imply that we are constructing cultural patterns independently. With hindsight, however, we know that values can be constructed by 'others' and therefore imposed upon the individual's process of self-formation. Thus, I will analyze power-structures in the old (former Yugoslavia) and new environment (Bosnia and Herzegovina) in which my interviewees have lived – in order to elaborate upon what has been imposed by 'others' and in which way their identities are self-elected.

My research focuses on the phenomenological and experiential, in that it tries to understand the world as my interviewee/subjects understand it. In harmony with phenomenological principles, I emphasize several dimensions of the subjects' life experiences, namely that their experiences are embodied, dependent on time and space, and mitigated by relationships with others.

I posed pre-formulated questions to my interviewees, but also asked relevant follow up questions where appropriate. In this way, the pre-formulated questions served more as an initial basis for discussion and a way for my interviewees to freely elaborate on them, rather than as strict boundaries of the responses. In my evaluation of the informant's words, I seek to characterize the main substance of their experiences and I leave out less crucial aspects (eidetic

reduction) (Zahavi 2003, 54; Fejes and Thornberg 2009). In my analysis, I aim to furnish a summary of the informants' subjective interpretations and experiences.

When translating interviews into English I convey the interviewees' statements as accurately as possible. In addition to recording those statements I took notes of my own reflections during the interview, including notes on my 'participant observations,' in order to be able to reconstruct the quality of my interactions and analyze them in depth later (cf. Heyl 2001: 377).

Needless to say, I can describe an identity-conception of my informant but I cannot know how it comes that his/her conception is what it is; in other words, I cannot reconstruct – at least not fully – the motivation(s) behind his/her behavior. I nevertheless endeavour to map both spoken and unspoken parameters for identity conceptions that frame the interviewees' narratives. The reason for this is to identify any latent content of the statements whenever possible, and to demonstrate the general as well as the specific structure of the subjects' conceptions of identity.

Phenomenological and inductive research can have negative connotations. For example, as my sample size is small, it may invite criticism if I use these lived experiences to generalize to a broader Sarajevo Jewish population too much. Although my interviewees represent just a small sample, I assume that they can provide the reader with a qualitatively rich idea of contemporary Jewish perceptions of self, community, and political belonging in Sarajevo. I consider my interviewees as forming a multigenerational reference group rather than representing all possible responses to the question of Jewish identification. Moreover, I see my research results as offering a perspective, rather than a truth claim, much less an exclusive one.

Furthermore, there is more going on in my research than merely studying 'phenomenon.' I focus on the transformative processes in the identity formation of my reference group, and in

order to understand these processes I explore their individual perceptions. I see the subjective perceptions as deriving from a place between individual and collective processes (cf. Kleinman & Fitz-Henry 2007: 57-58, 60). Subjectivity-making, as described in this thesis, is thus a socially constructed process.

CHAPTER ONE

THEORETICAL POINTS OF COMMENCEMENT

1.1 Intergenerational Memory

I begin this chapter by discussing works on memory. As this literature is vast, I focus on studies I believe are most relevant for my discussion on intergenerational memory among the Sarajevo Sephardim.

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Millions of people may hold notions of the past that differ from those constructed by historians; indeed, "[non-historians] even have a different way of arriving at that past" (Nandy 1995: 44). So instead of bringing those people who are outside history into history by correcting their perceptions in light of historians' empirical reconstructions of the past, one could argue that there is a legitimate non-historic approach to the past, one characterized, for example, by looking at the past through myths (cf. Nandy 1995: 44, 47). Conversely, historians attempt to demythologize the past by sticking to its 'realities' and also to (re)discover evidence to what has been forgotten (Connerton 1989: 14; Nandy 1995: 48).

The actual process of remembering is inter-subjective. The person remembering is a member of a community that communicates in a certain language or languages, and maintains traditions and commemoration practices. This social context – language, traditions and practices of commemoration – in the process of remembering, in turn, enables the individual to recall his/her memories (Connerton 1989: 4-5; Ricoeur 2004: 404). As Connerton (1989: 45) argues, "rites have the capacity to give value and meaning to the life of those who perform them." Thus, the collective memory is a construction (in forms of traditions, holidays and so on) of members of a certain group who find the content meaningful. For instance, Jewish holidays such as Hanukkah, Pesach and Purim entail a remembrance of the historical and/or mythological Jewish past as their point of reference. In the words of Nora (1998: 610), "(…) today's commemorations have become *lieux de mémoire* (…)" and the interpretation of different commemorations, and thus of the past, are in the hands of various parties (such as politicians, private groups, and other organizations) (Nora 1998: 610, 616).

Moreover, memories (as commemorations) construct the collective memory in the sense that memory is a form of a public discourse built upon a group's understanding of, and continuing commemoration of a historical past. There can be different memories of the past across generations. These, in turn, may shape a broader communal memory (Connerton 1989: 3, 48; Ricoeur 2004: 405). In other words, the memory that a certain group holds in the present is its 'history' and thus part of its present as well.

> What matters [in memory] is not what the past imposes on us but what we bring to it. (…) History proposes but the present disposes, and what happens often differs from what was intended (Nora 1998: 618).

In the process of remembering, the past and the present are thus interconnected. As Connerton (1989: 2) argues: "(…) we may note that our experience of the present very largely depends upon our knowledge of the past" (Connerton 1989: 2). Nandy (1995: 44) maintains, however, that while seeing and constructing the past through an historical perspective is common,

actually the historicization of memory is, as already showed, not the only way to construct and understand the past. Clearly, there is not one single true and objective past, but rather various and sometimes competing constructions of the past and with different empirical data to support these constructions (Nandy 1995: 49; Brubaker 2016: 64, 72). As Nora (1998: 637) elaborates:

> To ask what the national *lieux de mémoire* might have been a hundred and fifty years ago or what they will be in the next century, beyond the turn of the millennium, would be nonsensical, nothing more than a classroom exercise or intellectual game. The present selection [of memories to relate] makes sense only for the present moment (Nora 1998: 637).

The writing of *oral history* often seeks to give a voice to the memory of subordinate individuals by reconstructing their life stories (Connerton 1989: 18). I consider it also as a means of probing the phenomena of identity and its construction. As Connerton (1989: 21) remarks:

> The narrative of one life is part of an interconnecting set of narratives; it is embedded in the story of those groups from which individuals derive their identity (Connerton 1989: 21).

Additionally, oral history allows us to deal with the past independently of objective and academic history (cf. Nandy 1995: 49-50, 53).

In Judaism, the past is often looked upon through biblical myths. A mythical past is in fact crucial for many Jews who observe Jewish traditions (hold kosher, celebrate Passover and so on). These traditions form a shared cultural and religious memory for the Jews who perform

them. In my oral history of Sarajevo Jews, I give voice and explore untold stories, and analyze, for example, whether a mythical past is relevant.

In the section that follows, I move away from 'memory' and overview scholarly reference to specific counters of 'Jewish history.' I do this in order to bring my findings (with regard to ethnicity, language choice, and religion among my subjects) closer to a Jewish historical consciousness. Specifically, I make references to approaches to Jewish identity in pre-modern and modern times that have been proposed by scholars in the field(s) of Judaica. I discuss how Jewish identity in the pre-modern diasporas was based on the idea that Jews should 'return' to the land of Zion, present-day Israel. In modern times, however, Jewish identity became de-nationalized as the Jews acquired civil rights in their new homelands. I moreover elaborate upon the concept of a Jewish 'religion,' which was, I show, invented in modern times. The section reviews the relevant literature and places my own argument regarding Sarajevo Jews in relation to it.

1.2 The Specific Contours of Jewish Culture and History

Funkenstein (1993: 254) writes that the Jewish historical consciousness changed in line with modernization (which took place by the late 18th and the 19th centuries). Specifically, while the Jews acquired civil rights in their respective new homelands, they also had to de-nationalize their Jewish identity from their civic roles (cf. Sharot 2011: 170). As a result, Jews were discursively forced to identify themselves with the state they were living in and as Funkenstein (1993: 256) argues: "They lost the sense of being in exile. (…) As such, they did not want to have an open-ended, independent history, but only a past." In contrast, the premodern

perception of Judaism was very much influenced by the idea that all Jews should return from the exile and rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem (Funkenstein 1993: 79).

Yerushalmi (1996: 85) asserts that modern Jewish historiography emerged when the Jews 'came out of the ghetto' and assimilated with their respective majority populations. Yerushalmi (1996: 88) writes:

> The German and the French historian had a vital and honored place in the process of national awakening. At the very same time, however, Europe was demanding of the Jews alone that, as a condition for their emancipation, they cease to regard themselves as a nation and redefine themselves in purely religious terms. (…) Accordingly, they reconstructed a Jewish past in which the national element was all but suppressed, and the hope for national restoration seemed an anachronism (Yerushalmi 1996: 88).

Thereby, another difference between premodern and modern perceptions of Jews is that they, the Jews, traditionally did not have a codified 'religion,' and thus it is necessary to explain how Judaism (though not termed as such until modern times) became a 'religion.'

Batnitzky (2011: 13) explains that 'religion' in the modern context is a German Protestant category that does not correspond with Jewish thought. The philosopher Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786) made a crucial argument that pushed Judaism into this modernity. He argued that the individual Jew is separate from the Jewish collective politically, but not theologically.

> Mendelssohn defines the very category of Jewish religion by separating Judaism from politics. And he does so by defining as apolitical something that had until then been understood at least in part as political: Jewish law (Batnitzky 2011: 18).

Mendelssohn thus makes the claim that the Jewish religion, unlike Christianity, is a matter of behavior and thought rather than belief (Batnitzky 2011: 20, 22, 27). Funkenstein (1993: 220) maintains that:

> (…) "the Jewish Question" was born in the nineteenth century. It was fathered by the modern, national state, before whose laws all citizens are supposed to be equal. (…) No matter, therefore, how "enlightened" or religiously indifferent a medieval Jew may have been, he still could not aspire to obtain equal rights: not because he was discriminated against, but because the very term was outside the medieval political universe of discourse (Funkenstein 1993: 220).

Modernity was thus on the one hand inclusive of the Jews, but this inclusivity was oftentimes conditioned by the Jews' adoption of the dominant culture and national identity (Pianko 2015: 20). "(…) many reinterpreted their Jewish identity as a purely religious one and eschewed any Jewish national, or what came later to be known as Zionist, identity" (Sharot 2011: 170). Another reason for why the Jewish identity transformed into a religious identification is the decline of ethnic cultural elements – such as Yiddish and Judeo-Spanish – which in turn became the basis for a non-religious Jewish ethnicity (Sharot 2011: 172). Funkenstein (1993: 232) moreover elaborates upon anti-Semitism in modern times – pinpointing that the anti-Semite disliked the Jew who had 'almost become one of us'; despite the fact that Jewish people could never, according to the anti-Semite, truly assimilate. Many of these assumptions were shared by Zionists too. Theodor Herzl, for instance, who was the founder of modern political Zionism, (…) "shared the confusion between emancipation, assimilation and integration which characterized his century (…)" (Funkenstein 1993: 234). Additionally, Herzl argued in *The Jewish State* (1896) that the only way for Jews to be emancipated would be for them to have a state on their own, because in the diaspora they were not given the chance or the time to assimilate (Funkenstein 1993: 234).

Sharot (2011: 169) argues, however, that since the end of the 18th century not only did Judaism become more denationalized, but it was also more commonly the case that Jews identified as Jews either in ethnic or in religious terms. The basis for this identification can be traced back to the *Tanakh* or Hebrew Bible. Sharot (2011: 169) writes that "(…) the Tanakhic focus on the history of a people meant that once the process of secularization began, it became possible for Jews to identify with the people without the religion." Pianko (2015: 25) writes in this regard, that premodern religious communities – such as the Jewish one in question – were looking at the world through myths, and as she maintains:

> Nationalism introduced a shift away from each individual viewing him / herself as part of a
> cosmic theological narrative of the relationship between God and the Jewish people. Instead,

the nation is conceived as a collective secular group that marches forward together over time, developing its particular characteristics and shaping its historical milieu (Pianko 2015: 25-26).

Yerushalmi (1996: 99) clarifies that because of the integration of Jews in the diaspora and because of today's Israeli nation-state, Jews have become part of the 'mainstream history,' although their perceptions of their origins are often described in mythical/biblical terms.

Having discussed how the elements of Jewish culture that were interwoven in premodern centuries have been forced apart in modern times, I want to link these findings to the case study I am examining in this work. I argue that this historical development that I have described above has led to a context in which Jews in places like Sarajevo have had to deal with both a sense of the lingering interwovenness of these historical threads, and the modern compartmentalization of those elements (e.g., religion and ethnicity) into distinct categories that are counter-intuitive from the standpoint of Jewish experience.

In the following section, I continue to give definitions and explanations of the categories 'identity,' 'nationality,' and 'religion' and what I see as their (variable) relationship. I use these categories when I speak of my subjects in Sarajevo and it is therefore relevant to clarify their meanings in a broader context. Thus, the section focuses on the role of different sub-identities within the larger interplay of language and politics.

1.2.1 The Relationship Between the Different National, Ethnic, Religious and Cultural Sub-Identities

There is no scholarly consensus on the meaning of categories such as 'identity,' 'ethnicity,' 'nation,' 'religion.' However, I see categorization of this kind as necessary in order to make my argumentation and analysis clearer. Identity, according to Brubaker (2004: 4, 44), is a dynamic process of self-understanding and connectedness. Thereby, Brubaker (2004: 3-4) prefers a relational and dynamic analysis of the social world and is concerned with how identification 'works.' This is why he thinks words such as identification, self-understanding, and connectedness ought to replace the word 'identity,' a comparatively static and totalizing concept, in analytical writing on culture (Brubaker 2004: 4, 44). Moreover, Brubaker (2004: 4, 6) reflects upon the concepts of nation and ethnicity as perspectives on the world instead of as 'beings' in the world. By avoiding reification and underscoring human agency, he asserts, it will be easier not to take the concept of 'groups' for granted (Brubaker 2004: 7-8).

Furthermore, Brubaker (2004: 9-11) points to the fact that definitions of ethnicity and nationality are artifacts of political, institutional, and legal construction that originate and receive their legitimation from 'above,' so much so that they may not reflect lived realities 'on the ground' (Brubaker 2004: 17, 23). Brubaker (2004: 24), however, does not suggest that ethnicity is a purely elitist phenomenon; culturally distinct groups can originate and exist at non-elite levels, and shape society too. Nevertheless, Brubaker's (2004: 48, 54) analysis suggests that the formation of closed groups is not the only possible outcome. In particular, he highlights the development of boundary-crossing networks (taking place through bilingualism, mixed marriage, etc.) that confound the normative models of ethnic-territorial-cultural-political coextension.

When speaking of 'nations,' it is relevant to point out that nation-states, despite their stated ideal are usually heterogeneous (*inter alia* linguistically and ethnically), and hence cannot unambiguously represent 'one people.' The concept of 'nation' is oftentimes anchored in its association with a certain territory, and on the state's power to grant (or deny) a person (regardless of ethnic and linguistic status) residence within this territory (Hobsbawm 1990: 19). While it is common to require mastery of a majority language to acquire a full-fledged citizenship, this is not always the case – in Germany, for example, mastery of the national language is required, while in Sweden, it is not.

When speaking of 'religion' it is generally a world view based on specific texts; the Jewish religion, for example, is based on the Old Testament, while Christianity on the New Testament. Typically, the identities of people can often be classified according to the following categories: national, ethnic, religious and cultural. All of these categories can be closely related. In fact, one could say that culture encompasses all the others, and that nationality and ethnicity can be almost synonymous depending on the group. These categories may however serve as markers of identification for people who share the same background. The categories may, by the same token, help us to articulate what behaviors and cultural practices nourish different identities, as for example how use of a language can foster a linguistic identity. To consciously prefer one category of identity to another, to exclude one or more of the categories in order to switch identities entails an important if obvious element of individual choice. Wellros (2010: 157) however points out, that oftentimes ethnic and national identities converge for the largest ethnic group in any given country. The same well may be true for dispersed ethnic groups, such as the Jews, whose cultural traditions define them as a 'nation' (Heb., *'am* or *goy*) even outside of the homeland.

I substantiate the convergence of ethnicity and nationality among my subjects by using Israel as an example, as it is considered a Jewish country, specifically as the nation-state of the Jewish People (Israel does not have an official religion). In Israel today, the Jewish majority constitutes the basis for civic and political commonality. In the Hebrew Bible, Numbers 23:9 articulates Israelite nationality as follows: "For from the top of the rocks I see [Israel], and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." Hastings (1997: 187) argues that Jews who do not live in Israel can identify themselves on a national level with their native countries, as for example Bosnia and Herzegovina. "Most nation-states in fact include groups of people who do not belong to its core culture or feel themselves to be part of a nation so defined" (Hastings 1997: 3). Group identities, however, as the Jewish one in question, may also bring with them a loyalty towards the State of Israel even though one lives 'abroad.'

In the aftermath of the Holocaust, the Jewish nation-state Israel was established in 1948. This process was hastened by a flurry of nationalistic movements around Europe at the time (cf. Schoeps 1997: 120-125; Avineri 2013: 118). While Israel officially is a secular Jewish state, religious traditions are incorporated into state practices in some cases. For example, one cannot have a secular wedding and those who wish to have such a wedding currently must travel abroad to marry outside of the chief rabbinate. There are also restrictions on the use of public transportations and visiting public places like movie theatres and restaurants on Shabbat and other Jewish holidays. The import of pork and other non-kosher products to Israel is also restricted (Yonah 2005: 106).

These contradictions in Israeli society between, on the one hand, an 'official secularism' and, on the other hand, – and as an example – the authority of the chief rabbinate, make for an interesting backdrop to the struggles of self-definition that my own subjects in Sarajevo have faced as they have encountered different regimes (Yugoslav, Bosnian, European, majority-

national, minority [Jewish]-communal, etc.) in their lives and those regimes' often conflicting definitions of Jewishness.

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I now move from clarifying terms such as 'memory,' 'identity,' 'religion,' and 'nationality' to a discussion of 'language and identity' and the influence of 'others' in Jewish identity formation. Later on, when I use my interviewees' testimonies to construct the history, culture, religion, memory and language of Sarajevo Sephardim, 'language' as a basis of identity will be at the very center of the discussion.

My interviewees' perceptions are based on their experience of an interrelation between the Jewish minority- and the Sarajevan majority-culture(s). In the following section, I especially pinpoint an ideal of cultural hybridity that can arise from participation in different identity-creating processes – as in the case of Sarajevo's Jews. I moreover explore the role of 'others' and subjects' level of 'awareness' of different identity-constructing processes in their lives.

1.3 Language, Identity and the Influence of the Subjects' Perception of the 'Other'

Scholars have written about social and personal identities, and have claimed that identities are a result of socialization processes, that is to say, that individuals perceive their personal identity as a synthesis of different roles that they play in their interactions with other individuals. As Bergen and Braithwaite (2009:169) claim: "[When] we are in dialogue with another, we are engaged in the process of identity construction – simultaneously constructing our identities as 'selves' and our relational identities with others" (Bergen & Braithwaite 2009: 169). The fact that groups of people create their own internal cultural patterns by themselves, and do not have an explicit etiquette whereby the identity of the group is written, can actually strengthen identity by making it relatively inaccessible to outsiders. Against this backdrop, identities can function as starting points from which people position themselves and engage in politics (Alcoff 2000: 234-235). However, *a posteriori*, we can see that we are not always the creators of cultural patterns ourselves since identities can be constructed by others, and therefore can be imposed.

The social and personal aspect of identities can be seen from subjective and objective perspectives. Subjectively seen, social identity concerns (among other things) the view of oneself as a member of various groups (Wellros 2010: 116-117). Alternatively stated, social identity is the consciousness of one's involvement in social groups and the emotions such involvement evokes. Objectively seen, social identity is one's membership in different social groups, as that membership is determined from outside (Magnusson 1989: 168). Social identities are, according to Wellros (2010: 118, 171), most clear when groups oppose each other. Sociologists and psychologists occasionally use the terminology *in-group* and *out-group* to denote the more common use of *we/us* vs. *them/they*. A positive membership in an in-group presumes that the objective and the subjective social identity coincide, i.e. that the group-members actually feel belonging and solidarity with the group (Wellros 2010: 117).

That social construction implies the possibility of identity-change is, to my mind, one of its principal and most prominent features from the standpoint of human sociology and anthropology. In this regard, it is important to take a closer look and to critically analyze the 'self-constructing' aspect rather than merely accept it as a given: if identity creation is a (cultural) process, to what extent can we influence it, and to what degree are we actually products of the society in which we live, with its power-structures and pre-conceptions?

The processes by which individuals achieve cultural integration with social groups present another set of central questions. Among other things, sociocultural integration is the outcome of the ways in which people adapt to the linguistic setting in which they live. Speaking a certain language implies socializing in a specific cultural context in which the values and lifestyle of the social majority are manifested more or less via the dominant language.

Integration can also mean that the majority-population has to adjust to its minority elements, and for instance, learn to value languages different than its own. However, the 'others,' i.e. the cultural and demographic majorities, or at least the politically dominant groups, may value more than the minority languages. Specifically, an ideal of cultural hybridity can arise from the experience of participation in different identity-creating processes (that however in turn are manifested more or less via the coexistence of various languages).

I view cultural hybridity as a process of cultural exchange, and in this regard, hybridity makes it possible for 'newness' to exist (cf. Bhabha 1994: 324). Instead of focusing on assimilation and integration of migrants into a host society "(…) hybridity appears as a convenient category (…), describing cultural mixture (…)" (Kalra and Kaur and Hutnyk 2005: 70). Thus, when different cultures meet, hybrid identities are forming across a hyphen (as in 'Sephardic-Bosnian') instead of the identities being located in only one culture or position (as in 'Bosnian')

(cf. Chambers 1996: 53). For example, immigrants can adopt aspects of the host culture and rework these in production of a new hybrid culture. As the literary scholar Leslie Adelson points out:

> Man könnte sogar behaupten, dass, nähmen wir das Multidimensionale im Kulturellen ernst, der Begriff 'multikulturell' tautologisch und damit überflüssig sei. Er ist vor allem irreführend, insofern er die Vorstellung einer Vielfalt von Kulturen beschwört, eindeutig definiert und voneinander abgrenzt, anstatt eines dynamischen, höchst politisierten Prozesses kultureller Produktion (Adelson 1997: 36).

As regards to my reference-group in Sarajevo, I want to clarify that because of their supposedly hybrid identities I do not assume that their identities were once 'pure' or that there is something as anterior pure and authentic culture that precede mixture (cf. Gilroy 1994: 54-55; Hutnyk 2005: 90). As Kalra and Kaur and Hutnyk (2005: 88) argue: "The very idea of a 'host' and 'arrivee' culture assumes a degree of non-hybridity which is difficult to sustain unless there is an insistence on an unbridgeable difference between the here and the there (Kalra and Kaur and Hutnyk 2005: 88)". Moreover, 'hybridity in linguistics' is often associated with the idea of a linguistic continuum. For example, new languages emerged out of slavery such as the French and English patois (Kalra and Kaur and Hutnyk 2005: 75). Thus, linguistic hybridity not only means a mixing of languages but also involves a blending of cultures. That said, it can be difficult for 'others' to accept mixed forms, and this can lead to the demand, explicit or implicit, that a person has to choose either one or the other culture, for example, to be Jewish or Serb, and not both.

Integration on a micro-level concerns an internal acculturation of the individual to his or her group(s) – as evidence for instance in Jewish and South Slavic identity-building processes (cf. Lange & Westin 1981: 199). Normative thinking concerning what people 'should' think and do in order to call themselves Jewish (as an example) plays an important role in this process.

Gerson (2001: 193) argues that such normative thinking can lead people to 'measure' each other in relation to abstract and possibly incompatible ideals of identity.

> (…) die kognitive Leistung einer „pluriellen Identität" besteht darin, die verschiedenen identitären Facetten gleichsam zu einem kohärenten Identitätssystem zusammenzuschweißen.
>   Nur kann es freilich Fälle geben, in denen die Teilidentitäten derart auseinanderstreben, dass das Individum die Brüche nicht mehr kitten kann, das gefährliche Risse im Gefüge der Identität auftreten. Dies sind die Fälle, in welchen (...) die mehrsprachige Identität als Problem erlebt werden kann (Lüdi 2007: 44).

Lüdi (2007: 44) highlights the possibility of having multiple identities that work against and away from each other instead of uniting in a coherent whole. For his part, Magnusson (1989: 181, 183) reflects upon factors that are crucial in order to obtain a successful integration-process. He considers it important that a minority develops ethnic institutions, such as kindergartens, schools and associations, which may then serve as primary contexts of individuals' acculturation. In other words, he underscores that successful acculturation is most likely when the minority-group has access to a living, articulate culture within its communal confines (Magnusson 1989: 182).

For instance, many bilingual individuals exhibit a more profound linguistic knowledge in their second language than in their first when they have been schooled in this second language. On the other hand, they may be emotionally closer to their 'mother-tongue' (Romaine 2005: 22) – the minority language. Mother-tongue-preservation can be difficult – at least for children – outside 'home,' since there are often too few contexts besides the familial where one makes extensive use of the mother tongue. Therefore, second or third generation inheritors of the 'mother-tongue' often lose their linguistic identity with that language and retain only a feeling of having a foreign background (Magnusson 1989: 184).

Lagerholm (2005: 109-110) refers to the degree of consciousness that bilingual individuals experience in relation to their bilingualism, and he points to the fact that second-language-learning often is a process that takes place subconsciously inasmuch as the second language

develops automatically, even if that language can also can be acquired consciously. „Mit dem Bewußtsein der eigenen Zweisprachigkeit entstehen auch positive bzw. negative **Einstellungen zur Zweisprachigkeit**" (Kielhöfer & Jonekit 1995: 49, emphasis in original). At the same time, when a person is aware of different identity-constructing processes in his or her life, s/he may assess and reflect upon whether it is enjoyable to be simultaneously part of two cultures – say, Jewish and Bosnian – or, inversely, whether s/he does not feel at home whatsoever in any culture and attendant identity-process. The level of conscious socio-cultural integration in the building of an identity can vary between different individuals.

> (…) die Angst von einem Identitätsverlust wird mehr oder weniger verspürt, die Veränderungen werden von den einen bedauert und abgelehnt, von den anderen begrüßt. Dabei hat sich deutlich erwiesen, dass der Migrant in der Wahl seiner Verhaltungsweise nicht gänzlich durch äußere Faktoren gelenkt wird, sondern dass er in seinem Gebrauch von Konstellationen identitärer Figuren über einen gewissen Entscheidungsspielraum verfügt (Lüdi 2007: 47).

For instance, different groups have different core values. These correspond to different elements of the identities that group members consider to be crucial for the vitality of a given identity. As an example, Smolicz (1981: 106 108) argues that South Italians see the family as the most important value, and that Greeks and Ukrainians view their respective ethnic languages as determinative, while Jews value their religion, ethnicity, and a common history as essential to their identity. Thus, it can be more or less difficult for individuals to accept the loss of a mother-tongue, depending on whether their culture-group generally regards that loss as a loss of one's national identity, or if, from a cosmopolitan perspective, ethnic identity does not turn on what language one speaks (Magnusson 1989: 192).

When it comes to Jewish identity, it has long been clear to scholars that despite linguistic and cultural change, such as language-shifts and the demolition of literature, the identity has survived in some form (cf. Fishman 1994: 92-93). For example, when the state of Israel became independent in 1948, the national government proclaimed Hebrew to be the national language

of the Jewish people. This was in keeping with an earlier Zionist program for the Jewish People's cultural (especially linguistic) 'revival.' Thus, Hebrew was a central element in re-building Jewish (and I add, building Israeli) identity, not to mention the state of Israel itself (Spolsky 1999: 183).

As regards my interviewees in Sarajevo, I explore their language choice in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the role of the Sephardic language in their identity formation. I also pinpoint whether religion and ethnicity are important elements in their Jewish identification. In this context, I believe that 'hybrid identities' are crucial for them due to feelings of belonging in different ethno-religious sub-contexts.

In what follows, I continue to discuss 'language and identity' and moreover pinpoint the role of an 'ideology' in this regard. Specifically, I reflect upon the function of a 'nationalist ideology' in identity formation. Obviously, a nationalist ideology is relevant in the case of Sarajevo Sephardim because of the national linguistic ideologies present in the Yugoslavian and later the Bosnian multination-buildings, that in turn have shaped contemporary Sarajevo Sephardim's language use and conceptions.

1.4 Beyond a Nationalist Ideology

Wingstedt (1996: 6) concludes that an ideology consists of unconscious hegemonic ideas that human groups perceive as 'natural' and 'common sensical' and thus are taken for granted. That 'common sense' serves the interest of a particular group in society is, for Wingstedt, a reality that few acknowledge (Wingstedt 1996: 9).

More specifically, Wingstedt (1996: 10) defines a language ideology as a system of (…)

largely unconscious ideas, attitudes and beliefs pertaining to language and linguistic behavior (Wingstedt 1996: 10). A language ideology, she argues, thus reveals attitudes and beliefs about phenomena related to language and its use. In this sense, a linguistic ideology is a kind of worldview regarding, for instance: 1) monolingualism and bilingualism in society, 2) the relationship of identity and standard national languages, 3) language choice and 4) language shift and maintenance (Wingstedt 1996: 11).

For her part, Stukenbrock (2005) shows the central role of language in the German national identity building process. In fact, she argues that for Germans language is the most crucial building block, far more important than history, religion, and so forth; therefore, while self-described Germans have taken for granted the idea that German ethnicity writ large and Germany should coincide, the language itself has actually played an essential formative role (Stukenbrock 2005: 3). Stukenbrock (2005: 58, 401) especially criticizes the concept of Germany that was socially predominant in the 19th century, and the imagined borders that its proponents gave to this concept through the ideological unification of *Sprache, Rasse und Rassenseele* in nationalistic rhetoric (cf. Voss 2008: 109). In Western Europe in general the ideal of nation-states has been closely linked to the formation of language ideologies and attendant conceptions of language as expressing if not imparting national 'essences' (Wingstedt 1996: 12).

During the 19th century, nationalism was flourishing in Western Europe (Hobsbawm 1990: 91-93). Owing to the process of nation-building, the populations of nation-states became more homogeneous throughout the 1800s than ever before. Intellectuals and their nationalist ideologies viewed the common national languages as the foremost criteria for national belonging (Hobsbawm 1990: 93).[7] At the same time, there was a common conception that national belonging could also be determined by 'race,' and thus that minority groups and foreign elements present in the national (majority) languages should be cleansed out (Hobsbawm 1990: 129, 142).[8]

A Spanish encyclopedia, from 1925, illustrates this point. Patriotism (or the love and/or support for the homeland or the place where people originate from) was associated with the nation. So too, according to the encyclopedia, the nation constituted: *(...)* *'the collectivity of persons who have the same ethnic origin and, in general, speak the same language and possess a common tradition'* (Hobsbawm 1990: 15, emphasis mine). Such a claim amalgamates nationality with language and ethnicity. Nuorluoto (2012: 30) points out that this nationalistic thinking was often purely elitist and excluding the actual 'people' who were supposedly its basis. Therefore, even if the nationalism glorified 'the People' within a certain territory, it is not a given that the people really participate in the nation building.

In connection to this, Gupta & Ferguson (1992: 7) show that the very assumption of a structural resemblance (*isomorphism*) between space and culture/language actually *creates* national boundaries – even when cultures (such as Bosnia-Herzegovina's) are not separated per se from their neighboring cultures and do not necessarily occupy a definite place inside a certain (nationalist) space. Accordingly, Gupta & Ferguson (1992: 7) ask where the hybrid postcolonial

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[7] Obviously this was not the case with Jews, whose mastery of local languages was seldom enough to earn them citizenship.
[8] The meaning of national patriotism has also carried different associations, such as civic citizenship, support for democracy, and political emancipation (Brubaker 2004: 132; Вучина Симовић 2016: 111).

cultures belong in an ideological field that privileges 'pure' ethnic nationalities and allegedly direct correspondences between a people, its ethnicity, and its territory. In postcolonial cases, obviously, the notion of clear-cut, pre-existing nations and corresponding cultures is destabilized, since postcolonial societies are both the result of and the generators of new cultures that are shared and experienced (however unevenly) by the colonized and the colonizers alike.

<center>✧</center>

Throughout their history, Sarajevo Sephardim have dealt with multiple cultural contexts and languages (Jewish, Sephardic, Yugoslav, Bosnian and so on) beyond clear-cut nationalist ideologies. I analyze how they cope with the current linguistic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where three national languages correspond to the dominant cultures. Questions that I discuss include: how the Jewish minority-members choose to call the language that they speak; and what their conceptions of language and identity in present-day Sarajevo are?

In the following final section of this chapter however, I elaborate more upon the interrelation between 'language,' 'religion,' and 'nationalism' and also the role of 'inequality' in this interrelation. In my last concluding chapter of the thesis, I further explore an inequality-dimension in my interviewees' identity-conceptions.

1.4.1 Beyond a Ground for Difference

This section benefits from Brubaker's works and especially his book *Ground for Difference* (2015).

To be a citizen of nation-states is similar to holding a position in an organization, in this case, the modern nation-state. Brubaker (2015: 7, 143-144) states that dual citizenship oftentimes forms extended nationalist models and not necessarily transnationalism, that is, a transcendence of nationalism since the nation-states remain. Transnationalism based on migration may on one hand mean a change in legal status (according to population census or one's citizenship, for example), yet it can also be a transnationalism of being between and beyond national entities. The transnationalism of between occurs when a person moves between different categories without belonging entirely to either of them. Having two parents of differing ethnic backgrounds may also be interpreted as being positioned in a space of ethnic interbetwenness – specifically, of being between ones' parents (Brubaker 2016: 72-73, 93, 101). Ethnicity can thus be seen as a form of gradational variation instead of a monolithic category (Brubaker 2016: 103). Transnationalism beyond nationality occurs when someone positions him- or herself beyond existing national categories and even beyond categorization in general (Brubaker 2016: 72-73, 113).

In the backdrop of the constructivist assumption that race is a sociocultural phenomenon with no 'objective,' biological foundation, there has been a revival in scholarship of biology in relation to race. Brubaker (2015: 2-3, 12) argues that in the last fifteen years there has been a resurgence of projects that locate – and even celebrate – genetic commonalities and differences between groups. Researchers argue that genetic origin has implications for medicine and therefore it would be ignorant not to involve race in medical research (Brubaker 2015: 52-53).

Yet, it is not clear how one can produce and measure a 'race' and what race actually mean in a biomedical context. Moreover, while discovering peoples' mixed genealogy, it will be more evident that pure and bounded categories are irrelevant and that genealogy is an ambiguous and contradictory marker of identity (Brubaker 2015: 74). In fact, Brubaker (2015: 84) suggests that we adopt a transformed biosocial constructivist approach when we research social processes, that is, taking into account a biological influence on social processes too, but without taking the deterministic position that ancestry determines social outcomes.

Brubaker (2015: 12-13) writes how various forms of categorical inequality shape the social sphere. 'Internal categories' of inequality refer to unequal positions within an organization (e.g., the untenured lecturer vs. the tenured professor), while 'external categories' of inequality are unequal positions in the wider social milieu (along the lines of gender, race, citizenship, religion, etc.). External categories can be imported into organizations too, and may thus coincide with internally unequal positions within an organization.

Another mechanism that generates categorical inequality, according to Brubaker (2015: 15-16), is a bounded network, that is, a network that gives its insiders exclusive access to valuable resources such as work opportunities, valuable information, and so on. A network can of course be based on different forms of commonalities, such as shared familial or ethnic origins, language, beliefs, and more. Outsiders may have no chance to be involved, accepted and included into such a closed system, inasmuch as networks are sets of relationships that are not immediately accessible. Obviously, not all members of an ethnic group automatically have access to a certain social network. Oftentimes, an elite is formed within larger groupings and in-group members are excluded from this 'inner circle' (Brubaker 2015: 16).

By contrast to participation in ethnic networks, which may require negotiated initiation and protracted learning, citizenship as a category is non-ambivalent: either one is in or one is out

(Brubaker 2015: 21). Gender, as a category in contemporary 'liberal' contexts is, however, more diffuse and non-categorical. The inequality that is produced in relation to gender is complex and subtle. It is formed by ways of making sense of the social world rather than by official status alone (Brubaker 2015: 27). So too, the category of ethnicity does not rely entirely upon official, documented status. Indeed, Brubaker argues that ethnicity is becoming more and more a function of linguistic proficiency, inasmuch as language skills are crucial forms of cultural capital and are often decisive for the prospects of success in social life (Brubaker 2015: 32). In this regard, states are not really 'neutral' in their ethno-religious orientations.

In line with the modernization and secularization of life that have occurred since the Enlightenment, linguistic repertoires have become cultural markers in social life whereas religion has been redefined as a private matter (Brubaker 2015: 86). Individual subjects may take for granted language and religion as sources of identification, even though, in contemporary understandings, they are more commonly perceived as choices (Brubaker 2015: 87). Regardless, we readily know what we are talking about when referring to a person's language, while his or her 'religion' as a domain is often more vague (Brubaker 2015: 89).

Furthermore, Religion can to a certain degree, be practiced at home but ones' language is necessarily public. Besides, expectations exist that one should learn a country's dominant language if one moves there, yet one is not equally expected to learn the religious *Leitkultur* of one's new environment. Hence, the state is more central to linguistic than to religious reproduction. Moreover, arguably the adaptation of religious practices can be relatively flexible—inasmuch as one can choose to believe in and practice some aspects of a religion but not all—whereas the use of language is oftentimes not: either one uses a language, or one does not (cf. Brubaker 2015: 92, 94). The idea that religion should be central in the public sphere is challenging to liberal states today, whereas it is comparatively 'natural' that language occupies

such a position. Yet, since religion is not actually fully privatized in liberal democracies, an asymmetric power-relationship exists in which Christianity has a favored position.[9]

Reflecting on migratory trends, Brubaker (2015: 121) writes that if everyone within a country is 'diasporic,' then no one is distinctively so (and there is therefore no need to favor the Jewish experience), and thus the concept of a diaspora is also losing its discriminatory power in articulating the relationship between culture and the state. In other words, the universalization of diaspora indicates its disappearance too (Brubaker 2015: 121). Perhaps, Brubaker (2015: 126) argues, we are now in the Diasporic Hybrid Ages, having passed through an era of nation-states. Thus, it is important at this moment of time to treat the 'diasporic' identity as a behavior, practice, project and claim, rather than as the central characteristic of a bounded group and/or exclusive network (Brubaker 2015: 130).

Again, 'diasporic' and 'hybrid' identities do not naturally or automatically belong to Jews nor exclusively to them. I nonetheless think that my interviewees in Sarajevo, because of their multifaceted history, most probably practice a diasporic and hybrid life-style. The interviewees' transitions between and in-between different cultural contexts are, I argue, most valuable sources in order to better understand what is happening at this point in time.

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[9] Christianity is certainly part and parcel of Western democratic life even though many countries have instituted a separation of state and church (Brubaker 2015: 90). The Christian framework of social and political life is evident in the public calendar which typically acknowledges Christian liturgical holidays and designates Sunday as a day for rest (cf. Ricoeur 2004: 155). Generally speaking, there are Christmas trees and not Menorahs in public places, and 'secular' kindergartens and schools celebrate Catholic Lucia and/or Protestant Easter (as examples) while other religious holidays like Bajram are not celebrated. On the other hand, it is possible for a state and its citizens to be relatively neutral in regard to religion, whereas in relation to a national language neutrality is almost impossible (Brubaker 2015: 90-91). Thus, for example, the United States has no 'official' language, and yet English is still privileged as the dominant means of most public and official communication.

The aim of this theoretical chapter has been to clarify definitions and contextualize central terminology in the thesis. I provide definitions and analyze concepts such as 'ethnicity,' 'hybridity,' 'identity,' 'ideology,' 'inequality,' 'memory,' 'nationalism,' and 'religion,' that are frequently applied throughout the thesis. The chapter has suggested that individuals' participation in social contexts (certain languages, traditions and commemoration-practices) can lead to remembering. For example, in the context of Jewish modern history, many Jews in their new homelands lost a sense of being in exile, of being in the diaspora, and instead felt themselves belonging to their new environments. In this chapter I have moreover drawn on Brubaker's concepts of 'nation' and 'ethnicity' as 'perspectives' instead of as 'beings' in the social world. I have also benefited from Brubaker's understanding of categorical inequality, which is often an integral mechanism in the dynamics of bounded groups.

In chapter 2, which follows now, I discuss the Sephardic ethnicity as part of a larger Jewish national identity. I introduce categories of different Jewish groups, in order to place the Sephardim in a broader context. I furthermore continue to give an overview historical background that will serve as a backdrop to my exploration of the development of the Sephardim in relation to the various countries/identity options in which their identities are formed: Bosnia and Herzegovina/Yugoslavia, Israel and Spain. The purpose of this chapter is to offer contexts to the Sarajevo Sephardim's transitions as well as provide a chronological and geographical account of their cultural history. I furthermore present empirical data and analyze Sarajevo Sephardic attitudes towards the different identity options – based on my interviews in Sarajevo.

CHAPTER TWO

A TRANSFORMATION OF THE SEPHARDIC COMMUNITIES AND SARAJEVO SEPHARDIC ATTITUDES TOWARDS YUGOSLAVIA, SPAIN AND ISRAEL

2.1 The Sephardic Ethnicity as Part of the Larger Jewish Nation

The present chapter focuses on my informant's identity options in Yugoslavia, Spain and Israel. This first section provides an introductory background- and the current state of affairs of the Sephardic presence in the world. I moreover explain what I mean with 'Sephardism' which is a term that I apply throughout this work.

According to DellaPergola (1992: 8) the European Jewry comprises 9,9% of world Jewry[10], while in 1880 European Jewry constituted 89% of the world's Jewish population. Today, 42.9% of world Jewry lives in Israel, while 40.1% in the United States (DellaPergola 2015: 302). It is against the background scenery of this shift in the Jewish presence in Europe that I reflect upon language and ethnicity in Sarajevo.

The terms 'Sephardic' and 'Oriental' Jews derives from the Hebrew *sephardim ve'edot hamizrah,* that is, Jews from Sephardic/Spanish and Mizrahi/Oriental/Eastern communities of the Middle East (DellaPergola 2007: 4). Sepharad is the Hebrew name for the Iberian Peninsula and in a cultural sense areas in the western Maghreb as well, yet often connotes 'Spain' alone (cf. Hetzer 2001). These terms are used when speaking of Jews from distinct geographic regions

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[10] Of course, the very definition of 'who is a Jew' is complex and different interpretations exist (cf. DellaPergola 1992: 3).

rather than more local designations. Another way of looking at this geographic division is to use the terms 'Oriental' or 'Eastern' vs. 'Western' to differentiate the two Jewish groups' respective rhythms and patterns of modernization (DellaPergola 2007: 5).

With migration and the arrival of new generations, the place of origin has diminished in importance in the use of the Sephardi and Mizrahi categories, and the quest for an 'Oriental Jew' has acquired a new environmental connotation, especially in Israel (DellaPergola 2007: 6): Israeli Oriental Jews and Sephardim are generally contrasted with Israeli Ashkenazim[11]. As DellaPergola (2007: 6-7) points out: *What this means is that all those who are not 'western' (actually Ashkenazic) constitute a single group* (emphasis mine).

Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics classifies Jews by continents of origin (Africa, America, Asia, Europe) instead of using the Ashkenazic-Sephardic separation (DellaPergola 2007: 7). From a cultural perspective, DellaPergola (2007: 7), among others, refers to a typological distinction between Jewish communities according to their presence or past presence in a Christian and/or Muslim milieu.

Various simplified dichotomous typologies cannot describe the world Jewry since its experience entails fluid and crosscutting identifications. Nevertheless, classifications such as 'Sephardic' and 'Oriental' have been and are still used to describe sub-ethnic identities within the larger, hyper-variegated world Jewish ethnicity (DellaPergola 2007: 7).

In 2002, 70% of the world Jewish population identified as non-Sephardic. Yet, about two thirds of the Sephardic and originally Asian-African Jews live in Israel (DellaPergola 2007: 11, 15). In fact, even if Ashkenazim have had stronger political power in Israel, the majority of the Israeli population is no-longer Ashkenazi (Harris 1994: 149; cf. Moreno 2012: 67). I continue

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[11] A popular hypothesis is that the term Ashkenazim originally referred to diaspora communities which settled in the Holy Roman Empire, in Germany, France and Italy, at around the end of the first millennium. In the late Middle Ages the majority of these Ashkenazim moved to areas that would become the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (parts of today's Belarus, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Russia and Ukraine) (Straten 2011).

to discuss the position of Sephardim in Israel later on in this chapter.

Before turning to the different identity options for the Sarajevo Sephardim, I now show the transitions of the Sephardic communities over time in order to be able to better analyze and overview predicaments of Sarajevo Jews. First however, I want to clarify what I mean by 'Sephardism.'

I argue that the Sephardic and broader Jewish tradition overlaps to a certain extent. Nonetheless, celebrating Shabbat and Jewish holidays is not 'Sephardic' per se; it can be merely 'Jewish.' Celebrating these holidays by specifically and intentionally using aspects of *Minhag Sepharad* – a gamut of Sephardi customs, folkways, and legal traditions, including specific liturgical melodies and a prayer-book developed from the Middle Ages to the 19th century – is 'Sephardic,' by contrast. So is speaking Judeo-Spanish.

Among others, literary scholar Yael Halevi-Wise uses the term 'Sephardism' differently than from the way I use this term. Halevi-Wise does not refer to 'Sephardic traditions' but applies this term when talking about representations of Sephardic history and identity. 'Sephardism,' according to her (and others), is a modern literary metaphor that employs 'Sephardim' to express specific concerns about alterity, oppression, and so on (cf. Halevi-Wise 2012: 1-32). In this work however, when I refer to a concept of 'Sephardism,' I specifically mean *minhag Sepharad* and the Judeo-Spanish language and culture (its literature, music, food and so on).

The following section is an historical overview of the Sephardi migration from the Iberian to the Balkan lands. The purpose is to present a bigger picture of the Sarajevo Sephardim's history before entering the specific discussions about the Sephardim's possibly identity options (Yugoslavia, Spain and Israel).

2.2 Sephardi Migration from the Iberian to the Balkan Lands

The Jewish presence in Spain has been traced back to the Roman Empire.[12] The 'Tarshish theory' says that Jews came to Spain after the first destruction of the temple in Jerusalem (568 BCE) (Vidaković-Petrov 1986: 7; Bossong 2008: 16; Shindler 2012: 295):

> Thus the city of Tarshish toward which Jonah sailed in hopes of evading God's command was thought to be Tartessus, originally a Phoenician and later Carthaginian seaport on the Mediterranean coast (Gerber 1992: 2).

According to Gerber (1992: 2), this and other folk traditions affirming a Jewish presence in Spain from biblical times emerged as anti-Semitism escalated when the Christians defeated the Muslim Spain (at the time of the expulsion of Jews and Muslims in 1492).

> It was as if Spanish Jews were proclaiming that they could not be charged (as indeed they were) with "killing Christ," because they were nowhere near Palestine at the time of the crucifixion (Gerber 1992: 2).

Nevertheless, there are Jewish inscriptions from Roman Hispania, but how large the Jewish community was is not known (Gerber 1992: 100).

In medieval Spain which emerged in the 15th century, Muslims, Jews and Christians lived together in a situation – sometimes called *la convivencia* – that was unique for Europe. In 1492 however, on the orders of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain Sephardic Jews had to either convert to Christianity or to leave Spain. I continue to discuss this in greater detail in 2.3. ('An identity-creating factor: Spain'). On their way out of Spain the Jews were often robbed and persecuted. From border crossing-points and at the gates of port cities they boarded ships that would take them to their new destinations (Beinart 2002: 254, 261).

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[12] Because of this myth that the Jewish presence in Spain can be dated back to the biblical times there is a perception that the Sephardim had the right to Spanish soil (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 12, 192).

The expulsion from Spain resulted in some 60,000 Sephardim emigrating to the Ottoman Empire – especially to Constantinople and Salonica. According to other sources more than 100,000 Sephardim came to the Ottoman Empire, possibly up to 200,000 (Popović 1997:12; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 35).[13] By the second half of the 16th century they started to migrate to northern parts of the Empire, to Belgrade, Bitola, Sarajevo and Sofia.[14] Political stability, relative tolerance towards religious groups, and beneficial socio-economic conditions made the Ottoman Empire an attractive destination (Riedl 1939: 136; West 2006: 298; Cohen 2014: 3, 49).

The Jewish-Spanish refugees in the Balkans had spoken regional dialects from their Spanish hometowns, such as Catalan, Aragonese, Castilian and Andalusian. After half a century in the Ottoman Empire, these dialects were 'harmonized' so that only Judeo-Castilian was spoken. Thus, the Sephardim brought with them the Romance languages that they had spoken in Spain before their expulsion. In their new, exilic environments, this language developed into Judeo-Spanish. It was therefore after the expulsion that a specific Jewish Spanish variety evolved and distinguished itself from the Castilian (Astrologo-Fonzi 1992: 128; Spolsky 2014: 140, 145).[15]

After the fall of the Ottoman Empire Ashkenazi Jews immigrated to the Balkans as well, although to a lesser extent than the Sephardim. The Ashkenazim mainly settled in the Habsburg Croatia, in Zagreb and Osijek (Švob 1997: 19-21; Kerkkänen 2001: 24; Greble 2011: 38; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 37; Carmichael 2015: 45). During the Austro-Hungarian period, many

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[13] It is however not clear how many Jews actually were expelled and how many converted. The concrete numbers fluctuate from 40,000 too 400,000 departures and it is assumed that 100,000 Jews converted between 1391 and 1412 (Astrologo-Fonzi 1992: 127, Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: xxxvi-xxxvii, 193, Ginio 2015: 39-40). Cohen (2014: 6) writes that the number of Jews in the Ottoman Empire never were more than 500,000 people.

[14] Of course, many Sephardim also went further south to Damascus, Jerusalem, Cairo and other places (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: xix-xx). Many landed in North Africa, especially in northern Marocco (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: lii-liii; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 34). Others came to Western Europe, to Holland, France and England, and were called the Western Sephardim (Birri-Tomovska 2012: 34; Harris 1994: 18). The so called Eastern Sephardim, who settled in the Balkans and Asia Minor preserved the Sephardic tradition much longer (Birri-Tomovska 2012: 34).

[15] See further section '2.3.3 The Judeo-Spanish Dialect.'

Sephardim underwent a process of westernization. For example, this was achieved via the standardization of education through the *Alliance Israélite Universelle*[16] (Rodrigue 1992: 185-187; Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 68, 73, 83; Touboul Tardieu 2009: 99; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 40; Guillon 2013: 30; Vidaković-Petrov 2013: 20).

Moreover, the majority of the Sephardic elite in Austria-Hungary sent their children to study in Vienna or Paris. French and German became the languages of preference rather than Judeo-Spanish (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 91; Días-Mas & Romeu Ferré 2013: 225-226, 151). Serbo-Croatian, the language of the majority (in Bosnia-Herzegovina as well as other places), was seen by the Jews as a key to social and economic success (Вучина Симовић 2016: 202, 282).

Ashkenazi Jews in Zagreb promoted the Yugoslav Zionist movement after the First World War. They had been educated in the West, in Berlin and Vienna, and imported Zionist ideology into Yugoslavia in order to respond to growing anti-Semitism in Europe (Freidenreich 1977: 66; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 163; Mitrović 2016: 70). Zionism was essential in uniting the Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews of Yugoslavia, but certainly a shared Western (Viennese, at least) education also contributed to such unification. Nevertheless, only 1,5% of Yugoslav Jewry had left for Palestine by the time of the Second World War (Kerkkänen 2001: 23, 27). The reason that so few Jews emigrated to Palestine was possibly that they were treated well in Yugoslavia, as discussed in more detail later. By the late 1920s however – due to the economic and political crisis (as elsewhere in Europe) – anti-Semitism was spreading in Yugoslavia (Mitrović 2016: 72). Emigration from Yugoslavia to Palestine increased during the 1930s, but it was only in

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[16] The *Alliance israélite universelle* was a Paris-based Jewish organization founded in 1860. One of the missions of the organization was to promote a more advanced and westernized Jewish educational system with French as language of instruction (Birri-Tomovska 2012: 89; 152; Cohen 2014: 10-11; Вучина Симовић 2016: 252).

1940 that Yugoslavia adopted its first anti-Jewish laws under Nazi Germany's pressure (Birri-Tomovska 2012: 163, 169).

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When the Second World War broke out in 1941, 10% of Sarajevo's population, or 10,000 people, was Jewish (Greble 2011: 12). Bosnia-Herzegovina became part of the Ustaša-run Independent State of Croatia. Only 1,400 Jews survived the war (Ristović 2010: 260; Greble 2011: 12). Germans and local collaborators, especially Croatian Ustaša, killed more than 80% of Yugoslav Jews, some 82,500 persons (Ristović 2010: 260; Greble 2011: 12).

In the aftermath of the Second World War, between 1948 and 1952, six major *aliyot*[17] from Yugoslavia took place. After the first two *aliyot,* Yugoslavia's Jewry had already been reduced by 60%. However, many Yugoslav immigrants failed to settle in Israel and eventually returned to Yugoslavia (Ivanković 2011: 150).

During the Bosnian war between 1992-1995, the Sarajevo Jewish Community organized eight convoys for people to leave the city again (Kerkkänen 2001: 175). Most of the Jews went to Israel and the majority of them returned to Sarajevo after the war in Bosnia had ended, which I continue to discuss later.

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[17] According to the traditional and nationalist conception, when a Jew immigrates to Israel he or she makes an *aliyah* (Heb. Ascent) from the diaspora to Zion.

With this historical overview I pinpointed the paths of the Sarajevo Sephardim – originating in Palestine, settling in Spain, arriving to the Ottoman Empire and possibly heading back to Israel and/or to Spain and then to Sarajevo again. As mentioned earlier, the following sections explore different identity options: 'Israel,' 'Spain' and 'Yugoslavia.' I moreover describe Sarajevo Sephardic attitudes towards the different options based on my interviews.

I chose these identity options in order to pinpoint factors that have influenced identity formation of the Sephardim in Sarajevo. Obviously, lived experience in Yugoslavia and Sarajevo are the most crucial factors in these processes – since this is where they live and lived most of their lives – but I also explore whether the 'historical homelands' of Spain and Israel play a role as well.

I now move on to the first identity-option 'Spain.' I contextualize the situation for Jews in Sarajevo by giving a history of the Sephardim in Spain. I analyze my interviewees conceptions of Spain as an historical homeland and an option where one can 'return' to today. At first, I give a brief history sketch surrounding the 1492 expulsion and its aftermath. I moreover explore the substance of the newly enacted Sephardic-Spanish citizenship-law and elaborate upon reactions on the law on behalf of the Sephardim. In order to pinpoint the reasons for why this option to 'return' to Spain has received more/less support among my subjects' in Sarajevo, I also reflect upon Spain of today and on the Judeo-Spanish dialect.

2.3 An identity-creating factor: Spain

In Medieval Spain, Moors (who conquered the peninsula beginning in 711), Sephardim, and Christians lived together, which was a comparatively unique situation in Europe (Gampel 1992: 11; Amelang 2013: 7-8).[18] In Muslim al-Andalus (711-1474) – just as in Muslim Iraq – Jews and Muslims were living in relative tolerance with each other.[19] Nevertheless, they were not allowed to intermarriage or to live in the same quarters and to consult the same doctors (Alpert 2001: 9).[20] As Jikeli (2015: 205) recognizes, the Sephardim had to subordinate themselves to the ethno-religious majority as *dhimmi*—a 'protected people' (cf. Gerber 1992: 24; Gampel 1992: 14). Nevertheless, Jews were active in all areas of the economy (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: xxix, xxviii).

Likewise, after the Christian victory in Toledo in 1085, Jews were free to practice their religion. From 1000-1300, Toledo was a thriving Jewish center. Jews forced to converse and being persecuted by the Muslim Almohad regime[21] arrived to the city in huge numbers (Gampel 1992: 20-21; Alpert 2001: 8). In Christian Spain, Jews were treated as a *Fremdkörper*, however. Coexistence did not endure (D. L. Graizbord, Personal Communication, 3.3.2018).

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[18] The case of medieval Sicily and Greece may be considered vaguely similar to that of Spain. For an earlier history (than beginning from 711) of the Jews in Spain see: Gerber (1992: 2-26) and Gampel (1992: 11-14).

[19] In 19th century German Jewry integrated the Sephardic liturgy, synagogue architecture, literature and scholarship. These domains offered an alternative to one's East European origins (Schorsch 1989: 47). This fascination with Sephardism and Spain derived from self-criticism within the German Jewry. In fact, the Haskalah enlightenment movement was inspired by Spain (Schorsch 1989: 48-49, Schapkow 2011: 9-10, 28). There was a conception existing that the Sephardic branch of Judaism was more capable to be integrated in a larger society (i.e., just as the Jews were in Muslim Spain) and meet the political needs of a modern age (Schorsch 1989: 52-53, 63).

   The purpose of orienting towards Sephardic culture was to remember it and not to see it as foreign, Sephardic *Fremdkörper*, but rather as simply Jewish. Thus, it should of course be incorporated in the architecture of German's Jewry – as for instance in the synagogue on the Oranienburgerstraße that has a Sephardic-Oriental shape. Moreover, Zionism was considered a movement responding to anti-Semitism and therefore the Sephardic hybrid culture was appreciated as an attractive alternative. Jews on the Iberian Peninsula were recognized as mediators between Muslim and Christian majority-cultures and Jewish minority-cultures. This was especially admired and thought of as a role model for German Jewry (Schapkow 2011: 10-11, 28, 31, 33, 41; Efron 2016: 149-160).

[20] The Arabic language was replacing Hebrew even in religious contexts and, in fact, Jewish culture was totally oriented towards the Arab language and culture.

[21] The Almohads was a caliphate that originated in Morocco.

As the Reconquista progressed, the Spanish church started to preach intolerance towards Jews and Muslims and as a result, in 1391, conversionist riots led to the forced conversion of some half or two-thirds of the Iberian Jewish population (Gerber 1992: 114; Ray 2013: 18). Before the mass conversions of 1391-1415 and the completion of the Christian 'reconquest' of Iberia in 1492, there were eight synagogues in Toledo. Remnants of two of these are still standing: Santa Maria la Blanca and El Transito (Gampel 1992: 29; Gerber 1992: 29, 100).

By 1480, the crowns of Castile and Aragon had established a unified Inquisition whose chief purpose was to expose alleged 'judaizers' among the 'New Christians' or '(judeo)conversos'—that is, former Jews[22] and their descendants (Gampel 1992: 31; Alpert 2001: 9-10; Gitlitz 2002: 22; Amelang 2013: 88; Ray 2013: 23).[23] The purity-of-blood anti-converso-legislation had begun already in 1449 with the adoption of the *Sentencia-Estatuto* of Toledo. This regulation was the result of a popular uprising against royal authority. For example, it was stipulated in the regulation that all Jews who had converted to Catholic Christianity and their descendants were not allowed to hold public offices or to testify in Catholic and lay municipal courts. The explicit assumption that undergirded the law was the canard that conversos were basically sham Christians whose ancestry predisposed them to subvert Christianity by continuing to uphold beliefs, practice rites, and maintain social and familial ties that the Church tendentiously designated as 'Judaism' (Amelang 2013: 28, 35-36, 74; Ray 2013: 20; D. L. Graizbord, Personal Communication, 4.3.2018).[24] This logic culminated when, on the 31st of March 1492,

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[22] Baptized Jews – *Marranos* (swine) – sometimes maintained their Jewish rituals in secret (Schama 2013: 400-401; 403; Alpert 2001: 12, 14). Their practice nowadays is being referred to as a crypto-Judaism (cf. Halevy 2009: 14, 215).

[23] Catholic anti-Semitism is manifested in ritual prejudices towards Jews: Jews were seen as evil. Moreover, the Spanish conversos were seen as the Jews who had killed Jesus (Alpert 2001: 9-10).

[24] Kamen (1996: 21-22) clarifies that there were many opponents to the *limpieza* statutes amongst kings, bishops, theologians and tribunals (Pedro de Soto, Melchor Cano, Jesuit Juan de Mariana and others). This public criticism culminated in the 17th century when Agustín Salucio published his *Discurso sobre los estatutos de limpieza* (1599). All the same, when Conversos entered elite professions, they were seldom promoted if they could not forge records of their ancestry (Kamen 1996: 23, 25).

Ferdinand and Isabella signed the royal edict authorizing on behalf of the king the Inquisition[25] by the Supreme Inquisition Council (Alpert 2001: 27). The main reason for the expulsion of the Jews was that Jewish-converso ties were preventing the full assimilation and Christianization of conversos (Baer 1978: 433).

In 1492, many Marranos (i.e. converted 'New Christians') also left Spain for Portugal (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: xxxiv, xlii-xliii, Harris 2008: 21). The Marranos left especially because of the Spanish statutes of *Limpieza de sangre* that took further discriminatory measures against 'Old Jews.' 'New Christians' were for instance only allowed to be active in restricted areas of the economy (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: xli). Few if any of the Jews of the former Yugoslavia are descendants of conversos. Rather, they were 'Old Sephardim,' that is, descendants of the origin al megorashim (expellees) from 1492 (D. L. Graizbord, Personal Communication, 5.3.2018). The Jews who were leaving in 1492 were not allowed to take property (Bodian 2008: 147, 149; Ray 2013: 44, 47).[26]

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[25] *Inquisitio* means investigation and the Inquisition tried baptized Christians. Convicted Judaizers were forced to renounce their supposed crime: Heresy—specifically, crypto-'Judaism,' which was an inquisitorial caricature and distortion of actual Jewish belief and practice. The Inquisitors released convict to the secular authorities for punishment. From 1482-1530, some two-thousand conversos were executed after being rightly or wrongly convicted of 'Judaizing.' Afterwards until 1832, however, executions of conversos were relatively rare (cf. Alpert 2001: 23-25).

[26] Policy on conversos varied. Sometimes they were not allowed to leave at all, sometimes they were allowed to leave with or without property. In any case, those who left did so with what they could, legally or illegally (cf. Alpert 2001: 27; Gitlitz 2002: 26).

The Jews who converted to Christianity, at least in the public sphere, negotiated their individual and social identifications and were sometimes secret crypto-Jews or "Judaizers," colloquially attacked as 'swine' (*marranos*). New Christians were cut off from Judaism and struggled instead with the challenges blending into the Christian mainstream. Anti-converso bigotry increasingly treated the Judaic "error" as incurable and therefore as question of 'impure infected blood' driving the 'impurity of one's faith' (Graizbord 2004: 1-3, 116-117). This situation meant that conversos who 'Judaized' practiced a fragmentary and confused observance, and cultivated the capacity to switch identities according to the context in order to protect themselves (Graizbord 2004: 151, 157-158).

During the 16th century many New Christians left Spain (and likewise Portugal and Mexico) (cf. Alpert 2001: 15; Mazower 2006: 47; Halevy 2009: 12). The Marranos who left did so especially because of the Spanish statutes of *Limpieza de sangre* that took further discriminatory measures against 'New Christians.' 'New Christians' were for instance only allowed to be active in restricted areas of the economy (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: xli).

Having written about the history surrounding the 1492 expulsion, I now move on to Spain after the expulsion. When speaking of my informants' conceptions and memories of Spain, I believe it is important to pinpoint the developments in Spain after the expulsion of its Jews. This is in order to have a more recent retrospective view of Spain as it is a potential identity-creating factor for present-day Jews in Sarajevo. Is Spain of today an attractive place for Sarajevo Jews to 'return' to? What happened in Spain after the expulsion? How has the Jewish history in Spain been acknowledged by Spanish society? These questions will be the subjects of the next section.

2.3.1 Spain after the Expulsion

The Inquisition was abolished on 15 July 1813 (Alpert 2001: 202). Non-Catholics in Spain were legally recognized as official communities from the beginning of 1869 (Menny 2013: 136). However, during the Franco regime (1936-1975) national-Catholicism rose to be a strong political force. The government's passing of a regulation declaring that Catholicism be the state religion was a clear indication of this thinking (Menny 2013: 138-39). Non-Catholic faiths were 'tolerated' yet their members were not recognized as official communities. Consequently, non-Catholics could not fully practice their religions. For example, Jewish wedding or burial ceremonies were not allowed until the fall of Franco (Menny 2013: 140-41). Nonetheless, Ashkenazim from West and central Europe and especially Moroccan Sephardim at the time of the war in Morocco in the 1860s – have been returning peu à peu to Spain. In 1935, there were about 500 Jews in Madrid and 3,000 Jews in Barcelona (Menny 2013: 53-54).

The small Jewish Spanish population (approximately 6,000 Jews in 1936) was not deported during the Second World War, and Jews and others were not forced to obey racial laws. Baer (2011: 96) recognizes that the anti-Semitic climate in Spain at that time was different from that

in Germany. Spain was, however, de facto not neutral, and Franco cooperated with Hitler militarily and economically, i.e., by exchanging raw materials and exporting soldiers to the Nazi-German army (Bossong 2008: 111; Baer 2011: 96-98).

It was only from 1967 that non-Catholics and the non-religious were legally considered full Spanish citizens (Menny 2013: 150, 153-154). However, as Menny (2013: 175) maintains the Spanish majority-population had internalized the idea of a homogenous Spanish Catholic culture, and this sentiment is still prevalent. However, secularization has reduced the number of Catholics in Spain. It is estimated that in 2000 only 17% of the population were practicing Catholics (Menny 2013: 176). Nevertheless, most Spaniards still identify as Catholics despite the lack of faith and maintenance of traditions (Menny 2013: 177).

When Spain joined NATO in 1982 and the European Union 1986 the Europeanization-process was of course at its peak. Moreover, with the victory of the Spanish Social Democrats in 2004, the concept and heritage of *convivencia* was on their political agenda (Menny 2013: 178-179). But did the politicians remember that it was only after the Spanish Jews had been deported from Salonica to Bergen-Belsen in 1943 that Franco was ready to accept Spanish-Jewish refugees to Spain?

Every so often the Holocaust was thematized in Hollywood films such as Spielbergs' *Schindler's List* (1993) and Polanski's *The Pianist* (2002) (Menny 2013: 293, T. A. Linhard, Personal Communication, 6.9.2016). It is of course debatable whether the availability of American movies make for true public concern and awareness. Nonetheless, with the opening up towards other European countries in the 1990s, Spain started to confront its own involvement during the war and a governmental commission was established by the Ministry of the Presidency to investigate the (previous) economic transactions between Spain and the Third Reich *(Comisión de Investigación de las Transacciones de Oro procedente del Tercer Reich durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial)* (Menny 2013: 295). Since 2008, the confrontation with

the Holocaust is an obligatory topic in school and this is of course another attempt to acknowledge this period in history (Menny 2013: 300).

Another way of putting it is that since Spain joined the European Union in 1986 (and only then did Spain recognize Israel) the Holocaust has been on the national political agenda, and since then collective national commemorations have been instituted (Baer 2011: 98, Baer 2013: 101).[27] Furthermore, parallel with commemorating the Holocaust, there is a perception generally held by Spaniards that Jews are perpetrating a 'new Holocaust' in Palestine (Baer 2011: 110-112). For instance, at a conference in 2009 on anti-Semitism at Madrid's Complutense University (the second largest university in Spain) there were, paradoxically, many students demonstrating against Jews. The protestors portrayed the Jews as a financial elite who specialize in victimization and manipulation in order to silence criticism concerning their crimes against Palestinians (Baer 2013: 95).

Baer (2013: 97) argues that anti-Semitism in Spain today is most of all inspired by the Christian anti-Jewish tradition, as well as by the widespread notion that a 'Catholic Spanish essence' defines or should define the country. Furthermore, according to Baer (2013: 97), Spanish anti-Jewish bigotry is grounded in a political opposition to Israel, the nation-state of the Jews, in principle rather than on a biological racist ideology. Israel's image in the Spanish press is colored by an openly expressed pro-Arab sentiment. An overlap between anti-Zionism, anti-Semitism and anti-Americanization is obvious and the prevalent use of stereotypes rooted in religious and anti-Jewish rhetoric (Baer 2013: 103-104; Baer & López 2012: 3). Despite the absence of Jews in Spain itself (Jews constitute only 0,1% of the total Spanish population[28]),

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[27] In 2007, Sephardi culture was the theme of one such commemoration. In 2008, the theme was Europe and the passing of memory to succeeding generations. In 2009, the theme was solidarity and humanity broadly, and what lessons one can draw from the Holocaust (Baer 2011: 103-104).

The Holocaust has accurately become a globalized and cosmopolitan memory that transcends specific groups and goes beyond those nations who were directly affected. As a consequence, people are finding structural resemblances between the Holocaust and their own traumatic experiences (Baer 2011: 95).

[28] Since 1956, after the termination of the Spanish protectorate in Morocco, about 2,500 Moroccan Sephardim immigrated to Spain (Menny 2013: 58; cf Días-Mas & Romeu Ferré 2013: 225). In the 1980s Jews from Chile and Argentina immigrated to Spain as well, escaping their dictatorial home countries. These Jews were secular and

survey questionnaires show high levels of anti-Semitism (Baer 2013: 107, 109). According to surveys and scholarly analyses, Spain is the most anti-Semitic place in Europe (Baer & López 2012: 1, 3; Baer & López, 2015; Pedrosa 2007).[29]

In the backdrop of anti-Semitism in Spain among ordinary people, the state has enacted a law, in 2015, enabling Sephardim from Sarajevo and all over the world to 'return' to Spain, and/or obtain a Spanish citizenship. Would the Sephardim be interested in such option despite the recurrent anti-Semitism? Fifteen years previously to the Sephardic 'law of return' there was a wave of Sarajevo Jewish immigration to Spain, i.e., during the Bosnian war in the 1990s. The Jewish Community in Madrid and its president at that time, Samuel Toledano, was responsible for providing assistance to the 104 Bosnian refugees (not all of them were Jewish) who came to Spain from Sarajevo during this time (L. Maestro, Personal Communication, 24.4.2018; Kerkkänen 2001: 175). Lea Maestro, who escaped with her family to Spain in the 1990s, with whom I got in contact with through the Jewish Community in Madrid, reveals:

> We were invited by King Juan Carlos who sent an invitation through the Federacion de Comunidades judias de Madrid [The Jewish Community in Madrid] to the Jewish Community in Sarajevo. The king wanted to save our lives and he invited all Sarajevo Sephardim to return to the homeland of the Sephardim. First, we arrived to Madrid, then we came to Lloret de mar where we spent 3 months and finally we arrived to Málaga and stayed there from 1992-1996. In 1993, Sofía, the Queen of Spain visited us in a refugee-camp in Málaga. We were 35 families from Sarajevo in the refugee-camp and not all of us were Jewish but most came from mixed marriages. The Málaga town hall, Ayuntamiento de Mijas, employed one

understood themselves as political refugees of the Left (Menny 2013: 59) and did not approach the established Jewish institutions in Spain. Rather, they formed their own sub-institutions, which led to internal conflicts between themselves and the established Jewish institutions (Menny 2013: 60).

[29] Spanish anti-Semitism today is of course largely an anti-Semitism without Jews since the contemporary Jewish population in Spain is so small (Menny 2013: 60, 63). At the same time, there are many attempts in Spanish society to have an infrastructure addressing Jewish culture. For instance, there is a faculty for Hebrew literature and the Medieval Ages' history of Spanish Jews at the University of Madrid (Menny 2013: 78). Governmental discussions about how to protect the Spanish-Jewish culture and about Spanish-Sephardi citizenship have been ongoing since 1950 (Menny 2013: 86, 90). Furthermore, the memorial site *Museo Sefardí* opened in Toledo 1964 and it eventually became a state national museum 1969 (Menny 2013: 322, 325). Other sites such as the Jewish quarter in Girona promote an idealistic 'heritage tourism' in Spain and are partly private and non-Jewish initiatives that in turn attract Jewish tourists to visit Spain (Menny 2013: 340, 344).

member of each family. I was 7 years old at that time and we children went to school with other kids from the village and we were the first generation to learn Spanish so we helped our parents with translating [...]. In those years (1992-1996) we were members of the Jewish Community in Marbella because it was the closest Jewish Community to our village. There are three families still living in the Málaga area today. The others went back to Sarajevo when the war ended in 1996 (L. Maestro, Personal Communication, 23.5.2018).

Having elaborated upon Spain after the expulsion of the Jews and the refuge 'Spain' for Sarajevo Sephardim in the 1990s, the following sections begin by presenting the substances surrounding the current 2015 Sephardic 'law of return.' I elaborate on the general Sephardi responses to the law – in order to give a broader picture of the worldwide Sephardim's reactions. In section 2.3.4 however, I discuss the ways my interviewees in Sarajevo respond to the law.

2.3.2 Law of Return: the Sephardic Spanish Citizenship

It is estimated that approximately 3,5 million Jews in the world today have some Sephardi ancestry. There are about 13 million Jews in total so the Sephardim constitute around 27% of world Jewry (cf. Jakubowsky 2015). Many Mizrahim declare themselves Sephardim as well.

Since October 1, 2015 a bill granting Spanish citizenship to Sephardic Jews came into effect. The law was valid for three years as at first. Spanish legislators decided upon its continuation or cessation thereafter (§4). Recently it was decided that the law will be valid for one more year

(Paz, 2018). From March 2, 2015, Sephardic Jews of Portuguese origin are entitled to apply for Portuguese nationality as well, under the Portuguese Nationality Act for Descendants of Sephardic Jews.

2.3.2.1 Jurisdiction Ratione Materiae, Jurisdiction Ratione Personae

According to the Spanish law, one of the possible means of evidence to prove that someone is a Sephardic person of Spanish origin is for that person to prove that he or she knows and uses Ladino or Haketia (§1:d). The law, however, does not determine how to prove one's language use. Gonzalez Garágorri, who is responsible for the citizenship applications at the Embassy of Spain in Tel Aviv (Personal Communication, 23.7.2015), suggests that for Israeli candidates it can be useful to obtain certificates of linguistic proficiency either from the Israeli National Ladino Authority or from any well-known Israeli university with experts in Ladino studies. The purpose of permitting this form of certification is to allow applicants who still speak Ladino/Haketia today the chance to make it count.

For the rest of the potential applicants, there are many other ways listed in section §1:a-f of the Spanish law to prove that they are Sephardi, for instance, another means to prove one's Sephardi status is to submit a report from an appropriate entity that certifies that the family name of the applicant is of Sephardic lineage of Spanish origin (§1:f). According to Gonzalez Garágorri (Personal Communication, 23.7.2015), many people are confused about the value of the family name as a means of proof of Sephardi origin. There are non-official (and sometimes fake) lists of Sephardi family names currently in circulation which often give the impression that if one's name is on one of these lists, then one is automatically eligible for Spanish citizenship, and by the same token, that if one's family name is not found on one of these lists,

then one should not even try to apply for citizenship. Both conclusions are, however, false. Family name is only one of the possible means of evidence of Sephardi ancestry (M. Gonzalez Garágorri, Personal Communication, 23.7.2015).

Paragraph 2 of the Spanish bill consists of 6 sub-options for proving one's special connection to Spain. Two of these ways are (1), as I mentioned above, to verify one's knowledge of Ladino/Haketía (§ 2:b), and (2) to provide proof of a blood relationship to Spain (§ 2:d). Other requirements listed in § 3 are (1) a birth certificate, (2) a minimum proficiency in the Castilian language, and (3) knowledge of the Spanish Constitution and the social and cultural reality of Spain.

An application for Spanish citizenship on the basis of Sephardi ancestry must be submitted online, and any documents attached to it must be translated into Spanish. Gonzalez Garágorri explains that this is because the documents will come from different countries; for instance, most of those from Israel will be in Hebrew. To prevent fraud and to ensure the accuracy of the translations, it is mandatory that they be done by official translators, accredited by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and listed on the embassy's websites (M. Gonzalez Garágorri, Personal Communication, 23.7.2015). The underlying assumption of this regulation is that English is not a *lingua franca* in Europe for purposes of addressing national governments—in this case, the Spanish one. So too, one must apply for French citizenship in French. Yet not all European states uphold this view of the coextension of citizenship and ethnic language. For instance, one may use English when applying for Swedish citizenship.

2.3.2.2 Sephardi Reactions to the Law on Sephardi Spanish Citizenship

Gonzalez Garágorri tells me that already since the announcement of the new law (which took place several months before the law was finally passed and put in effect) there was a lot of interest in Spanish citizenship from Israeli Sephardim. The embassy received calls and e-mailed inquiries regarding the law every day. Generally the prospective applicants' reactions to the law were positive. "People were expecting the law to come into effect and wanted to get ready" (M. Gonzalez Garágorri, Personal Communication, 3.8.2015). Tamar Alexander who is president of the official Ladino Authority of the State of Israel provides the following, complicating perspective:

> I am afraid that millions of Jews will want to go to Spain. Lawyers are calling me and ask for help regarding some people who have interest in leaving and want to do the language test but I am not answering their questions. We are a national Ladino authority under the roof of the Ministry for Culture. I will not help my co-nationals to leave this country! (T. Alexander, Personal Communication, 2015-11-10).

By contrast, in Sarajevo, according to Javier Blanco, who, until 2016, was responsible for the Sephardic nationality-issue at the Sarajevo Spanish Embassy, the Jews' interest in obtaining a Spanish citizenship has not been significant (J. Blanco, Personal Communication, 23.7.2015). Blanco accentuates that it is a citizenship-law and not a law of return. The point [of demanding] proof of one's Sephardic status is to be sure that the applicants have a Sephardic connection. According to Blanco, thus only a few persons will be eligible to apply for citizenship from Sarajevo. "Until July 2015, one community member, David Kamhi, who also has a good command of Ladino, has asked about the new law" (J. Blanco, Personal Communication, 23.7.2015).

Since 2016, Nuño Postigo is responsible for the Sephardic nationality-issue at the Sarajevo Spanish Embassy. He maintains that it is because the Sephardim are so well integrated in

Sarajevo and because they lack knowledge of Spanish that they are not interested in the Spanish citizenship (N. Postigo, Personal Communication, 16.3.2018). Moreover, the non-residential rabbi in Sarajevo, Eliezer Papo, does not think it is in the interest of the Sarajevo Sephardim to return to Spain because it's 'too late' and they are not homeless refugees and thus the need to leave is not urgent (E. Papo, Personal Communication, 26.11.2015).

There is a private legal firm in Madrid, Tulex abogados, that specializes in immigration to Spain. According to one of its staff, Serbian-speaking Attorney Milica Stojkovic, the firm currently has many Sephardic clients who are interested in applying for Spanish citizenship. However, she is aware that since the applicant at least once shall travel to Spain during the proceeding some potential applicants will not be able to apply due to their lack of economical means. Regarding ex-Yugoslav countries, she reports that there are around 20 applicants from Serbia and one applicant from Sarajevo. Currently the firm is working closely with the Jewish Association of Sarajevo so they presume there will be a number of applicants from the region. There are none from Salonica (or any other Greek places) showing interest so far (M. Stojkovic, Personal Communication, 21.10.2015).[30]

In the main Facebook groups dedicated to Sephardic issues (such as elmundosefarad, El Mundo Sefaradhí, The Sephardic Diaspora) there is almost nothing written at all or ongoing discussions concerning the Spanish nationality option for the Sephardim. I do however know that about 2,000 Sephardim in Israel have applied for Spanish citizenship since the new law came into effect (R. Shmuel, Personal Communication, 5.9.2016). Even if little is written about the new law in the internal public, there is a Facebook-page titled 'Sephardic Spanish Citizenship' (https://www.facebook.com/SephardicSpanishCitizen-ship) with about 1,100 'likes' (23.9.2015) and a few ongoing discussions concerning the question of how to prove of

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[30] According to Milica Stojkovic the firm has a significant number of clients mainly from Argentina, Venezuela and some other Hispanic countries. In total, there are about 50 applicants (M. Stojkovic, Personal Communication, 21.10.2015).

one's Sephardic status and possible eligibility to apply for Spanish citizenship.

There is a conception circulating in the international press that offering Sephardim Spanish nationality is a symbolic act rather than an indemnifying one—in other words, there is no realistic expectation that the majority of the Sephardim will actually have the chance to 'return' to Spain (cf. the German Contingent Refugee Act[31]). Moreover, with Spain's unemployment rate (26%, i.e., every fourth person) and the recurrent anti-Semitism it is questionable if Spain is a proper place for Jews to turn (Borgestede & Müller, 2014). On the other hand, the Spanish passport is at the same time a European Union passport with which one can live and work in any of the 28 member-nations.[32]

As I showed (in section 2.3.2.1), a minimum proficiency of Spanish – not Judeo-Spanish – is required in the Sephardim's Spanish citizenship application-process. In the following section, I address the Sephardic language and its correlation with Spanish. I do this in order to give a background to the Judeo-Spanish language, to explain what kind of language Judeo-Spanish is and how it has emerged. When in section 2.3.4, I discuss my interviewees' perceptions about 'Spain,' the Judeo-Spanish language is significant as well.

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[31] From 1991 until 2004 the German states/*Bundesländer* accepted Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union. This action was based on the Contingent Refugee Act/*das Kontigentflüchtungsgesetz* (HumHAG) (1991). When the Immigration Act/*das Zuwanderungsgesetz* (ZuWG) of January 2005 came into effect, the Contingent Refugee Act was voided. It was now necessary for the Russian Jews to prove Jewish ancestry, whereas previously this was not the case (you could also bring your non-Jewish relatives). Since 2005, the applicant moreover had to show a positive integration prognosis: German language skills (unless under the age of 14) and experience of employment. Persons who experienced Nazi persecution did not however have to demonstrate an integration prognosis; they did not have to know any German. It also concerned their husbands and wives, even if they were not Jewish (JZ 2007: 2).

Since 2007 the Residence Law/*das Aufenthaltsgesetz* (AufenthG) serves as the legal basis for issues surrounding Jewish immigration from the former Soviet Union. Furthermore, Article 116:2 of the German Basic Law/*das Grundgesetz* (GG) from 1949 give those Germans who fled during the Second World War, such as Hannah Arendt, the right to come back and gain German citizenship. This clause only concerns ethnic German Jews and not the worldwide Jewish community.

[32] Already between 2010 and 2013, about 121 Sephardic Jews were granted Spanish nationality after meeting Spain's residency or naturalization rules. This was a small proportion of those who actually applied (Minder, 2015). Since the U.K. decided to leave the European Union, many British Sephardim have applied for Spanish citizenship (Jones, 2016).

2.3.3 The Judeo-Spanish dialect

Ladino is the name of the written language of Eastern Sephardim, and Judeo-Spanish the name of the spoken lingua franca of those same Sephardim until the modern era.[33] There is a diglossic language situation between the 'high prestigious' variety Ladino and the 'low prestigious' variety Judeo-Spanish (Bossong 1991: 276). As Lazar (2007: 428) explains:

> A gap, wider or narrower according to the country to which the refugees fled, began to appear between the written and spoken language on the one hand and the language of secular and rabbinical literature on the other. The language of Bible translations and prayers, which remained more resistant to the words, expressions, and syntactic patterns of the local tongue, became, in the course of the centuries, less and less comprehensible to the masses (Lazar 2007: 428).

The question as to whether Ladino/Judeo-Spanish is a variety of Spanish or a language in itself cannot be answered since there is no objective criteria concerning how to define closely related languages apart from referring to the norm that has evolved. However, from a standard Spanish perspective Judeo-Spanish is, according to Hetzer (2001: 90), an archaic Castilian with influences from at least ten other languages. Thus, the core of this language is Spanish and it also features influences from Greek, Turkish, Arabic, Hebrew and French, among other languages (Astrologo-Fonzi 1992: 128; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 44).

Astrologo-Fonzi (1992: 128) refers to the fact that the Spanish refugees in the Balkans had spoken regional dialects from their hometowns, such as Catalan, Aragonese, Castilian and Andalusian. After half a century, these dialects were 'harmonized' so that only Castilian was spoken. Thus, the Sephardim brought with them the languages that they had spoken in Spain before their expulsion along with them, and this language developed into Judeo-Spanish in their new environments. It was therefore after the expulsion that a specific Judeo-Spanish variety of language evolved and distinguished itself from Castilian and which had a similar phonetics,

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[33] In northern Marocco, the Judeo-Spanish speakers named their dialect Haketia (i.e., the Ladino of northern Morocco that was a mixture of Spanish and Arabic) (cf. Harris 2008: 21).

morphology, and syntax of the 14th and 15th centuries Castilian (Astrologo-Fonzi 1992: 128; Harris 2005: 110; Lazar 2007: 428; Spolsky 2014: 140, 145).[34] Hundreds of archaic Spanish words were preserved in Judeo-Spanish and many of these are no longer in use in modern Spanish (*ladinar* – to translate, *abolar* – to die and *dias de kútio* – days of the week are examples) (Quintana 2007: 430).

> Nach der Ankunft in ihrem neuen Umfeld, in der Türkei und auf dem Balkan, verloren die Sepharden mit der Zeit die Verbindung zu ihrer alten Heimat Spanien und zu ihrer spanischen Muttersprache. Es gab keine lebendigen und intensiven Kontakte mehr mit der Pyrenäenhalbinsel: die Sprache erstarrte und erhielt keine neuen Impulse (Nezirović 2002: 114).

Thus, there was not much contact between speakers of Judeo-Spanish with speakers of Castilian after the 16th century, although some Sephardim may have kept contacts with the 'old world,' including the Iberian Peninsula, that slightly influenced the linguistic development of Ladino (cf. Penny 2002: 29). However, as the linguist and Sephardic studies scholar Aldina Quintana maintains:

> The lack of contact between the Sephardim and Spain after 1492 led to a situation in which the Sephardim did not make use of the standardized norm of Spanish and allowed for the conservation of many rustic and popular forms, rejected by the Castilian norm, as well as an extraordinary geographical and social linguistic variation (Quintana 2007: 428).

In the Sephardic communities of the Ottoman Empire, language contact occurred with local languages, especially with Turkish and Italian, which in turn led to loans of words. From the 16th century, Hebrew influence on Judeo-Spanish intensified and words and expressions were adopted. Hebrew influence is moreover visible in some syntactic structures. With the Alliance Israélite Universelle from 1865, French replaced Turkish and Hebrew elements in what is called the New-Judeo-Spanish (Quintana 2007: 428).

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[34] Various opinions exist regarding the emergence of Ladino but I believe that Judeo-Spanish emerged after the expulsion (cf. Bossong 2008: 90; Harris 2005: 99). Nevertheless, Ladino was another word for Spanish among the Jews in Spain (Bossong 2008: 88). There is also a persisting belief that Jews in Spain spoke Judeo-Spanish as early as the 13th or 14th century (Quintana 2007: 429; Harris 2005: 100; Ray 2013: 138; I. S. Vučina, Personal Communication, 15.7.2016).

For many centuries, Judeo-Spanish was written first with the Rashi (Hebrew) script and then with standard Hebrew letters, and from the 20th century onwards it was written with the Latin alphabet instead.[35] There were attempts to write Judeo-Spanish with the Cyrillic alphabet as well (Nezirović 2002: 105; Lazar 2007: 431; cf. Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 114; Harris 2005: 101; Schwarzwald 2008: 425; Ginio 2015: 22;).

Quintana (2013: 36, 38) explains that the grammar-book *Otsar Hahayim* by Israel Hayim de Belogrado (1823) was the first published modern Judeo-Spanish grammar book. *Otsar Hahayim* was a very central work in the standardization of Judeo-Spanish spelling. There are, for example, spellings in the book that depart from the traditional spelling norms of the Sephardi rabbinate (Quintana 2013: 40). In fact, Hayim de Belogrado adapted the Judeo-Spanish spelling to the contemporary (19th century) pronunciation of Judeo-Spanish. Therefore, in the Balkan region, Quintana suggests the applicability of the Vukian principle[36], which predicts that a language's orthography will shift towards its phonetic spelling.

Popular religious works in Judeo-Spanish appeared shortly after the arrival of the Sephardim in the Ottoman Empire (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 61; Ginio 2015: 21). This in turn led to the emergence of the Eastern Judeo-Spanish tendency to retain archaic forms from 15th century Castilian (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 60; Penny 2002: 27). In fact, Castilian as the 'literary language of high culture,' chiefly among the Western Sephardim, and the more colloquial Judeo-Spanish of the Eastern Sephardim were quite different (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 62). Moreover, there were two main dialects of Judeo-Spanish in the Ottoman Empire: that of

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[35] Already in the 13th century, Jews began to translate the Bible into Spanish in Latin letters, i.e., so called *enladinamientos*. Thus, one can say that Ladino emerged through these translations in Spain (cf. Dilligan 1992; Ginio 2015: 42).

[36] Under influence of Western European nationalist Romanticism in the 19th century, a Serbian literary language, also known as 'the Belgrade style' developed. The latter was based on the vernacular in its Ekavian form (Ronelle 2006: 417). The Serb linguistic reformer and cultural historian Vuk Stefanović Karadžić was instrumental in this development. He made sure that many church language elements disappeared and were replaced by popular vernacular words (Naylor 1980: 71; Wachtel 1998: 25). Karadžić and his enthusiastic student and follower Daničić, fought to reform the vernacular in a *write-as-you-speak* manner and succeeded in implementing this maxim as a guiding principle of the language's standardization (Naylor 1980: 42-73; Djokić 2010: 14; Bugarski 2013: 161-162).

Salonica, Monastir, Bosnia, Skopje, Bulgaria and Romania, and that of Istanbul, Izmir and other places in Turkey and Rhodes (Harris 2008: 23).

In the 16th century Sephardic intellectual activities were flourishing in all of these places. Owing to the relatively small number of Jewish centers that existed in Ottoman lands, scholars could support and easily exchange ideas with each other (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 49). However, apart from a middle- and upper-class élite, literacy was not widespread among the Sephardim (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 51). All the same, Sephardim spoke and understood Judeo-Spanish, while Sephardic religious culture was mostly communicated in Hebrew, though many religious works were published in Judeo-Spanish (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 51). Hebrew was considered the most prestigious religious language. Its perceived cultural value exceeded that of the Judeo-Spanish of the masses (Bunis 2000: 9; Simović & Filipović 2011: 571).

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Judeo-Spanish was never governed by formal linguistic conventions and thus there is no single standard form Judeo-Spanish, though the language was in wide colloquial use (cf. Hetzer 2001: VII; Harris 2008: 26). Judeo-Spanish was not merely a language or dialect of the masses alone. Highly Europeanized Sephardi *maskilim* ('enlightened ones'), adherents of the 20th century modernist Jewish movement known as the Haskalah, wrote both in Hebrew and Judeo-Spanish. They published a magazine, *El Lunar*, (1865) in Judeo-Spanish with the intended goal educating readers in that language (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 106; Guillon 2013: 48; Efron 2016: 21). Moreover, the 19th and 20th centuries saw the publication of many Judeo-Spanish

translations of French, Italian, Russian, Hebrew and Yiddish novels. The Salonican Jacob Jona, among others, wrote popular songs in Judeo-Spanish. From 1870 to 1880 the Ladino press expanded, and many Zionist newspapers in Judeo-Spanish appeared (Birri-Tomovska 2012: 40; Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 111-112; Cohen 2014: 12). Until 1941, there were about 60 Jewish newspapers published in Yugoslavia (Birri-Tomovska 2012: 288).[37]

Having given an overview history of the identity-option 'Spain,' including the emergence of the Judeo-Spanish language I now move on to my interviewees' conceptions of 'Spain.' Before doing so however, I want to clarify the relevance of this entire sub-chapter on 'Spain' for the question of Sarajevo Sephardic identity. One could of course say that it is irrelevant to speak about the history of Jews in Spain since it was such a long time ago (500 years) that the Jews in Sarajevo were expelled from there. Besides, the Sephardic culture and Judeo-Spanish language develops only in the diaspora, after the expulsion of Spain's Jews. However, as Ray (2013: 155) points out: "During this process, pre-Expulsion Iberia began to function as an idealized homeland, a marker of communal identity and the centerpiece of their cultural patrimony." I moreover think it is important to provide a historical context to the Sephardic Jews in order to understand the transitions in their communities better. Besides, because of the newly enacted citizenship law enabling Sephardim all over the world to 'return to Spain' and/or to obtain a Spanish citizenship, Spain could obviously be an attractive option for Sarajevo Jews today.

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[37] Runge (1995: 16-17) writes that Yiddish (as both a language and literature) also was fostered, at least officially. Birobidzhan was appointed as a Jewish autonomous city in Siberia in 1928, and the official language here was Yiddish even if the majority of the city's population did not speak the language. During the 1920s and 30s Yiddish was the official language in Belarus along with Russian, Polish and Belorussian. "(…) by 1933, almost half of all Jewish children in school in Belorussia and the Ukraine, areas of the former Pale, were attending a Yiddish school" (Gitelman 1991: 10). There were also newspapers in Yiddish, for instance in Moscow, Charkiv and Minsk (Gitelman 1991: 11).

In what follows, I analyze my interviewees reflections upon belonging in 'Spain' and their perceptions of the Judeo-Spanish language. As far as I know, there is no existing study regarding how Judeo-Spanish speakers conceive of the relation between Judeo-Spanish and standard Spanish. Hetzner (2001: VI) however suggests that Sephardi Jews are 'returning' to standard Spanish instead of to Judeo-Spanish. He maintains that this behavior contributes to an obsolescence of the spoken and non-standardized Judeo-Spanish (Hetzner (2001: VI). In the next section, I explore conceptions of my subjects' in Sarajevo on this matter.

2.3.4 Spain and Jewish-Sephardic Identification in Sarajevo

Among my interviewees in *Group One,* Tea Abinun was born in Sarajevo in 1998. Her mother is Serbian-Orthodox and her father Sephardic. Tea is an M.A. student of musicology in Sarajevo. My second source, Vladimir Andrle, was born in Sarajevo in 1986. His mother is Croatian-Catholic and his father Sephardic. Vladimir is a coordinator of humanitarian and cultural activities at *La Benevolencia.* My third source, A.A., did not wish to be named. She was born in Sarajevo in 1994. Her mother is Croatian-Catholic and her father Sephardic. A.A. is an M.A. student of musicology in Sarajevo.

The youngest adults of my reference-group understand English as an important language that they wish to learn. For instance, A.A. says that: "It's difficult without English because English is *universal*" (emphasis mine). Tea Abinun adds: "English is international." Correspondingly, when deliberating upon the value of Jewish languages, specifically Hebrew and Ladino, Tea Abinun elaborates:

I communicate in Bosnian with relatives in Israel […]. I just learnt very little Hebrew in the Jewish Community and there is no possibility to learn Ladino, there are no teachers. I learnt a little Spanish at the Jewish Community. But only elderly speak Ladino and in five years, no one will be able to speak it.

Among this younger generation there is thus a prevailing belief that Ladino, in the near future,

will no longer exist among the Sephardim in Sarajevo. On Ladino, A.A.[38] explains:

If Ladino is a Spanish dialect? I don't know […]. Only old people speak it […]. Yes, it is a dialect and a combination of different languages. Since everyone can read the Latin alphabet I think it's more appropriate to use it. But I like the Hebrew alphabet more because it's a Sephardic tradition.

Vladimir Andrle tells me:

I had no opportunity to see written Ladino. The Sephardi culture is important but there is no chance to preserve it here. It's positive of course to revitalize Ladino in Israel.

When discussing the option for the Sephardim to return to Spain under the recently introduced

law offering citizenship to persons of Sephardi origin, Vladimir contemplates:

I mean, Spain did that because of the expulsion of its Jews in Medieval times. It doesn't have anything to do with the European crisis. Spain gave that chance to all Sephardim all over the world to connect with their Sephardic roots. I would never go to Spain. The Jewish Community there is really small and Spain is very anti-Semitic.
The EU is very attractive to me even though the EU made a mistake by taking on some countries that weren't able to catch up with the successful ones, for example Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, or even Greece. Bosnia is also not ready for

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[38] A.A. from the youngest and Tina Tauber from the middle generation did not wish to include a photo portrait of themselves in this thesis.

the EU economically nor for some EU-values. But I am always for the EU! I would like it for Bosnia to be in the EU from a personal perspective […].

The same person clarified in a written correspondence (via Facebook messenger) on another occasion (4.5.2015) under what fragile conditions Spanish was taught in the Sarajevan Jewish Community:

We were 8 people aged 22-50 years old that attended a Spanish course at the Jewish Community. It was between November 2013 and July 2014 but the group fell apart so we couldn't continue.

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Among the interviewees in *Group Two,* Yehuda Kolonomos was born in Sarajevo in 1968. His mother is Sephardic and his father Croatian. Yehuda works as a senior assistant at the Academy of Music in Mostar. My second source, Tina Tauber was born in Sarajevo in 1982 and works as a tour guide. Her father comes from a Sephardi-Ashkenazi family and her mother from a Serbian-Orthodox family. Her mother converted to Judaism in 1992 around the time when Tina's family emigrated to Israel. Finally, Igor Koẑemjakin was born in Sarajevo in 1980. His father comes from a Sephardi-Ashkenazi family and his mother from a Hungarian-Italian-Croatian family. His mother converted to Judaism in 1991. Igor is a counselor at the interreligious council in Sarajevo. He is moreover *chazan* in the Jewish Community.

Igor Koẑemjakin, from this generation, regards the viability of Ladino like this:

There is no in-depth interest in learning Ladino. I for instance read translations from Ladino to Bosnian about Laura Papo Bohoreta but I listen to Flora Jagoda in Ladino.

Ladino is not a dialect but different variants of Ladino have different influence, like from French and Turkish. I prefer Ladino with Hebrew letters […]. Actually, I've heard that in Israel people first study Spanish and then Ladino. Anyway, you can of course be Sephardic without the Sephardic language; look at our community!

Igor says the following about the option to return to Spain:

I think this should have happened a long time ago, not only for Sephardim but for all people who were expelled during the Spanish Inquisition. Anyway, it's never too late and the Sephardi culture is homogenous in that sense: although still living in exile they see themselves more as a Spanish than an Israeli diaspora.

From a personal perspective, I wouldn't apply. I don't even know if I can because only half of my family is Sephardi and the other half is Ashkenazi. I don't feel connected to Spain but to the Bosnian Sephardi culture. We have been here for 450 years and that is special in the Sephardi world. Besides, I have too many citizenships. It would be dangerous for me to apply for another […]. I have the Bosnian, Croatian and the Israeli passport. My grandmother was born in Croatia so it was easy to get the Croatian citizenship. If I wouldn't have had that one I would maybe had applied for the Spanish one, in order to have a European Union citizenship.

When talking about the new Spanish citizenship law, Tina Tauber from this middle generation says:

It was 500 years ago and the new law doesn't directly influence me. In my opinion, they are free to take the Arabic refugees instead of Jewish refugees; they need a home more than we do. By the way, they kicked us out of Spain so why do they need us now? Because of their bad economy that they think the Jews will improve? If someone kicks you out once that's like, thank you, bye.

Yehuda Kolonomos has a Croatian passport, and adds that his family was in Spain 500 years ago. "Spain of today is far from what it was back then. Besides Spain has kind of the same bad connotation for Sephardim as Germany has for Ashkenazim."

Among the interviewees in *Group Three,* all three women are pensioners today. Matilda Finci was born to a Sephardic family in Sarajevo in 1935. My second source in this group, Laura Papo Ostojić was born to a Sephardic family in Sarajevo in 1939. Finally, Erna Kaveson Debevec was also born to a Sephardic family in Sarajevo, in 1933. I moreover consulted two key experts belonging to this generation: Jakob Finci, who is president of the Jewish Federal Community of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Eli Tauber, who is responsible for its cultural activities. Finci was born to a Sephardic family in 1943, in an Italian-run concentration camp on the island of Rab. Eli Tauber was born in Sarajevo to a Sephardi-Ashkenazi family in 1950.

Among this generation, older than 55, Laura Papo Ostojić's conceptions of Ladino are as follows:

> Ladino is Old Spanish. I prefer the Latin letters because no one can read Hebrew. I like to read Laura Papo Bohoreta and I deeply love Ladino music. There are such beautiful songs by Flora Jagoda.

Matilda Finci of this same generation elaborates:

> I love to listen to Spanish. When my parents were in Madrid, they found a street called Levi and my mother was a Levi! Ladino is important of course because there is so much wisdom […]. No way it's a dialect! It's Old Spanish.

Members of this generation agree that Ladino not is a Spanish dialect and they, like the other generations, do not experience a Ladino revival in Sarajevo today. Laura Papo Ostojić is characteristic of this group:

> It is not a Spanish dialect but the grammar is Spanish. There is lots of Hebrew, Portuguese, Turkish and Slavic influence. With the Latin alphabet, it's more understandable.

There is no point for young people to learn Ladino. I personally feel connected to the prayers in Ladino and to the Romanzas.

Erna Kaveson Debevec speaks Judeo-Spanish with two people today – David Kamhi and Moris Albahari.[39] She reveals that her son has a Spanish citizenship. He studied standard Spanish in Sarajevo and works as a translator. She says,

My son lived in Spain during the Bosnian civil war in the 1990s, and he worked as a Spanish translator. My granddaughter was born in Spain and I've been there a few times. Being in Spain made me learn new words and see the differences in Spanish and Ladino. For example, they pronounce 'gente' [people] as 'hente', a we as 'gente.' Although five hundred years have passed, I still feel a connection to Spain.

Jakob Finci contemplates as follows upon Ladino:

Ladino is a dying language, similar to Yiddish, which is also dying. The tendency today is to speak modern Spanish […]. Ladino is as an old language and if I may make a comparison, it's as if we speak here the Old Slavic language. Nobody would understand it.

Regarding the Spanish law Finci states:

Spain did have a similar law before, which made it possible for Sephardim to obtain a Spanish citizenship but one condition by then was to have lived two years in Spain. This is the first time that Sephardim can obtain citizenships without taking a step on the Spanish ground. The biggest interest comes from Turkey and Israel. Other Western European countries are not so interested in it because many of them got the Schengen[40] [privileges].
I don't think there are going to be many residents in Sarajevo who would like this double citizenship, maybe 20-30 people. The Spanish Embassy and the Cervantes Institute from Belgrade will organize a testing of Spanish, at least Judeo-Spanish, i.e., the kitchen language and the language of my grandmother. It would be hard to talk about democracy and human rights in this language. I think this testing will discourage people even to apply.
I am personally a candidate to apply for the Spanish citizenship. I am at least thinking about applying. Anyway, it's not easy to prove your Sephardic origin […].

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[39] There is a film *Saved by Language* about Moris Albahari, and it is about how his Judeo-Spanish language skills helped him to survive the Holocaust: https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=R0qZYqb1OIU.
[40] Schengen is an agreement between 26 European states with a common visa-policy, allowing citiziens to pass freely across the border controls. Neither Bosnia-Herzegovina nor any other of the South Slavic countries are part of the Schengen agreement.

> In my case it's pretty clear because all my family from both sides are Sephardic Jews, but members of the Community of mixed marriages will have troubles with this. It's not easy […].

Eli Tauber tells me:

> I am personally interested in obtaining a Spanish citizenship. I think in some ways it belongs to me because of my Sephardic heritage. I am into the Sephardic culture in Bosnia and we don't know what will happen in Bosnia, where and when there will be an ISIS attack. What I'm working with could be more progressive in Spain […]. I plan to apply. There are special criteria to fulfill […]. I will also help some people to get prepared. There was a person from the Spanish Embassy informing us about the law. The problem is that one has to go to Spain and apply and the procedure is […]. It will take time for people to adapt. We are a small community, about 80 young people […]. Just some of them are interested in the new citizenship. We are not under pressure. It's positive but too late […] 500 years ago so, who has a Spanish connection? Actually, we are really connected. Just a few are speaking Ladino but many know what they are singing, the Sephardic Romanzas […]. We are a Spanish diaspora here. We preserved Spanish not Hebrew. Spain was a homeland. I always thought my roots are from Toledo. When I went there if felt as if had been there before. The Transito synagogue […]. I felt I know these streets, they were so familiar, and the form of the synagogue […]. So, in the same moment you have a connection.

The subjects acknowledge Spain's role as a touchstone in their identity creation through their conceptions of Ladino and Spanish. To my mind, a consciousness of being Sephardic is transferred to younger generations through the belief that one can be Sephardic beyond the territory of *Sefarad* (Spain) and the Sephardic language (cf. Días-Mas & Romeu Ferré 2013: 235). According to Laura Papo Ostojić "there is no point for young people to learn Ladino." One of her younger fellow Sephardim, Igor Kožemjakin confirms this: "(…) anyway, you can of course be Sephardic without the Sephardic language; look at our community!"

Moreover, Spain has a romantic connotation in this transmission, representing: "(…) a longing for a better time, whether or not such a time ever actually existed" (Ray 2013: 161). Spain as an identity-creating factor is a shared experience of something abstract and far away, rather than something based on concrete memories of the past. In this regard, Eli Tauber's statement is illustrative:

> I always thought my roots are from Toledo. When I went there if felt as if had been there before. The Transito synagogue […]. I felt I know these streets, they were so familiar, and the form of the synagogue […]. So, in the same moment you have a connection.

Statements by the younger and middle generations indicate that Spain of today is not necessarily an attractive place to 'return' to. Vladimir Andrle said: "The Jewish Community there is really small and Spain is very anti-Semitic." Yehuda Kolonomos recalls the Sephardic history: "Spain of today is far from what it was back then [500 years ago]. Besides Spain has kind of the same bad connotation for Sephardim as Germany has for Ashkenazim." Tina Tauber recalls: "If someone kicks you out once that's like, thank you, bye". Spain is thus seen in retrospect to the time of the expulsion of the Jews. The conception that Spain is anti-Semitic today is also prevalent. Nevertheless, across the three generations there is more interest in Spain than in Israel. When discussing national affiliations, Vladimir Andrle expressed his preference for certain countries and aversion to others, but does not include Israel in his consideration of those other countries:

> I think Yugoslavia is influential in my life. I was only a child but the mentality of Yugoslavia […]. It's more appealing than the system today.
> In football, I am for Bosnia. Our ancestors came here 500 years ago. Why should I be loyal towards Spain? Maybe only if Spain would play against someone else than Bosnia I would be for Spain.

The younger generation is more likely to favor Spanish than Judeo-Spanish and it is in this way that the interest for the Sephardic language is displayed. Erna Kaveson Debevec from the older generation, and who is one of very few Judeo-Spanish-speakers in Sarajevo today, said that her son has obtained a Spanish citizenship. He studied standard Spanish in Sarajevo and works as a translator today.

Having discussed my interviewees perceptions of Spain, I now move on to the identity-option 'Yugoslavia.' The middle and elderly generations of my interviewees have first-hand experience of living in Yugoslavia and the country has probably been influential in the identity formation of the youngest interviewees as well – even if they were born after its disintegration.

2.4 An Identity-Creating Factor: Yugoslavia

In the following I provide a historical sketch of Yugoslavia's history – including the events that lead to the disintegration of the country and the emergence of an independent Bosnia-Herzegovina. In the last section, I discuss my interviewees' identity-conceptions in relation to 'Yugoslavia.' The first sections therefore serve as an historical context to the discussion on my interviewees' perceptions. The reader may think that some of the episodes in Yugoslavia's history (that I explore here) have little to do with its Jews. I nonetheless believe it is important to provide a 'bigger picture' of Yugoslavia and not narrow down the discussion to the Jews' position there. This is because the Yugoslav Jews did not live in a vacuum, but were part of Yugoslavia's general population.

2.4.2 The First Yugoslavia (1918-1941)

I begin with the first Yugoslavia and also explain how it ceased to exist with the occupation of the country by Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and their allies. Moreover, I pinpoint circumstances surrounding the First World War in Yugoslav territories. I thus present a general history, which in the next section (2.2.2.1), will be followed by the specific experience of Jews in the first

Yugoslavia and the aftermath of the World War.

In the 1830s Croatian intellectuals wished to preserve Croat identity within Habsburg. At the same time, the Serbs strove for emancipation from the Ottomans. Thus, it was useful for Serbs and Croats to cooperate, and this gave rise to the Yugoslav Idea (initially called the Illyrian movement) (Wachtel 1998: 1; Djokić 2003: 140; Rusinow 2003: 12-13; Greble 2011: 7).

Contrary to pan-Slavism, whose proponents sought to unite all Slavic people, the Illyrian movement was aimed at the South Slavs. Its goal was for the Croatians to be united with the Serbians and to speak the Illyrian, Croato-Serb people's language. Instead of Kajkavian, the Illyrians chose Štokavian with an Ijekavian dialect as the South Slavic 'common tongue.' Consistent with this ideal, the Vienna Agreement of 1850 enshrined 'Serbo-Croatian' as the national language of the southern Slavs (Wachtel 1998: 27, 31; Djokić 2010: 26-27; Alexander 2006: 383-384, 410-411; Bugarski 2013: 161; Djokić 2013: 57). However, the Agreement did not refer in detail to the appellation of the Yugoslav language and people, and the agreement itself did not standardize Serbo-Croatian even if it bolstered the Croats' strivings to be united with the Serbs (Nuorluoto 2012: 139). Subsequently, Croatian became one part of the dual concept of 'Serbo-Croatian' or 'Croato-Serbian' (Naylor 1980: 77).

The Yugoslav Idea survived the 19th century. An updated version that centered on Croat-Serb political cooperation became dominant in Habsburg Croatia in the years leading up to the First World War. Revolutionary youth groups – among them Young Bosnia – in Habsburg-held South Slav territories also embraced Yugoslav (as well as Croat and Serb) nationalism. Meanwhile, the Yugoslav Idea was increasingly being accepted by Serbia's elites, especially by its intellectuals (Trgovčević 2003). Owing to a complex combination of factors, including the outbreak of The First World War, following the assassination of Habsburg archduke Franz

Ferdinand and duchess Sophie in Sarajevo by a Young Bosnian, a united Yugoslav state – the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes – eventually emerged at the end of the war (Pavlowitch 2003; Djokić, 2007, 12-39). Because of their military strength and because they were the largest group, the Serbs exercised a political (though not necessarily cultural and economic) hegemony in the kingdom (Cohen 1995: 2; Wachtel 1998: 1; Djokić 2010: 5; Greble 2011: 9; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 110). Even the new country's official name symbolically suggested the Serbs' dominance (Djokić 2003: 139; Djokić 2007: 48).

The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes – as the country was officially known until 1929, when it was renamed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia – was in the official discourse a Yugoslav (i.e., South Slav) nation-state. The South Slavs, allegedly comprising three 'tribes' of the same nation—Serbs, Croats and Slovenes—made up around 82% of the country's population of 12 million. (Montenegrins were officially considered, and many considered themselves to be Serbs; the Muslim Slavs of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sandžak were considered Muslim Yugoslavs, or Serbs or Croats, while Macedonian Slavs were officially considered 'Southern Serbs' regardless of how they actually felt). The main non-South Slavic groups, who totaled around 2 million people, included Jews, ethnic Italians, ethnic Germans, ethnic Hungarians, ethnic Turks, ethnic Albanians and ethnic Romanians (some of whom may have been Vlachs) (Wachtel 1998: 66-67, 71-72; Djokić 2003: 142; Jović 2004: 282; Calic 2010: 81; Djokić 2010: 4-6; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 105, 107, 118; Djokić 2013: 59, 310). Scholars have subsequently estimated that in 1921, there were 8.5% Slovenes, 3.9% Macedonians (some of whom probably felt as Bulgarians), 6.2% Muslims, 23.3% Croats and 40.1% Serbs (including Montenegrins) in Yugoslavia. Thus, none of the main groups constituted an absolute majority. Serbs were merely the largest minority. However, as already stated, the South Slavs together made up an absolute majority of Yugoslavia's population, which gave credence to those who viewed the country as a South Slav nation state. Serbs, Croats

and Slovenes were officially considered the Yugoslav nation(s) (Djokić 2006: 2794). As for Yugoslavia's Jews, in 1921 they comprised only 0.6% of the country's population, as well as 0.6% of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Kočović 1998: 332, 338).

The Serb-Croat-Slovene kingdom was not only a state in which the Serbs (and arguably Croats and Slovenes, too) dominated, it was also a state whose politics was male-dominated. Or, as Wachtel (1998: 72) put it: "(…) the ethnocultural ideal of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was male and South Slavic." Serbia's prewar universal male franchise was extended to the territory of the new South Slav state, but women still did not have the right to vote (this changed only in 1945). This also meant that they could not participate in the country's political life (Wachtel 1998: 71-72; Calic 2010: 86).

In 1921, Yugoslavia adopted a Serbian-style centralized Constitution (Wachtel 1998: 75-76; Djokić 2006: 2794; Djokić 2007: 14-15). The domination of Serbs from prewar Serbia continued. It was evident, for example, in their near monopoly over key political posts, including the post of Prime Minister (during the interwar period only one Prime Minister was not a Serb: the Slovene political leader Anton Korošec) (Djokić 2003: 145-146; Jović 2004: 282; Mitrović 2007: 299; Djokić 2011: 62; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 108; Žigon 2014: 40). Notwithstanding, as Djokić (2007: 1) points out, there were Serbs who opposed centralism as well as the royal dictatorship introduced by King Alexander in 1929. Politically, there appeared to be little difference between a (Greater) Serbia and Yugoslavia (Wachtel 1998: 74, 78; Djokić 2006: 2794; Djokić 2007: 43, 265, 274, 277; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 110; Djokić 2013: 61). Most artists and intellectuals, rather than impose one cultural model, sought to create a Yugoslav synthesis, while "[e]ven in the field of economy, Croat accusations of Serb hegemony are hard to sustain" (Djokić 2007: 266; cf. Wachtel 1998: 82; Wachtel 2003: 243-244). In the second half of the 1930s, as Yugoslavia educated its own officer cadre, non-Serbs were gaining greater representation in the army officer corps (Pavlowitch 1983: 447-452).

Following the culmination of a political crisis caused by the murder of Croat Peasant Party deputies in the Belgrade parliament in the summer of 1928, King Alexander abolished the parliament and all political parties in early January of 1929. He introduced his 'personal regime' (thus following what was becoming a pattern in an increasingly authoritarian Europe). The royal dictatorship attempted to introduce an 'integral Yugoslavism,' whereby the state no longer accepted old 'tribal' (i.e. Serb, Croat, Slovene) identities, but rather promoted a single, Yugoslav identity for the southern Slavs. In October of the same year, the country was officially renamed Yugoslavia, and the regime introduced new administrative units called *banovine*, using allegedly geographic rather than historical criteria (Djokić 2003: 146, 149-150; Djokić 2006: 2796; Djokić 2007: 73-74; Djokić 2010: 5; Djokić 2011: 63; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 108, 110; Djokić 2013: 61).

Politics came to bear the stamp of violence and oppression. The royal family was not only ethnically Serbian, but increasingly also perceived as such by non-Serbs, regardless of King Alexander's avowed Yugoslavism. At the same time, nationalist groups opposing the regime, especially among ethnic Albanians, Macedonians and Croats, grew in strength (Magnusson 1989: 41; Djokić 2011: 70). Magnusson (1989: 40) writes that there were different opinions among the ethnic partisans and among the citizenry at large about the very formation of Yugoslavia, and on the question of to what extent various groups of people were to be autonomous within the limits of the state. The main issue that the South Slavs could not agree upon was whether the country should be politically and culturally centralized or decentralized (Djokić 2003: 141; Djokić 2006: 2794; Calic 2010: 85-86; Djokić 2011: 63; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 112-113).

It is hard to say in what ways the political crisis caused by the national question and Serb-Croat rivalry influenced the position of the Yugoslav Jews. The political instability most probably

affected all citizens of interwar Yugoslavia including its Jews. The Jews however did not take part in any political activities that were opposed to the Yugoslav politics. They seemed to have been loyal to and having identified with Yugoslavia. Tellingly, very few Jews emigrated from the country which I will discuss in detail later. In interwar Yugoslavia, there were approximately 65,000 members of the 'Federation of Jewish Communities' and as I mentioned, 10% of Sarajevo's population was Jewish (Greble 2011: 12). The Sephardim constituted 85% of the local Jewry. Seven out of eight synagogues in the city at that time were Sephardic (Greble 2011: 37).[41]

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Yugoslavia did not disintegrate from within in 1941–as the second Yugoslavia would do in 1991. The first Yugoslavian state was invaded and occupied by Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and their allies in 1941 (Djokić 2007: 269; Calic 2010: 137). Some 55,000 Jews, mostly from Germany, Czechoslovakia, Austria, passed through Yugoslavia before April 1941 (Ristović 2001: 512). Britain, too, pressured Yugoslavia to limit the number of Jewish refugees it allowed to enter the country and then continue towards Palestine.

In one infamous incident from 1941, around 1,000 Jews from Austria, Czechoslovakia and Germany were awaiting permission to continue their journey from Yugoslavia to Palestine (the

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[41] The total number of Ashkenazim in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was however 60% while the Sephardim constituted 40% (Friedenreich 1979: 58). See further on the Ashkenazim in Sarajevo in Hahamović (1966: 142-152).

so called Kladovo transport), when invading German forces arrived and executed nearly all of them (the survivors were later transported to extermination camps) (Ristović 2001: 513; Monoscheck 1993: 62).

> The neutral countries (Switzerland, Spain, Sweden, Turkey), anxious to maintain their relations and very profitable economic connections with the Axis states, in particular Germany, pursued a restrictive refugee policy. This greatly affected Jewish refugees from Yugoslavia and restricted the possibilities for their rescue and survival. Those who in spite of all the obstacles managed to enter neutral countries were granted only temporary refuge and threatened with extradition, detention in camps for foreigners, or expulsion (Ristović 2001: 514).

The number of Jews who managed to reach Spain during the war is not clear. Most of them however only went via Spain and continued to United States or Latin American countries (Ristović 2010).

During the Second World War, the Independent State of Croatia – comprising Croatia (minus most of Dalmatia), the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and parts of Serbia – was governed by the Croatian fascist organization Ustaša (Wachtel 1998: 128; Calic 2010: 138; Dulić 2011: 82; Greble 2011: 2). The Ustaša sought to homogenize the state's population, and thus endeavoured to kill and deport all Serbs, Jews and Roma, who comprised more than a third of the country's population. Croatian nationalists viewed Serbs as a threat to the Croatian nation, and the official Croatian state policy was to shoot them or send them to Ustaša concentration camps, while 250,000 Serbs were forcibly converted to Catholicism (Wachtel 1998: 128; Goldstein 1999: 8; Greble 2009: 123; Calic 2010: 139; Byford 2011: 302; Dulić 2011: 83; Jović 2011: 122).

The Ustaša argued that Bosnia and Herzegovina should be part of the Independent State of Croatia because Muslims were descendants of the Croatian nobility that had converted to Islam in the Middle Ages (Greble 2009: 120; Dulić 2011: 84). The Ustaša regime defined a citizen as a member of the Aryan race who was supportive of the Independent State of Croatia (Greble 2009: 122). Foreigners, i.e. non-Croats by blood, were excluded from public life (Greble 2009:

123). The Jews were forced to wear yellow stars, and they were not allowed to socialize with or marry Aryans (Greble 2011: 66). Moreover, the state took property and work-places away from them (Calic 2010: 143).

The factors that precipitated conflict in the first Yugoslavia – asymmetric power-relations (due to a Serbian and Croat struggle over political and cultural dominance) and nationalism – would be present in the second Yugoslavia as well. Therefore, there is a degree of continuation between the history of two Yugoslavias. Moreover, the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the ensuing rise of nation-states in the Balkans exposed southern Slavs to 20th century, Western-style radical nationalism, and by extension to the political authoritarianism, that ultimately sparked two World Wars. Consequently, one could say that it was the modernization of the Balkans, and the World Wars themselves, which, more than any other factors, transformed the Balkan Sephardic communities and disrupted them nearly to the point of extinction (cf. Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: xxi-xxii; Ivanković 2009: 56; Ivanković 2011: 151; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 34; Вучина Симовић 2016: 80, 101, 104).

I have showed challenges facing interwar Yugoslavia, especially Serbian dominance and the promotion of a Yugoslav identity for the southern Slavs – when those southern Slavs were not equally represented by the state. In the following section, I explore the specific position of Jews in first Yugoslavia: how their 'Federation of Jewish Communities' was categorized (as a religious and/or ethnic association), their language use, and the role of Zionism in their lives. I moreover continue to address the tragic fate of Jews during the Second World War. In this regard, I focus on rescue of Jews during the war. As we shall see when I present my empirical findings in section 3.4 ('Rescue during the Holocaust in memory of the Sephardic Community in Sarajevo'), memories of rescue are central in the discussions with my interviewees as well.

2.4.2.1 The Jews in the First Yugoslavia

As I showed in the previous section, Jews constituted 0.6% of the total Yugoslav population. There were 64,746 Community members, whereas two-thirds were Ashkenazim (in Croatia, Slavonia and Vojvodina), and one-third Sephardim (in Serbia, Dalmatia, Bosnia, and Macedonia) (Goldstein 1999: 1; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 121-122; Vidaković-Petrov 2013: 19). Apart from the Federation of Jewish Communities in the First Yugoslavia, there were other institutions including the Jevrejski Srednji Teološki Zavod (the Jewish Theological Seminary) which was founded in Sarajevo in 1928, and where the Talmud and Jewish history was taught (Birri-Tomovska 2012: 133).

Jews were still, as in the Ottoman era, considered a religious minority (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 90; Ivanković 2011: 135; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 117, 121; Vidaković-Petrov 2013: 28; Hofmeisterová 2016: 257). However, in contrast to the situation in the Ottoman lands, a Jew in

Yugoslavia could claim national affiliation as well (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 91).[42] Probably, however, as a result of the transition from an official religious identity towards an official national and ethnic identity in the first iteration of Yugoslavia, speakers of Ladino began using Serbo-Croatian (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 150; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 127-128, 179-180). In other words, as I demonstrated in the historical overview section, the westernization of life during this time prompted the Sephardic communities to switch to the majority national languages and/or to French (because of the influence of the Alliance israélite universelle), which contributed to Judeo-Spanish being spoken less. German was moreover introduced in Jewish schools alongside Serbo-Croatian so that the shift to state schools would be easier for them. This westernization process did not benefit the population equally, since there was no Alliance school in Sarajevo and Belgrade for example (Kerenji 2008: 32-33).[43] Macedonia remained part of the Ottoman Empire until 1913 and thus its ethnic groups took a slower path towards homogenization. Furthermore, since Macedonia was socioeconomically weaker than other areas, the westernization process was more difficult; and as a result, Judeo-Spanish was maintained longer in Bitola and Skopje than, for instance, in Belgrade and Sarajevo (Freidenreich 1979: 64; Kerenji 2008: 26; Simović & Filipović 2011: 566; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 188-189; Вучина Симовић 2016: 158). In Bulgaria, however, the Zionists' domination replaced the Alliance's institutions by the First World War and as a consequence Hebrew and Bulgarian were used instead of French (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 88, 116, 118). Simović and Filipović (2011: 566. 576) point to this fact that the Zionist movement had an impact on

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[42] As Graizbord explains in one of our conversations (12.6.2017) with regards to the Western Sephardim: "I think that the bonds of the members of the Judeo-Portuguese and Judeo-Spanish nation were first and foremost ethnic. They probably thought of themselves as a nation of Hebrew stock and Iberian culture whose ancestral religion was Jewish" (D. L. Graizbord, Personal Communication, 12.6.2017; cf. Bodian 2008: 147; Ray 2013: 140-141, 144). An ethnic identification among the Eastern Sephardim from the Balkans was therefore perhaps a 'known quantity' from the very start—albeit an identification modeled by Western Sephardim and not by ones from the Ottoman Empire—and it is even disputable if the Sephardic identification was ever entirely 'religious' (Graizbord 2008: 35, 43, 45-46).

[43] The Alliance schools in the Balkans were located in Edirne, Istambul, Izmir, Monastir, Salonica, Sofia and in Volos.

language ideologies, and that as a result many Yugoslav Jews became interested in the larger project of revitalizing Hebrew as a global Jewish language.

As I showed earlier when discussing the Sephardi arrival to the Balkans, Ashkenazi Jews in Zagreb promoted the Yugoslav Zionism after The First World War (Goldstein 1999: 3; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 163).[44] Freidenreich (1977: 79-80) clarifies, that the Sephardim and the Ashkenazim perceived Zionism differently: for the Sephardim, Zionism was seen as movement of modernization and secularism. For the Ashkenazim however, Zionism was seen as an alternative to assimilation (Freidenreich 1977: 79-80).

> The Sephardim felt themselves to be accepted as part of Yugoslav society. (…) Jewish nationalism among the Sephardim and, in particular the Sephardic movement might be seen as a form of diaspora nationalism, to aid Jewish survival in the galut, with Ladino rather than Yiddish as its basis. Like national autonomism, Sephardism was not meant to replace Zionism, but to complement it and help cope with existing Jewish realities (Freidenreich 1977: 78).

On the contrary, the Ashkenazim did not stand behind a diasporic nationalism ideology and they did not feel themselves to belong, to the same extent as the Sephardim did, to the South Slav territories. Zionism was thus the form of Jewish nationalism that made the most sense to them (Freidenreich 1977: 78).

Nonetheless, as I stated previously, Zionism was essential in uniting the Ashkenazi and Sephardic 'Yugoslav Jews.' Moreover, in Sarajevo in 1927, a group of Sephardim and Ashkenazim joined together and formed a unified Jewish club and started publishing a local Jewish paper: *Jevrejski Glas* (Jewish Voice) (Greble 2011: 38). Nevertheless, only 1.5% of Yugoslav Jewry had left for Palestine by the time of the Second World War (Kerkkänen 2001:

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[44] In this context, the Versailles Treaty (1919) stipulated the protection of minority rights within multi-ethnic societies. That is partly why Zionists then became engaged in Jewish 'Diaspora nationalism'—running in local elections, etc. Previously Zionism had kept aloof from European politics and focused on Zion. Now it opened a new vista, so to speak, which was both a cause and a symptom of what historians have called the 'nationalization' of Jewish communities and Jewish politics between the First and the Second World Wars (Fink 2017: 59; D. L. Graizbord, Personal Communication, 7.3.2018).

23, 27; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 171-172). In fact, between 1919 and 1939, 330,000 had Jews

settled in Palestine and only 800 of them, i.e. 0,24%, were Yugoslav Jews (Ivanković 2009: 34;

Birri-Tomovska 2012: 162, 169).

> This relatively small number was probably due to the favourable position of the Yugoslav
> Jewry, their peaceful cohabitation in most parts of the Yugoslav Kingdom, and rarity of anti-
> Semitic acts (Birri-Tomovska 2012: 169).

Birri-Tomovska (2012: 163, 169) thus argues that the reason that so few Jews emigrated to

Palestine was possibly that they were treated well in Yugoslavia. Immigration to Palestine had

increased during the 1930s, but it was only in 1940, under Germany's pressure, that the first

anti-Jewish laws were adopted (Goldstein 1999: 1, 6; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 169).[45] Zionism

was then a primary response to the anti-Jewish politics.

Several hundred Yugoslav Jews spent the Second World war hiding in Belgrade and the Serbian

countryside, often assuming the false identity of Serb refugees from Bosnia and Croatia (i.e.

'the Independent State of Croatia'). Serbia was a German occupied territory and many Jews

were helped by Serbs, despite the fact that penalty for doing so was death by execution.

Miroslav M. Stojadinović saved the lives of 80 Jews in Belgrade, while Predrag Vasić, also

from Belgrade, hid around 40 Jews in his mountain house in south Serbia (Ristović 2001:

514).[46]

In April 1941, at the start of the war in Yugoslavia, around 300 Jews, mostly from Serbia,

but some from Sarajevo, managed to reach the relative safety of Boka Kotorska, in Montenegro.

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[45] In 1940 the Yugoslav authorities passed two anti-Jewish laws: one banning foodstuff enterprises which were owned by Jews, and another one introducing *numerus clausus,* which reduced the number of Jews enrolled at schools and universities according to the percentage of Jews in the total population (Goldstein 1999: 10; Ivanković 2009: 32, Ristović 2001: 513).

[46] There were survivors as well who had been hiding with friends, and approximately 6% of the Yugoslav Jews were part of the Titoist partisan movement which fought against the occupiers (Ivanković 2009: 48, 60; Greble 2011: 110, 113; Ivanković 2011: 138).

Filip David's book *Kuća sećanja i zaborava* (2014) is about a six-year-old Serbian Jewish boy who was saved from the death-camps by the help of his father and other Holocaust survivors. An English translation came out in 2017 with the title: *The house of Remembering and Forgetting.*

Others fled to Kosovo — which, like Montenegro, was under Italian control. Between 1941 and 1943 some 4,000-5,000 Yugoslav Jews – many of whom were from Sarajevo – were stationed in 15 different camps in Italy. A similar number of Yugoslav Jews were based in the Italian-occupied Dalmatian coast, so around 10,000 Yugoslav Jews found themselves in territories under Italian control by summer 1943 (Ristović 2001: 516; Goldstein 2004: 182). The largest of the 15 camps was 'Ferramonti di Tarsia' in southern Italy. There were 853 Jews from Yugoslavia in Ferramonti di Tarsia – the largest group in the camp – and 76 of them were from Sarajevo (and 5 from Mostar, Herzegovina) (Ристовић 2016: 91).

Yugoslavs, including Jews, interned in Italy often sought aid (money, passports etc.) from the Yugoslav legation at the Vatican (although it had its representatives in the Independent State of Croatia, the Holy See continued to recognize the London-based Yugoslav government in exile). Among them was Josif Klajn, a Sarajevo-born Jewish art student who moved to Belgrade to study just before the war, and Marselo Finci, who was born at a camp at the Rab island in 1943 (Ристовић 2016: 94). Another Italy-based Jewish refugee was Ela M. Perera, who managed to escape from Sarajevo to Italy, via Split, in November 1941, with two small children after her husband, a prominent Sarajevo merchant Moric Perera, was sent to a Croat Ustaša-run camp. She wrote to the Yugoslav legation in Vatican in late December 1942, asking for a monthly allowance of 470 lira. Ela was born in Serbia and her father served with the Serbian army in the First World War, as she mentioned in the letter to the Yugoslav diplomatic representatives, clearly hoping that this would strengthen her case (Ристовић 2016: 97). Clearly, the Jews still viewed themselves as Yugoslavs and sought help from Yugoslav representatives abroad. Nor did the Yugoslav Communist Party understand the killing of Jews as a separate crime from that of other ethnic persecution in the country which I will now discuss in greater detail.

After the fall of Italy in September 1943, American and British troops liberated some of these Yugoslav Jews (sending some to the USA and Canada); others, including 868 Jews from Bosnia-Herzegovina, joined Yugoslav Partisans (Ristović 2001: 517).[47] Furthermore, Yugoslav partisans, led by the Communist Party, evacuated around 2,500 Jews from the former Italian camp on the island of Rab. This was the largest Jewish rescue operation in Yugoslavia during the Second World War. The partisan 'rescue' of the Jews was rooted in their political ideal of a future socialist federation to which the Jews belonged (Kerenji 2016: 57, 60, 65).

> For Yugoslav partisans, 'rescuing' Jews from Nazi and fascist anti-Semitic persecution was not an ethical or political objective, and they did not use the word. Rather they understood their de facto rescue of the Jews as a process, ideally brought about by the objects of rescue themselves, in which the Jews joined their (i.e., the partisans') ideological vision (Kerenji 2016: 59).

Thus, the Communist Party and its partisan movement considered Jews as equals–as Yugoslavs. Anti-Semitism was moreover viewed by the Communist Party as an ideology that was imposed on Yugoslavia by the Nazi invaders and their Ustaša collaborators (Kerenji 2016: 61).

<p style="text-align:center">⸎</p>

Although the London-based Yugoslav government-in-exile and Vichy France had no diplomatic relations, the Petain administration allowed for the creation of a *Comité d'Assistance Yougoslave* in Marseilles in 1941-1942, which helped Yugoslav Jews secure exit visas for Spain, Portugal, or Latin America (Ristović 2001: 517). Some Yugoslav Jews managed to escape to Switzerland, where they were able to receive help from Yugoslav diplomatic

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[47] Around 500 Yugoslav Jews who were captured as Yugoslav Army officers and soldiers survived the war (Ristović 2001: 522).

representatives (Ristović 2001: 518). Notably, only a small number of survivors from the Yugoslav territories succeeded in reaching Palestine during the war and stay there (Ristović 2001: 519). Britain actively interdicted Jewish immigration in accordance with its 'White Paper' policy (cf. Segev 2000: 335; Mazower 2006: 379). Nonetheless, Yugoslav Jewish Diaspora organizations, such as the Association of Yugoslav Jews in the USA, Inc. and Association of Yugoslav Jews in Palestine — Hitahdut, were helping and urging other Jewish organizations and the Yugoslav government-in-exile to help rescue Jews in occupied Yugoslavia (Ristović 2001: 520). The Yugoslav government-in-exile set up a mission in Constantinople in early 1943 to help rescue Yugoslavia's Jews. The head of the mission was Martin Weltmann (Meir Touval), who had emigrated to Palestine in 1939 and who was a prominent Zionist and lawyer from Novi Sad. He sought help from various Jewish organizations, and from the Vatican, but the results of his efforts were, in his own words, 'symbolic' (Ristović 2001: 521).

Only 12,500, [out of around 80,000], Yugoslav Jews survived the Second World War.[48] Some 8,000 left for Israel after it was established in 1948 (Ristović 2001: 523).

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[48] There were 14,000 Jews in the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 10,000, i.e., 71,5%, of them perished. In Macedonia there were 7,762 Jewish community-members and 6,982 of them – 90% –were killed. In the Serbian territory 11,000 out of 12,500 Jews – 88% – were killed. The reason why more Jews from Bosnia and Herzegovina survived was because they succeeded to flee to the Italian zone (Zone B) (Goldstein 2004: 155, 181; Вучина Симовић 2016: 165-166).

The following sections are about the second Yugoslavia that was founded in 1945 after the Second World War had ended. I begin by explaining the multiethnic nature of the country and also its language policies, then move on to exploring the position of Yugoslav Jews. I furthermore write about a critical period in Yugoslavia from the 1970s onwards, which led to a religious awakening and a multi-party-system. Finally, I pinpoint the factors that, eventually, led to the country's disintegration. After having explored the Yugoslav general history and more specifically Jewish Yugoslav history, I then switch focus to my Sarajevo-Jewish interviewees' conceptions of the country.

2.4.3 Second Yugoslavia (1945-1992) and its Language Policy

Second Yugoslavia was restructured as a socialist federation; its 1946 Constitution was modelled on the Soviet 1936 Constitution, which meant, among other things, that it was an 'ethnic socialist federation,' like the USSR. In other words, it was a federation made up of six republics and six (initially five) constituent nations (*narodi*): Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, Montenegrins and, from the 1960s, [Bosnian] Muslims.

Bosnian Muslims (listed with the capital M – Muslimani, as opposed to religious Muslims who were 'muslimani' regardless of nationality) were recognized as comprising a separate national group (i.e., on the federal/Yugoslav level) in 1974 (Bougarel 2003: 107; Djokić 2010: 6; Djokić 2013: 65; Bougarel 2018: 81). In the Bosnian constitution, at the level of the republics, Bosnian Muslims were recognized as a separate nation in 1968 (Wachtel 1998: 132; Blum 2002: 30; Djokić 2010: 5-6). After 1974, Muslim Slavs (i.e., Bosnian and Sandžak Muslims)

Živković (2000: 69) clarifies that the Jewish experience of suffering and exile, especially during the Holocaust, was seen as the ultimate narrative of victimhood that was not questioned – hence, there was a desire of other Yugoslav groups to be Jewish.

could thus declare themselves as 'Musliman u etničkom smislu' [Muslims by ethnicity] and Muslimani became the 6th Yugoslav nation (Djokić 2010: 5-6).[49]

Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, Montenegrins were *de facto* titular nations in their own republic, while in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there were three main nations: Muslims (from 1968/1974), Serbs and Croats. Serbia included autonomous provinces: Vojvodina and Kosovo. Moreover, all six nations were considered *narod* – and not *narodnost* (a minority) or *etnička zajednica* (an ethnic group lower in the Yugoslav pyramid than a *narodnost*) – throughout Yugoslavia, which was their own homeland (*de facto* nation-state) (Blum 2002: 30; Jović 2004). *Narodnost* were de facto national minorities whose nation-states were situated outside of Yugoslavia, the largest ones being Albanians and Hungarians (Ellis 2003: 69). (Germans and Italians were largerly expelled after the Second World War.) *Etničke zajednice* were those groups of people considered geographically scattered, such as Jews, Greeks and others (Bringa 1995: 26; Blum 2002: 29). The categories of nationality attributed to these groups were, however, shifting and the Romani people were recognized as a *narodnost* in 1981 in Bosnia, Croatia and Montenegro (Matasović 1989: 119; cf. Lichnofsky 2016: 64; K. Králová, Personal Communication, 24.2.2016).

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[49] In the population census of 1953, 93,8% of the Bosnian Muslims declared themselves as *nationally undetermined Yugoslavs,* 3,8% of them declared as Serbs and 1,7% as Croats (Bougarel 2003: 106-107). The high percentage of mixed marriages in the Bosnian society made many people declare themselves as *nationally undetermined Yugoslavs* instead of as Muslims, Serbs and Croats. This was also a category that people chose as a protection against Serb and Croat nationalisms and in interest of Muslim nationalism (Bougarel 2003: 107-108).

Among the six federal republics in second Yugoslavia Serbs formed circa 36% of the population, Croats, 20%, Muslims 9%, Slovenes 8%, Macedonians 6% and Montenegrins circa 3%. Other ethnic groups, such as Albanians, Romani and Jews comprised 13% of the total Yugoslav population and they had, by the fact that they were minorities, the right to their own schools (Matasović 1989: 117), and thus, at least theoretically, the legal right to preserve their respective ethnic languages. Generally speaking, the Jews declared themselves as 'Yugoslavs.' Members of the largest minority groups, such as Albanians (who constituted 8%) and Hungarians (2%) preferred their own ethnic labels and did not usually self-identify as Yugoslavs. In terms of geographical distribution, Slovenes and Macedonians lived primarily in Slovenia and Macedonia, while Serbs and Croats (especially) lived throughout Yugoslavia (Magnusson 1989: 14-15, 17).

There were as many as 14 official languages in the Second Yugoslavia (Škiljan 1992: 31; Kordić 2013: 235-236).[50] Blum (2002: 39) concludes that Macedonian- and Slovenian speakers, 'practical communication' was not as important. Rather, the 'symbolic significance' of speaking a different language played a key role for the respective South Slavs and their perceptions of an adequate representation in the Yugoslav state and society. There was a similar pattern among the Yugoslav Jews for whom 'practical communication' in Judeo-Spanish was not important. Further, no state support or educational options existed in order to learn Judeo-Spanish. This in turn led to that the Vukovian Serbo-Croatian *de facto* became *lingua communis* for all the Yugoslav minorities (Gak 1989: 123; Blum 2002: 49, cf. Bugarski 2010: 42).

Serbo-Croatian was obligatory in school and it was the only language accepted in the Yugoslav People's army *Jugoslavenska narodna armija* (Blum 2002: 67-68, 76, 78). Cultural and political education could still be done in a soldier's mother tongue (Gak 1989: 123).

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[50] According to Kordić (2013: 235, 237), 73% of the Yugoslav population spoke Serbo-Croatian in different Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian-Herzegovinian and Montenegrin sub-variants. 8% spoke Slovenian, 8% spoke Albanian, 6% Macedonian, 2% Hungarian, 0,6% Romani and less than 0,5% spoke either Turkish, Slovakian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Russian, Italian, Czech and Ukrainian.

Moreover, Blum (2002: 81) points out, that in media such as television, radio, and newspapers as many as 16 languages were used and that the teachings at universities took place in nine different languages (Blum 2002: 73-79). Federal laws appeared in three variants of Serbo-Croatian, as well as in Slovenian, Macedonian, Albanian and Hungarian (Kordić 2013: 236). This demonstrates in part that considerations were made in order to avoid having a linguistic hegemony (cf. Kordić 2013: 239).

In 1981, Muslims covered 9,7% of the total Yugoslav population, the Croats 21% and the Serbs 42,3% (Kočović 1998: 332). Thus, none of the three dominant ethnic groups constituted an absolute majority (Sundhaussen 2014: 250). In 1948, 1953, 1961, 1971 and in 1981 there were no declared Jews in Yugoslavia according to the population censuses (Kočović 1998: 332).[51] There was however an existing Federation of Jewish Religious Communities in Yugoslavia – a group of 42 Jewish communities – that had been re-established in 1945 (Kerkkänen 2001: 42).[52] At this time, the victorious communist power (unlike the Četnik- and Ustaša-movements during the Second World War) was partly inclusive of ethnic minorities in the Balkans even if the state was to be built on communist centralism (unity) and atheism (Cohen 1995: 28; Wachtel 1998: 131; Djokić 2013: 64-65).

In the section that follows I pinpoint the particular position of Jews. I explore inner-Jewish dynamics': whether their community was to be considered a religious or ethnic one, the areas in which Jews lived, how they made their livings, and the immigration to Israel during this period of time.

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[51] According to the population census in 1981, in Bosnia and Herzegovina there were 42.4% Muslims, 19% Croats and 36.7% Serbs (Kočović 1998: 338).
[52] Freidenreich (1979: 68) maintains that the Jewish Community was the basic organizational unit where all types of cultural, educational, religious and charitable activities took place.

2.4.3.1 The Jews in the Second Yugoslavia

Emil Kerenji shows that there was a lack of an organized Jewish life in Yugoslavia after the Holocaust. The Jewish Community had lost real estate property and the survivors who returned after the war had lost their apartments as well (Kerenji 2008: 125).

More than 90% of married Jews in Yugoslavia were parties to mixed marriages (Kerkkänen 2001: 169). By mixed marriages here Kerkkänen (2001: 169) have in mind the marriages between Jews and non-Jews. After the Second World War intermarriages between Sephardim and Ashkenazim were also common, whereas before the war they were rare (Birri-Tomovska 2012: 183, 187; Vulesica 2015: 8; Вучина Симовић 2016: 103, 220). Kerkkänen (2001: 49) however suggests that intermarriages between Sephardim and Ashkenazim were unusual even after the war.

Almost all Yugoslav Jews lived in urban centers such as Belgrade, Zagreb, Sarajevo, Subotica, Novi Sad, Skopje, Osijek, Zrenjanin, Bitola, Senta and Zemun. Less than 5% lived in rural areas, where organized Jewish communities did not exist (Birri-Tomovska 2012: 149; Freidenreich 1979: 58; Ivanković 2011: 132). Because of their concentration in the big cities, most Jews were active in trade, banking, education and media rather than in agriculture (Ivanković 2011: 132; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 148). Additionally, Jews held high positions in the state-administration, as diplomats and in the army (Kerkkänen 2001: 98). Tito's right-hand man, Moša Pijade, who was Jewish, came to function as a middleman between Jews and the authorities. Pijade was engaged in migration issues and ensured that it became easier to migrate from Yugoslavia than it was from Eastern European countries (Kerkkänen 2001: 100; Ivanković 2009: 281, 279, 314; Hofmeisterová 2016: 270; cf. Kerenji 2008: 105; Ivanković 2011: 141).

According to Ivanković (2011: 134), the Yugoslav authorities were supportive of Zionism. After the foundation of the Israeli state, Yugoslavia was one of the first countries to officially recognize Israel (Ivanković 2011: 150). Prior to Yugoslavia, the USA had recognized Israel *de facto* and the USSR did so *de jure* (Ivanković 2009: 102, 375-376). During the Six-day war of 1967, however, Tito broke off diplomatic relations with Israel. Yugoslavia voted for the infamous United Nations resolution equating Zionism with racism. This resolution was revoked by the United Nations in 1991 (cf. Lewis, 1991).

Six major *aliyot* from Yugoslavia to Israel took place between 1948 and 1952. Already after the first two *aliyot* the Yugoslav Jewry was reduced by 60% (Ivanković 2009: 318, 339; Ivanković 2011: 150). In 1948, 4,114 people left to Israel. During the second *aliyah* (1949), 2,567 persons left to Israel and during the third *aliyah* (1950), 892 persons left to Israel. In a 2 year period, this participation had dropped by over 50% and only 819 people left. During the fifth *aliyah* (1951), 141 persons left to Israel and in 1952, only 84 persons made *aliyah* to Israel. After the *aliyot*, 6,175 Jews remained in Yugoslavia (Ivanković 2011: 150). All in all, 8,618 Jews made *aliyah* between 1948-1952: 4,517 came from Serbia, 2,747 from Croatia, 974 from Bosnia and Herzegovina, 308 from Macedonia, 68 from Slovenia and 4 from Montenegro (Ivanković 2009: 312, 360-361; Ivanković 2011: 150). In emigrating to Israel, the Yugoslav Jews lost their property ownership rights in Yugoslavia (Ivanković 2011: 150). (Already during

the Second World War Jews suffered great property losses.) The remaining Jewish communities were largest in Belgrade, Sarajevo and Zagreb (Kerkkänen 2001: 71, 79; Vidaković-Petrov 2013: 38; Hofmeisterová 2016: 272-273). As mentioned earlier, eventually, between the 1950s and 1970s, many Yugoslav immigrants who failed to settle in Israel returned to Yugoslavia (Ivanković 2011: 150).

Meanwhile, in Yugoslavia, members of the Jewish Community were discussing how they could develop Jewish education (Kerenji 2008: 245). In the 1950s, the Community established Jewish summer-camps (Kerenji 2008: 245). Moreover, the journal of Yugoslav Jewish youth *Kadima* (first published in 1956) was popular among the Jewish youngsters (Kerenji 2008: 246).[53]

On one hand, one could argue that Jews were good off in Second Yugoslavia, by the mere fact that they were equal to others by law; in other words, Jews did not have any special status or constitute a group set apart in order to be protected (i.e., by being recognized as an official minority with special governmental support). As the political scientist Dejan Jović (2011: 122) writes: "The Yugoslav system was based on the idea that nobody could be treated as a minority, but as equal to the majority" (Jović 2011: 122). On the other hand, one may argue on the basis of the large numbers of Jews who decided to leave the country and undertake *aliyah* from the 1940s to the 1960s, that the second Yugoslavia in fact did not present so good conditions for Yugoslav Jewish life (cf. Ivanković 2009: 312, 360-361; Ivanković 2011: 150).

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[53] In Gordiejew's (1999) work on the Yugoslav Jewry, the cultural life of Yugoslav Jews is elaborated upon further. However, in his work, the term 'identity' is taken for granted, and is not analyzed at all (cf. Gordiejew 1999: 16). Furthermore, Ivanković (2009: 237- 268) writes extensively about the cultural activities of the Jews in the second Yugoslavia.

It should be noted, too, that discussions were ongoing internally within the Jewish Community whether they should be considered an ethnic or religious community (Kerkkänen 2001: 83-85; Ivanković 2009: 274, 278, 280, 290, 357; Ivanković 2011: 134; Hofmeisterová 2016: 271-272, 275). These debates prompted the government to issue a new law on the legal status of religious communities in 1953. It granted the right to conduct religious activities but political activities by religious communities or any other groups were not allowed. Consequently, the Jewish Federation's collaboration with Israel was suddenly problematic (Kerkkänen 2001: 89; Živković 2011: 74). In the same year, the Communist Party also promulgated a new law emphasizing that atheism was one of its basic principles. This meant, of course, that one could not be a member of a religious organization and the Communist Party at the same time. In order to get around this problem, the Jewish Federation deleted the word religious and renamed its Jewish constituency as a national minority instead. A separate religious section of the Jewish Federation was founded that came under the law on religion. Moreover, the new atheist principle of the Communist Party – stated as anti-religious clause introduced in the constitution – led to Jewish members of the party boycotting Jewish holidays (Kerkkänen 2001: 87-91; Ivanković 2009: 373; Ivanković 2011: 143-144; Hofmeisterová 2016: 278; cf. Bringa 1995: 204).

This development is exactly the opposite of what happened in many countries in the West in the 19th century, where Jews, a national minority, had to reconfigure themselves as a 'religious' minority. As I have already shown, the designation of Jews as a national group responds much more to the historical experience and anthropological and sociological reality than 'religion' (cf. Funkeinstein 1993: 254; Sharot 2011: 170). I however do not think that the Yugoslav Jewish Federation redefined itself as the representative of a national minority for reasons other than the official, atheistic status of the state.

In some ways, the communism in former Yugoslavia was unique: from the 1960s onwards, the state adopted a more liberal position towards religion and I will now explore this phenomenon and discuss a 'religious awakening' in Yugoslavia from this point of time. I moreover analyze the multi-party-system that emerged in 1990, which then sparked the country's disintegration. I contend that my elaboration on the fall of Yugoslavia is relevant to the main subject of the thesis – the Sarajevo Sephardim – because it gives an overview history of what Yugoslavia was and why it no longer is. Although Yugoslavia is no more, many Sarajevo Jews reflect upon and feel belonging to the former South Slav federation.

2.4.3.2 Religious Awakening and a Multi-Party-System

The anti-religious clause the Yugoslav Party adopted is a well-known anti-religious trend in all communist states. It was not specific to Yugoslavia. In some ways however, as suggested above, the socialism in former Yugoslavia was unique: from the 1960s onwards, the state with interfered less with the religious communities than was the case in most states in the Warsaw Pact. As an example, the Serbian Orthodox Church had more opportunities than before to criticize the regime in public and 'defend national interests' (Buchenau 2005: 547). Moreover, a separate (from the Serbian) Macedonian Orthodox Church was created in 1967 and the position of the Islamic community improved as Bosnian Muslims were recognized as the sixth Yugoslav nation in the late 1960s (Radić 2003: 206).

How this increasing liberal position of the state affected the relationship with the Jewish community is not clear. According to Ivanković (2011: 144), religious activities (such as the services in the synagogue) were never explicitly discouraged. In reality, religious practice, at least in public, was encouraged either and as a result Orthodox Jews emigrated to Israel

(Kerkkänen 2001, 69; Markowitz 2010: 114; Ivanković 2011, 143). Sarajevo-born non-residential rabbi, Eliezer Papo, who left for Jerusalem during the war of the 1990s, told me:

> I left Sarajevo because the war was coming and because it wasn't possible to 'live religiously' there. I had to hide that I was Jewish from the Jewish Community. I used to have a compress around my foot and pretend that I was hurt so I wouldn't have to go and buy the newspaper on Shabbat [the day of rest] (E. Papo, Personal Communication, 7.9.2014).

Thus, I argue, the ethnicization of the Jews, the so called *etnička zajednica* (ethnic group) label, that was imposed on the them by the Yugoslav state – made religion within the Jewish Community a taboo, and was probably embraced by those Yugoslav Jews who were atheist.

The following benefits from Cohen's book *Broken Bonds, Yugoslavia's Disintegration and Balkan Politics in Transition* (1993).

The position of Yugoslavia's religious groups in general changed when the Yugoslav economy worsened by the end of the 1970s, owing in part to the size of foreign debt. Unemployment increased and productivity decreased. Nevertheless, the majority of the citizens and the leaders of the various republics were optimistic about the future (Cohen 1995: 37). The situation, however, worsened in the 1980s, and in 1988 four million Yugoslavs took to the streets to demand relief from the economic crisis (Cohen 1995: 45-46).

Out of this discontent emerged three reform strategies: the first one was developed by Slobodan Milošević, the second one represented by the League of Communists in Slovenia, and the third strategy was led by Ante Marković who had been leader of the Federal Yugoslav Council (FEC) – i.e. government – in 1987 (Cohen 1995: 51; see further on Marković's reforms in Jović 2009: 355-361). Milošević was concerned with approximately three million Serbs living outside of the Serbian republic; he believed that their interests were underrepresented (Cohen 1995: 52, 57). Slovenian leaders were disturbed by the fact that Slovenia was economically stronger than the other Yugoslav republics and that it was obliged to economically support the others. Marković proposed economic reforms, but the communist

regime's leaders differed significantly about how these should be implemented (Cohen 1995: 66, 72).

During this critical period, other political organizations than the Communist Party began to emerge (Cohen 1995: 80-81). As an example the Catholic Church in Croatia became a refuge for many Croats who were disappointed with the regime. "Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, a growth of nationalist feelings, together with a revival of Roman Catholic religiosity, had become increasingly apparent in the general Croatian population" (Cohen 1995: 81). Even Milošević referred to the Serbian Church and the Orthodox Christian religion in many of his pronouncements in order to generate a stronger communal feeling among the scattered Serbs. Incidentally, Tito had also communicated with Yugoslavia's religious leaders.

Furthermore, Yugoslavia was affected by *die Wende* in Germany and the *perstroika* in the Soviet Union. These events pushed Serbia to agree to establish a multi-party-system for which Slovenia (especially) was longing. Even though the multi-party-system was introduced, the media was not independent (Cohen 1995: 154). The media, then, is another actor which contributed to the rise of nationalist parties and to the increasing dissonance of Yugoslavia's internal relations.

When the multi-party-system was introduced in 1990 the newly elected nationalist leaders represented the republics: Izetbegović in Bosnia and Herzegovina; Tuđman in Croatia; Kučan in Slovenia; Gligorov in Macedonia; Milošević in Serbia; and Bulatović in Montenegro. All leaders except for Tuđman had been in power before 1990, as communists. Not surprisingly, the republican leaders held different opinions on how the new system should be structured. For instance, they debated how the communist and nationalist tendencies were to be balanced and shaped. However, they all agreed that the federation must be reorganized (Cohen 1995: 171).

Cohen (1995: 327) argues that Yugoslavia disintegrated because the newly elected leaders

could not agree on what a reworked federation should look like. They debated whether it ought to be a centrally regulated federation – as Serbia wanted – or a loosely bonded confederation from which the member countries would have the right to withdraw, which is what Slovenia and Croatia wanted (Cohen 1995: 178-179).

In 1990, 88,5 % of the Slovenian population voted to leave the federation (Cohen 1995: 173, 176, 182). By that time, *(…) "Yugoslav" consciousness, was becoming an increasingly rare phenomenon, and a perspective lacking any important political-organizational underpinning* (Cohen 1995: 160, emphasis mine). Round table-discussions among the leaders of the republics brought this phenomenon of interethnic fissures to a head. Izetbegović claimed that he was looking for an alternative so that each republic could live in the "kind of Yugoslavia that they want" (Cohen 1995: 201). Meanwhile, Milošević and the JNA wished to reestablish a more centralized federation. JNA threatened Croatia and Slovenia, and even intervened with military force when the republics did not respect federal laws (Cohen 1995: 207, 228).

The United States and EC[54] – which in 1992 became the European Union – opposed Slovenian and Croatian independence, yet these tiny, independence-bent republics ignored them (Cohen 1995: 221). Such was the impact of the JNA as a factor in the disintegration process: the JNA, I hazard, triggered and may inadvertently have helped to solidify a staunch opposition to Yugoslavia among the people it attacked in the 1990s.

Another factor that contributed to the fall of Yugoslavia was the conviction held by Tuđman and Miloševic that they could share Bosnia and Herzegovina if the federation dissolved (Cohen 1995: 208, 217). The Bosnian government (led by Izetbegović) asked instead that the EC recognize Bosnia and Herzegovina as an independent state. In 1992, a referendum revealed that Croats and Muslim strongly supported this (Cohen 1995: 241-242). The Serbs, however, insisted that Bosnia and Herzegovina should be shared, a view that led to escalated violence

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[54] From 1958, the 'European Communities' (EC) comprised EEC, ECSC and Euratom. The association was subsumed under the EU in 1993.

among the different ethnic groups in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Cohen 1995: 244).

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In sum, the factors that contributed to the dissolution of Yugoslavia[55] are the following:

- historic developments, such as the wars of liberation against the Ottomans and the Habsburgs (i.e., there was a tradition of armed war as the means to regain independence) (cf. Dragović-Soso 2007: 4)

- that the first Yugoslavia was characterized by nationalistic tendencies and often longstanding conflicts among the peoples, such as ethnic cleansings (i.e., old problems were not addressed and history repeated itself) (cf. Dragović-Soso 2007: 6)

- the fact that Serbs and Croats comprised the biggest groups of the population in Second Yugoslavia, which caused Albanians, Slovenes, and Croatians to feel left out of the political process, and thus to harbor strong desires for independence (cf. Dragović-Soso 2007: 7)

- the increased distrust of the Communist Party among large sectors of the Yugoslav populations

- the changing self and group perceptions of the citizens (from having the status of 'Yugoslavs' to that of 'Serb'/'Croat'/'Muslim,' and so on)

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[55] A thoughtful treatment of the disintegration of Yugoslavia can be found in Jović's (2009) study *A State that Withered Away*.

- the (re)vitalization of religious and ethnic identities, with the ethnic churches serving as sources and lightning rod of inter-ethnic opposition

- problems that occurred in relation to the constitutional reform in 1974. For example, when the republics and autonomous areas attained more independence the citizens of those entities were still not satisfied: the Albanians, Slovenes and Croats wanted even more independence, and the Serbs regarded themselves as "losers" because their dominance was weaker than before. In short, it was difficult for all of them to compromise (cf. Dragović-Soso 2007: 10)

- economic (pre)conditions: the economic crisis of the 1980s; and the opinion among the Albanians that they did not enjoy the economic development and living standard that they wanted (cf. Dragović-Soso 2007: 12)

- the fact that Serbs (especially), Croats and Albanians were scattered in different republics, which led to conflicting territorial claims and complicated the independence-processes

- the composition of the people's army, which non-Serbians regarded as a 'Serbian' army

- the differences among the democratically-elected leaders in the 1990 about the proper restructuring of the federation (for instance the views held by Tuđman, Miloševic and Izetbegovic regarding the political status of Bosnia and Herzegovina) (cf. Dragović-Soso 2007: 15)

- the absence of a free press, which permitted undue media influence over electoral processes, mostly in favor of Serbian interests

- the surrounding world's influence (including the economic problems of Eastern Europe and the EU's – EC at that time – and USA's respective approaches to Yugoslavia); the initial position of the EU in favor of maintaining the Yugoslav federation, which the Serbian government interpreted as a 'green light' to use violence to suppress all

opposition to its hegemony (cf. Dragović-Soso 2007: 23-27)

The most crucial factor that led to the disintegration of Yugoslavia seems to have been a cluster of longstanding issues – such as the ethnic cleansings perpetrated by Četniks, the Ustaša-leadership and even the communist partisans during World War II. These issues had not been properly and comprehensively resolved. As a result, destructive patterns of interethnic and interreligious enmity reemerged. Tellingly, the main victims among the South Slavs during the Second World War – the Serbs – were the main perpetrators of the Yugoslav war.

The disintegration of Yugoslavia has inevitable been influential on my interviewees' in Sarajevo identity-conceptions. I will focus on these in sub-section 2.4.5 ('Yugoslavia and Jewish-Sephardic Identification in Sarajevo').

Having discussed the second Yugoslavia, the Jew's position in the country, and the factors leading to Yugoslavia's fall, I now move on to the Jewish Sarajevo after Yugoslavia had collapsed.

2.4.4 Post-Yugoslav Jewish Sarajevo

During the siege of Sarajevo, which lasted throughout the 1992-1995 war in Bosnia[56], the Sarajevo Jewish Community organized eight convoys for people to leave the city.[57] The organizers were very welcoming to every person who wanted to leave, regardless of his or her religion. A majority of Bosnian Jewish Community members fled to Israel as well as to other countries (e.g. Canada, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom).[58] 1,077 Bosnian Jews moved from Bosnia to Belgrade during the war and 731 Bosnian Jews emigrated to Israel by 1996 (Kerkkänen 2991: 171, 174). In total there were 1,501 Jews from former Yugoslavia who went to Israel during the war. 731 Jews were from Bosnia-Herzegovina, 103 from Croatia, 554 from Serbia, 7 from Slovenia and 6 from Macedonia (Kerkkänen 2001: 174). The evacuation was financed by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. Upon arrival in Israel the Sarajevo Jewish refugees were taken care of by the Jewish Agency (Kerkkänen 2001: 177; Markowitz 2010: 113; 2016; Kerenji 2017: 246; E. Papo, Personal Communication, 7.5.2018). Those Sarajevan Jews who stayed behind relied on and were bonded to the city's Jewish Community.[59] The Jews visited the Community centre in downtown Sarajevo (Markowitz 2010: 113; Gebert, 2016): "Sarajevo's Ashkenazi synagogue became the city's sole radio-communication base, as well as a soup kitchen, pharmacy, and medical clinic" (Markowitz 2010: 30).

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[56] See further: Burg & Shoup (1999).
[57] In total, there were more than one million people who fled from Bosnia-Herzegovina during the siege (Markowitz 2010: 9).
[58] 130 Jews went to Canada, 104 Jews went to Spain, 51 to Switzerland and 43 to the United Kingdom (Kerkkänen 2001: 175).
[59] The photojournalist Edward Serotta has documented the humanitarian efforts of the Jewish Community during the siege.

When the war in Bosnia ended in November 1995 (this was when the Dayton peace agreement was reached) many Bosnian Jews who had fled to Israel returned to Sarajevo. They were often highly educated, though often could not find work in Israel. Moreover, it was expensive to live there, and many of them still had apartments in Sarajevo to which they could return (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 26.12.2016).

After the war in Bosnia had ended, five separate Jewish Communities emerged in Croatia (approximately 1,700 community members), Serbia (approximately 3,200 community members), Bosnia and Herzegovina (approximately 1,000 community members), Slovenia (approximately 100 community members) and Macedonia (approximately 200 community members) (Kerkkänen 2001: 186). Since 2012, there has been an independent Jewish Community in Montenegro, with around 100 members.

The Jews, who had often been classified as 'Yugoslavs' in Yugoslavia, were now expected to express national loyalties to the newly established states (Kerkkänen 2001: 119; Živković 2011: 201). Kerkkänen (2001: 122) argues, that this in turn disturbed the previous sense of unity among Jews in different ex-Yugoslav republics and disconnected them from each other. Generally, former members of the Yugoslav Jewry blamed each other for being too engaged in and loyal towards their respective (new) nation states (Kerkkänen 2001: 122).

The Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as other small minorities in the country, faced a unique situation in which three major ethnic groups dominate the country: Muslims, Serbs and Croats. In Sarajevo however in 2003, Muslims constituted 80,5% of the city's total population, the Serbs constituted 7,5% and the Croats 12% (Sundhaussen 2014: 352). Therefore, Serbs and Croats were (and remain) clearly minorities in Sarajevo, at least in terms of numbers, too. The Muslims, Serbs and Croats are however recognized as the constituent peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina whereas Jews and other official minorities are 'Others.'

In the post-Yugoslav context, it was impossible for Jews to continue declaring themselves 'Yugoslavs.' According to Kerkkänen (2001: 194), the Jews' identification either with only one of the post-Yugoslav constituent Muslim, Serb or Croat peoples was also not an option. Thus, after the fall of Communism in 1990, according to Kerkkänen (2001: 109), young Jews started to declare themselves as Jews. In one of our conversations (16.3.2018), Jakob Finci explains this further:

> Since the fall of Communism, the Jews openly said that they were Jewish. They didn't hide it anymore and therefore, after Yugoslavia collapsed, there was a wave of 'new Jews'; many of whom said they were Jewish in order to have better prospects to leave Sarajevo during the Yugoslav war. Many of them stayed here however or came back after the war and are now members of our Jewish Community (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 16.3.2018).

Furthermore, after the collapse of Yugoslavia, Jews did not follow the usual post-Serbo-Croatian state-regulated and elite-dictated language division whereby Orthodox Christians should speak Serbian, Catholics should speak Croatian, and Muslims should speak Bosnian.[60]

> Lack of an inclusive Bosnian category leaves many Sarajevans frustrated, including those whose names lead others to define them as Serbs or Croats (Markowitz 2010: 150).
> In that way, Bosnia-Herzegovina remains unsettled in its B-C-S-(O) national divisions, and the truth that accompanies them is not uncontested or static, at least not yet (Markowitz 2010: 186).

Jews thus began to use other/individual/anti-national language-classifications, for example, by referring to Bosnian-Serbian-Croatian as 'our language' (cf. Bugarski 2013: 166-167).

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[60] In the census in 1991; 26,62% of Bosnia-Herzegovina's population named their native language Serbo-Croatian, 37,12% named it Bosnian, 18,85% Serbian, 13,56% Croatian and 2,46% claimed to have no mother tongue (Markowitz 2010: 70).

Having talked about the Sarajevo Jews in the post-Yugoslav context, I now move on to show my interviewees perceptions of 'Yugoslavia' – including their linguistic choices after Yugoslavia's disintegration. As already mentioned, the interviewees belong to three groups: *Group One* are community-members under the age of 30, who have been raised in independent Bosnia-Herzegovina, *Group Two* are community members between 30-55 years old, who have been raised in both the former Yugoslavia and in independent Bosnia-Herzegovina, and *Group Three* are community members older than 55 years old, who were raised solely in former Yugoslavia.

2.4.5 Yugoslavia and Jewish-Sephardic Identification in Sarajevo

Members of the under-30 generation, have internalized the new official multinational Bosnian or Bosnian-Serbian-Croatian linguistic classification. On the other hand, the youngsters are amused when they speak about the recently-categorized national languages and it seems in this meta-linguistic way that they have developed somewhat skeptical and non-nationalistic views on the national tongue. Tea Abinun states the following:

> My parents are nostalgic. They wish Tito would still be alive. According to them the times were better then […]. And they still call themselves Yugoslavs. Of course, they also identify as Bosnian and Herzegovinian but in a broader sense they are still Yugoslavians. Our parents spoke Serbo-Croatian with us and they still call their language Serbo-Croatian but we say Bosnian, or Bosnian-Serbian-Croatian [Laugh].

Tea says she speaks 'Bosnian' or 'Bosnian-Serbian-Croatian' because she was raised in the post-Yugoslav Sarajevo. However, at the same time she laughs when she talks about the new language-classifications. Her attitude, to my mind, reflects identity-perceptions 'beyond the

Sephardic community,' meaning, that she is willing to look in- and outside of the community to construct her concept of a linguistic identity. This is of course *novel* that this younger generation can choose a language or choose to laugh at given language choices, whereas their parents did not have any choice and automatically spoke Serbo-Croatian in its Bosnian-Herzegovinian sub-variant. A.A., from this same younger generation, says:

> It's funny to me because you don't know what language you're actually talking. My parents ironically say: 'Bosnian'; what should that be? It's Serbo-Croatian! They're confusing me with all this. Logically: if I live in Bosnia, I speak Bosnian. If my parents would have raised me in a way to pay attention to someone's nationality and religion I would be different. At home, there was never a questioning about religion and language. I am Bosnian and religion shouldn't be mixed up with that.
> I speak Bosnian because Bosnia and Herzegovina is where I grew up. I don't speak Croatian or Serbian because I don't connect to these languages as most people here do now after the war, meaning connecting to a particular language according to their religion. I was born in Bosnia and Bosnian is my language. Although people connect Bosnian only to Muslims, I think it's wrong. We have a few minorities living here and imagine all of them speaking their own language; it would be ridiculous! So, my language is Bosnian because I was born in Bosnia and I feel I'm a Bosnian.

Again, data from this generation, that is, from people younger than 30 years old, show that the Sephardim have internalized the official national Bosnian language-classification. At the same time, Tea expresses confusion and a certain exasperation about the new linguistic situation. When discussing the significance of language more broadly, she also gives voice to her *powerlessness* in relation to Ladino-maintenance that is, regarding her ability to learn Judeo-Spanish since opportunities for doing so do not exist. There is however an ongoing initiative to establish a section in the faculty of Philosophy in Sarajevo for Ladino and Roma languages.[61]

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[61] Another development is that the five Jewish children/siblings in the Catholic Kreševo (just outside Sarajevo) can attend Sephardic Jewish classes once a week instead of being forced to attend the regular Catholic class (E. Tauber, Personal Communication, 26.11.2015). According to Yehuda Kolonomos however, who is father of the children, this is no longer the case in practice but only on the paper. "It doesn't make sense for Tauber to come to Kreševo because of the very little salary he gets" (Y. Kolonomos, Personal Communication, 21.3.2018).

Jakob Finci explains:

> The faculty of Philosophy has a chair for national languages and they said that the national languages here are not only Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian but also Ladino and the language of Roma people. But it's not easy to make these minority-languages part of the curriculum because these things cost and financial problems in this country are enormous (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 16.3.2018).

Tea says: "My grandfather spoke Ladino and of course we must work for the preservation of Ladino, but nobody speaks it and it's impossible to study Ladino." Her testimony may obliquely suggest that there is a lack of interest among the younger generations for the Sephardic language, since it has no function in the society, at least from its young members' point of view.

Vladimir Andrle too expresses a certain fatalism regarding the Sephardic language:

> Very, very few people [have any use for Ladino]. I think that there are only two or three elderly people in Bosnia who speak Ladino, and I also think that this language will become extinct in Bosnia.

My interviewees between the ages of 30 and 55 appeared to demonstrate an even more ambiguous relationship towards their mother tongue. Igor Kožemjakin, for instance, makes reference to a Jewish experience in Yugoslavia, and also reveals his own multifaceted relationship towards the language he considers his mother tongue:

> My parents were really positive towards Yugoslavia. Life was easier with more social security. I was a pioneer [belonging to a communist youth scouting group]. One would become a pioneer by default when reaching a certain age, usually seven or eight. So becoming a pioneer was not something one could choose for oneself. We were Yugoslavs with a Jewish background and we celebrated Jewish holidays at home. It's difficult today to talk about a mother tongue […] Judeo-Spanish was spoken at home when I was a child. Today I speak Sarajevan and we mix at home.

My wife speaks Russian because she's from Ukraine and we speak English, Hebrew[62] and Bosnian too.

My […] [This matter of my 'mother tongue' is a] very difficult question, knowing the fact that there have been linguistic disputes. I don't know how to call it anymore […] 'mother language.' So, I speak Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian. I really don't know how to […] Sarajevski [the 'Sarajevo language'] would be the most appropriate name. Sarajevski [Sarajevan].

For us it's the question of how to call it. So we often call it the way the person we're talking to is calling it. For me it's one language but I would try to speak 'our language.' That's how I ask at the airport if I hear someone speak my language: Vi govorite naš jezik? [Do you speak our language?].

I am not a speaker of Ladino, unfortunately it's a language which is falling out of use. Here in Sarajevo in particular this was a community where Ladino was spoken at homes, until the Second World War. For example, my grandmother didn't speak our language well enough, because her native language was 'Djudeo-Espanjol,' Judeo-Spanish.

Yehuda Kolonomos tells me about Yugoslavia:

Because we Jews were living in Yugoslavia relatively freely, nobody persecuted us because of our religious beliefs. Some religious communities did go through persecution, but we didn't, ever. Yugoslavia was a country created on the basis of respect for the freedom of religion, at least nominally.

I was raised in a sort of a mixed marriage, where my mother was, let's say, relatively neutral to the regime, and my father, didn't think highly of it because our property was nationalized after the Second World War, so […]

When speaking of his mother tongue, Yehuda reflects:

Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina today claim that they speak the Croatian language, Serbs say that they speak Serbian and Bosniaks Bosnian. What happened [is that] there was a political division, which is clear to us locals, and maybe not so clear to foreigners. But all of us basically speak the same language. I don't think there's any difference but, of course, due to political reasons, and as someone coming from a Croat area, where Croats live, and where all of my neighbors and people around me say that they speak Croatian, I also belong to that […] environment.

I didn't use Ladino in real life, I understood a lot, almost all of it, and I know a lot of songs in Ladino which I learned when I was a child. But very few people use Ladino for speaking, so […]. Even those of us who live in our Jewish community

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[62] In a Facebook messenger message (29.6.2018) Igor Kožemjakin clarifies that his wife studied Hebrew at the International Solomon University in Kiev. Igor himself learnt Hebrew during the time he was living in Israel from 1994-2001.

and who can speak Ladino almost never use it to talk with each other. That's a problem.

At home, today we speak Croatian and Macedonian. When I grew up my grandmother and my mum spoke Ladino with me, and Macedonian because that's where I was born, and Greek. I still know many songs in Ladino but I never speak it. Croatian is my mother tongue I guess, fbecause of my father.

For the generation older than 55, the relationship towards Yugoslavia is emotionally loaded.

Matilda Finci recalls:

It was very positive in Yugoslavia. I saw Tito once outside 'Hotel Evropa' [in Sarajevo]. Socialism is a better system. We were all Yugoslavs. It was good because we all spoke the same language. I taught Serbo-Croatian […].

Let me tell you an anecdote: My daughter is […] My mom went to the market and bought […] As she said: "I've bought Serbian cheese to make a pie." And my daughter said: "Granny, it's not Serbian, you should say Serbo-Croatian," because it was the name of the language.

On the other hand, Finci expresses a sense of loss concerning Ladino in the idyllic Yugoslavia of her memory:

I still regret that I didn't learn the language from my mother and my stepfather who spoke Ladino Spanish at home. And I didn't think that was something important. Can you imagine that I didn't know, I was a child back then, I had no idea it was Spanish. I was thinking – God, how can they speak in this way in front of me, when they don't want me to hear something? They spoke Ladino at the time.

The important thing is to maintain the tradition and to maintain Ladino, that really valuable language. I mean, there are so many sayings, so much wisdom, so many […] well […] it's the linguistic culture […].

Reflecting on languages spoken in her family and in public space in her youth, Erna Kaveson Debevec recalls:

In socialist Yugoslavia we spoke Serbo-Croatian, went to school and learned that language, naturally, and spoke it while communicating with friends. But for traditional purposes, let's say prayers, or anything like that, we either use Hebrew, or Ladino, 'Djudeo-Espanjol,' because there are some prayers which have been translated into Spanish. Otherwise, I'm telling you, during holidays we were speaking Serbo-Croat.

Our parents sometimes used to mix the languages […]. Anyway, I didn't learn Ladino from my parents. I guess I listened to my older family members and learnt it without knowing, and it came with the years. I have it in my blood. My father was a polyglot, he spoke five languages. But basically, nobody has taught me specifically to speak Ladino and I didn't teach my children either.

I was a Yugoslav in Yugoslavia, of course. Back then, we made no differences what we are, where we come from or what religion we practiced. We all lived together a normal, quiet life. The ethnic conflicts later led to all the problems we have today. Unfortunately and unnecessarily, it destroyed us [Yugoslavia].

Laura Papo Ostojić tells me about the language-use when she grew up:

Ladino culture is very important. I can't explain […] I would so very much like to know […]. It would be beautiful to know. Only my mother spoke Ladino with her Jewish friends, but not with me. We spoke Serbo-Croatian. Our parents were mixing Serbo-Croatian and Ladino at home. I know very little Ladino. "Linda, querida mia" [My beautiful dear]. My mum always said it to me. There are some phrases like that still left, but it's a pity I can't speak or that I've never studied the language.

Among this older generation, there emerges a 'master narrative' of romantic longing for ordinary life in Yugoslavia[63] and the values it embodied for them, such as security, stability, and socio-cultural unity among citizens. Simultaneously (and contraveningly) they long for Ladino. The way in which this generation views Serbo-Croatian—rather than some recently-recognized local variant of it—as a mother-tongue is most probably interconnected with how they have experienced Judeo-Spanish as a 'domestic' language in relation to standard Spanish, and to the role of modern Hebrew—a language that they did not speak as children—as the dominant language in Israel. The official elimination of linguistic and cultural borders in

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[63] Burić (2012: 227) writes that many former Yugoslavs and not only the Jews, are nostalgic about the Yugoslav period and especially former Yugoslavs from Bosnia and Herzegovina (cf. Maksimović 2017: 1071). Additionally, the high number of mixed marriages in Bosnia and Herzegovina (16% in Sarajevo) and the high number of Bosnians declaring themselves as Yugoslavs – reflects the strong role of a Yugoslav identity among Bosnians (Burić 2012: 228-229). Besides, the lack of a generational consensus regarding 'Bosnianness' has made this category ambiguous and as a consequence the Muslims tend to declare themselves in various ways (Burić 2012: 232-233).

Maksimović (2017: 1073) argues that the Yugonostalgia serves as a reminder that post-Yugoslav societies need more of a critical discussion about their communist past. Furthermore, she thinks that the nostalgic feelings about the past represents a 'utopian desire' for a better future, i.e., with more trustworthy politicians, less nationalism and more tolerance (Maksimović 2017: 1073, 1076).

Yugoslavia led to cultural homogenization and it is precisely this homogenization that this generation is responding to and remembering with fondness.

Jakob Finci reflects as follows upon his conception of his mother tongue and upon Yugoslavia as a factor in his identity:

> My grandmother spoke Judeo-Spanish. It was the secret language of the elderly. Yugoslavia was a society without religious feelings. It was a pink socialism and the state provided you with free education, good health care and an apartment.[64] Was it efficient? The majority of us still speak Serbo-Croatian today […].

As we have seen, among Finci's generation there are persons who explicitly regard Ladino as their *lost* mother tongue. Based on this data, it is obvious that from a generational perspective, the elderly perceive the Sephardic language as a somewhat familiar yet now largely inaccessible part of their cultural heritage. For the next generation, the generation of Igor Kožemjakin, Tina Tauber and Yehuda Kolonomos, the conceptions of a 'mother tongue' are destabilized. These subjects' are multilingual. Meanwhile, for the youngest, like Tea Abinun and Vladimir Andrle, the Sephardic language is residual. It is simply a symbol from the past built on the nostalgia of the elderly. The language ideology that my youngest subjects articulate is especially concerning the supposedly direct relationship between identity and standard national languages.

The subjects' Sephardic identity is, in my opinion, oftentimes manifested through linguistic ideologies that contradict each other across the generations—with the older subjects holding on

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[64] Djokić (2006: 2792) writes that Yugoslavs enjoyed government-sponsored social systems which made it possible for everyone to obtain housing and free health care. Between 1945-1950, the *American Distribution Committee* donated food and clothes to the Yugoslav Jews, improving their living conditions (Ivanković 2009: 138, 374; Ivanković 2011: 145-146). However, in the 1980s there was a growth in unemployment and a decline in living standards. As Mesarič (2017: 584) writes: "Secure jobs and housing that constituted 'normality' in socialist Yugoslavia were replaced with precarity and soaring unemployment (…)" (cf. Maksimović 2017: 1071, 1077). As Maksimović (2017: 1071) writes: "(…) facing a difficult socioeconomic situation and general life conditions, people look into the past searching for a lost sense of security and stability." These economic problems in socialist Yugoslavia were moreover one factor, among others, which led to the disintegration of the country (Djokić 2006: 2792).

to (pan-)Yugoslav conceptions of culture and citizenship. The middle aged adults, who experienced Yugoslavia and its break-up, remain in a gray area of ambivalence toward facile articulations of the nation-language nexus. For their part, the younger subjects, for whom nostalgic conceptions of Yugoslavia were never part of lived reality, have settled for a skeptical attitude toward the nation-language nexus: simply put, the young adults judge national divisions to be somewhat arbitrary. The contradictions in the ways that the subjects regard language lead me to the following conclusion: Sephardic-Jewish identification in Sarajevo is, among other things, constructed through *transnational* (Serbo-Croatian and/or Bosnian-Serbian-Croatian) conceptions of 'mother tongue' that in turn have been filtered through the experience of, inter alia, the second Yugoslavia and the Bosnian and Herzegovinian multinational state.

I argue that the young show an ambivalent identification with the Bosnian state, while a 'Bosnian' orientation among the elderly is less distinct, since they were socialized in Yugoslavia. On one hand the subordination of Serbo-Croatian in Yugoslavia has led to a dilution of Ladino for the Sephardim. On the other hand, the subjects express resistance and grief toward ideologies that designate a hegemonic language. Consequently, the ambiguity of the relationship between language and Sephardic ethnic identification is, to my mind, a core element in the interviewees' notions of their minority membership.

The Yugoslav period that the elderly remember nostalgically is a period that held back their Sephardic linguistic background. It seems like they have internalized their need to adjust to a post-Ladino situation so much that they do not fully recognize what has happened to their Sephardi linguistic heritage. However, the mere fact of providing their linguistic biographies, and their expressed grief regarding the dying Sephardic language, may provide them with a degree of self-understanding and the ability to grasp that they were linguistically discriminated against by the very Yugoslavian political and cultural order for which they yearn.

As mentioned earlier, Jews did not follow the usual post-Serbo-Croatian state-regulated and elite-dictated language division whereby Orthodox Christians should speak Serbian, Catholics should speak Croatian, and Muslims should speak Bosnian. Obviously, there are new language-classifications that have emerged. As an example, Igor Kožemjakin referred to 'Sarajevski' (Sarajevan) as being the most appropriate name for him. It is thus possible to make a direct link between this section and my initial research question regarding how the Jews 'choose' to call the language they speak considering that they do not automatically belong to one of the three constituent peoples in Bosnia who often speak Bosnian, Croatian or Serbian. First- and second-hand experience of life in the second Yugoslavia period and the experiences of living in today's Sarajevo marks the most important point of departure in the identity formation of my interviewees. The mother tongue conceptions (as being reflected by the interviewees) and the linguistic and nationalist ideology within the second Yugoslavian and today's Sarajevan society are, to me, crucial components in the interviewees' Sephardic contemporary culture (cf. Wingstedt 1996: 10-11).

In the Sephardic culture of my subjects the Sephardic language is not consciously promoted by them (academic promotion of Ladino is an Israeli phenomenon which I will describe in detail later). Because the interviewees do not consciously promote the Sephardic language this language itself is not expressive of the Sephardi culture. Instead, they are conscious that the distinctiveness of a Sephardic culture and language in Sarajevo is almost gone. The expressed ambivalence in the subjects language choices that I underscore with regard to some of my interviewees suggest a passive if somewhat conflicted acquiescence of linguistic realities, including dominant or once-dominant, *non-Sephardi*, official ideologies of language. Thus, being Sephardic among my subjects seems to be largely about the experience of the loss of the Sephardic language an about ambiguities regards the linguistic setting in Sarajevo today.

In the following section I move from 'Yugoslavia' to 'Israel' which once again (just like 'Spain' did) presents a 'historical homeland' and an option today for the Sarajevo Sephardim. As I showed earlier there were six major *aliyot* from the Balkans between 1948-1952 (Ivanković 2011: 150). Moreover, among my interviewees, three persons (Tina Tauber, Igor Kožemjakin and Matilda Finci) made *aliyah* to Israel during the Bosnian war in the 1990s. Eli Tauber did as well, and all four interviewees have returned to Sarajevo after the war.

2.5 An Identity-Creating Factor: Israel

In the following I present an overview of the history and culture of the Sephardim in Israel, which I find crucial to understanding identification with Israel, or the lack thereof, among my interviewees in Sarajevo. I argue that the way Sephardim in Israel were perceived has had a major impact on the way my subjects in Sarajevo relate to Israel.

In the following sections, I analyze issues pertaining to Israel's foundation and the role of the Sephardim in the early Israeli endeavour. In this regard, I especially reflect upon the relationship between modern Hebrew and Judeo-Spanish: how this relation was shaped at the time of Israel's foundation and what the situation is today. In this section (below) however, I begin by introducing two different sub-groupings of Israeli Sephardim and the self-images these sub-groups entail. I round up by exploring the Sephardim's connection to oriental Jews, the so called *Mizrahim.*

The reader may wonder how these following sections further my main exposition about linguistic and Jewish identity formation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. As alluded earlier, the work is, among others, about my interviewees perceptions and feelings of belonging – or not – to Israel. I discuss their perceptions of Israel in relation to Jewish identity formation in Sarajevo today.

Henceforth, I see it as important to elaborate upon Israel's history and cultural reality (the relation there between Sephardim and Mizrahim as for example).

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Between 1948 and 1952, 8,000 Yugoslav Jews, out of a total of 14,000, emigrated to Israel. Israeli society categorizes its Sephardim according to their country of origin (though until recently, members of Israel's predominantly Ashkenazic socioeconomic and cultural elites held them in lesser esteem than those immigrants who came to there from countries with predominantly Ashkenazic-European communities). In Israel there are Turkish, Bulgarian, Yugoslav [65], and Greek Jews who constitute various Sephardi communities in distinct neighborhoods and other living areas. Only the elderly among these groups still speak Judeo-Spanish (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 197-198; Вучина Симовић 2016: 166-167).

Furthermore, there are two Sephardi subgroups in Israel: first, those who arrived in then Ottoman Palestine some 200-500 years ago from Iberia and the early modern Sephardi diaspora; and second, 'Sephardi' immigrants—many of whom possess no Iberian ancestry yet adhere to '*minhag Sepharad*' (Heb., literally, 'the custom [or rite] of Hispania') namely the rabbinic, liturgical, and folk traditions of the Iberian Jews—who came to Israel in the twentieth century. According to Tamar Alexander (Personal Communication, 5.6.2015) the veterans and the newcomers have different self-images.

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[65] They still identify as 'Yugoslavs,' even after the breakup of Yugoslavia (Eliezer Papo, Personal Communication, 26.2.2015).

From early on, Sephardim who possessed Iberian-Jewish ancestry added the adjective 'pure' (*tahor*) when identifying their Sephardi ethnicity in writing. When listing their favorite rabbinic authorities, for example, they added to the names the acronym ס״ט, which allegedly contracts the Hebrew phrase '*Sephardi tahor*'—pure Sephardi—but is actually an acronym for '*sofo tov*'—'his end [death] was good,' in other words, 'he did not die prematurely or as a result of violence.' This the 'pure Sephardim' did in order not to be confused with oriental Jews of non-Iberian ancestry, including those from such places as inner North Africa, Iran, Iraq, and other lands. The 'pure' Sephardim flaunted their supposed genealogical purity "(…) as if to protect themselves from possible counterfeiters, in a brand of ethnic chauvinism, projecting a sort of aristocratic image of themselves within the Jewish world" (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 195; cf. Efron 2016: 50). This aristocratic self-image derives in part from the conception, developed during the Middle Ages in Al-Andalus, that the Spanish Jews' ancestors came from southern Palestine and were descended from the Judean nobility, whereas the Ashkenazim (for instance) allegedly came from northern Palestine (Wexler 1996: 247; D. L. Graizbord, Personal Communication, 6.3.2018).

After 1948, the Sephardim concentrated on settling down and establishing themselves economically in Israel (Elazar 1989: 200). It was specifically during this period of time that Oriental Jews began to feel closer socioeconomically and culturally to the Sephardic community. Step by step these two groups came to be considered as one (Harris 1994: 149; Ginio 2015: 10; 16), a situation that lasted approximately until the 1980s. However, in recent years, the term *Mizrahim* (Hebrew for 'Orientals') has acquired currency as a collective designation of Jews from the Middle East and inland (non-Sephardi) areas of North Africa (cf. Hetzer 2001: v). These latter '*mustarabim*' (Jews who are like Arabs) are historically and ethnically distinct from 'classic' Sephardim who descend from the expellees of 1492. A case in point are the ethnic and cultural differences that mark the native Jews of Tangier. According to

Moreno (2012), their self-representation in Israel stem from the broader cultural and linguistic divide between Hispano-Jewish, Spanish-speaking Jews in northern Morocco and the Judeo-Arab cultures in the rest of the country.

<p style="text-align:center">❧❦❧</p>

Having showed how the Israeli Sephardim subsumed themselves in Israeli society, I move on to I explore the pre-conditions that, eventually in 1948, led to the foundation of Israel. I introduce an Israeli nationalist ideology and specifically a Hebrew linguistic nationalist ideology pertinent in the young Israeli nation. In section 2.4.2, I continue to elaborate upon this interrelation between Israel and its Hebrew national language. I come back to this ideology while analyzing my interviewees perceptions of Israel and the Hebrew Israeli language.

2.5.1 The Foundation of Israel

In modern times, the condition of endemic Jewish dispersion and subjection to non-Jewish peoples lent impetus to the idea of developing a Jewish state in the ancestral homeland of the Jewish nation. This idea gained political and material traction in the last two decades of the 19th century. More precisely, pogroms in Russia from 1881 to 1882 made urgent the question of the absence of a land in which Jews could exercise self-determination and live in peace

(Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 88, 116, 118; Shindler 2012: 296-298).[66] In some respects the political program of Zionism was resuscitated by the Alfred Dreyfus affair (1894-1906) in Paris, which seemed to invalidate the promise of political emancipation as a solution to the question of whether Jews' truly belonged and would be fully integrated in the modern, democratic nation-state (Bar-Zohar 1967: 10).[67] One of the many journalists who was writing about Dreyfus was Theodore Herzl. He argued that Jews would not be able to live securely and peacefully unless they had a homeland-state of their own; of course, he had such homeland already in mind – Palestine (Bar-Zohar 1967: 10; Shavit 2013: 6). To articulate his ideas and spur their implementation, Herzl published the *The Jewish State* in 1896 (Avineri 2013: 114).

A year later, the first Zionist Congress was held in Basel. Herzl and his fellow Zionist delegates produced a platform that laid out the main elements of a plan to (re)create the Jewish state in the Jewish homeland, the Land of Israel (also known as 'Palestine' in accordance with Roman imperial usage after 135 CE) (Birri-Tomovska 2012: 161-162; Shindler 2012: 296). Alternatives to Palestine-centered Zionism included proposals to found a Jewish state in Argentina and in Uganda, both of which met with limited support. The age-old concept of making *aliyah* and hence the ideal of a return to Palestine were far more popular among the Zionists overall (Bar-Zohar 1967: 11-12; Shindler 2012: 297; Avineri 2013: 123-124).

Between 1517 and 1917, Palestine was part of the Ottoman Empire. The British government expressed its support of the idea of a Jewish national home in Palestine when it issued the 1917 Balfour Declaration, which in turn encouraged Zionists to implement their plan and continue the project of systematic Jewish settlement and economic development in Palestine (Shlaim

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[66] In 1882, the first Zionists from tsarist Russia settled in Ottoman Palestine and in 1910 the second wave of Zionists settled there (Shindler 2012: 298).

[67] In 1894, captain Alfred Dreyfus was accused of espionage in France. He was prosecuted for having handed out secrets to Germany and was brought to justice. Dreyfus was sentenced to prison on Devil's island off the coast of South America, but he claimed that he was innocent. When the actual spy was found, Dreyfus was able to return to France; he was place on trial again and found guilty a second time, but was excused from serving more time. Only in 1906 was Dreyfus exonerated (Rayfield 1999: 184-185; Shindler 2012: 296).

2010: 4-5; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 162, 287; Shindler 2012: 296).

The British position had some impact on Serbian Jews during the First World War. For example, David Albala from Belgrade was a Sephardic Jewish medical doctor and captain in the Serbian army who had been dispatched by the Serbian government to the United States because of his fluency in English. Albala recommended to the Serbian government that it express its formal support for the Balfour Declaration. As a result, Serbia was the first country in the world to endorse the declaration (Ivanković 2009: 21, 36; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 79; Freund, 2013). Still, the impact of this diplomatic support on Yugoslav Jews was modest. As already mentioned, a small percentage of Yugoslav Jews settled in Palestine during the interwar period: only 800, or 0,24% out of 330,000 Jews to be precise, settling in Palestine between 1919 and 1939 were from Yugoslavia.

When the state of Israel was founded in 1948[68], Holocaust-survivors—approximately 500,000—came to live in the newly established state (Birri-Tomovska 2012: 162; cf. Segev 1998). This number included 4,114 Jews from Yugoslavia (Ivanković 2011: 150).

Israel has been defined by political scientists as an ethnic democracy[69], which is "(…) propelled by an ideology or a movement of ethnic nationalism that declares a certain population as an ethnic nation sharing a common descent (blood ties), a common language and a common

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[68] The war of Independence (May 1948-January 1949) marks a point of departure for the modern conflict between Jews and Arabs in the Middle East. The war resulted in 700,000 Palestinian Arabs—who began to call themselves simply "Palestinians" after 1970—fleeing, and in a few cases, being expelled from their homes, transforming 80% of them into refugees. Another result was that their lands were 'nationalized' as part of the new Jewish state and no compensation was given to them by the Israeli army. It is estimated that a new Jewish settlement was created every third day and that after 1948, the Israeli Palestinians turned into a minority (having had settled mainly in the West Bank, Gaza and nearby Arab countries) within the newly founded Israeli territory (Segev 1998; Yonah 2005: 102; Shindler 2012: 295). There are a few so-called 'new historians' who challenge mainstream interpetations of the circumstances of the war of liberation. Morris (2007: 19-20), for instance, argues that some Arabs were expelled but also that most of them left voluntarily.

[69] Smooha (2005: 25-29) describes an ethnic democracy model. In accordance with this model, an ethnic group has an exclusive right to a certain territory, which in turn results in a community where certain members are more included than others. This results in the creation of two distinct groups: insiders and outsiders. Even if an outsider becomes a citizen, this person will still not be able to obtain the same rights as an insider, whose language, religion, and ethnicity are favored. The insiders are first-class citizens and only these members have the opportunity to contribute and participate for the common good.

culture" (Smooha 2002: 477; cf. Yonah 2005: 104 and Yiftachel [2006], who critically opposite the notion of an 'ethnocracy'). Zionism is *de facto* the state ideology in Israel, and as Smooha (2002: 485) notes, "Hebrew is Israel's official and dominant language (...). It is dominant in all areas of life (home, media, economy, government, science, etc.). It is the only official language in Hebrew education, displacing foreign languages and cultures in the Israeli-born generations" (Smooha 2002: 485).[70] The recent (2018) Israeli Jewish nation-state law stipulates that Arabic no longer is one of the country's official languages and that Israel *de jure* is a Jewish state (Maltz, 2018). The law was adopted by Knesset, the Israeli parliament on the 19th of July 2018.

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The following section explores issues pertaining to the Israeli Law of Return (1950) and I specifically focus on the Sephardim's experiences in Israel at this point of time. Around then, modern Hebrew was introduced as the national language in Israel – in order to further unify the Jewish population of the newly established nation-state. In this process, I describe the relationship between Judeo-Spanish, the language of the Sephardim, and that of modern Hebrew. This relationship, as we shall see, resembles the relationship between Judeo-Spanish and Serbo-Croatian – currently called Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian – in Sarajevo. What we learn from this section that follows however, is that Israeli Sephardi parents gradually stopped

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[70] Spolsky & Shohamy (1999) observe that there are as many as thirty-two languages spoken in Israel. Moreover, there are Jews in Israel from more than 100 different countries with their singular traditions and (hi)stories (Shindler 2012: 302; Y. Ezrahi, Personal Communication, 24.3.2011).

speaking Judeo-Spanish with their children alongside the revitalization of Hebrew – being considered *the* favored Jewish language.

2.5.2 The Right to Return and the Modern Hebrew Standard

In 1950, Israel introduced its Law of Return. This Law allows any Jewish person to come to Israel and claim citizenship. The idea of the Zionist movement was to unite all Jews and create 'one Jewish culture.' Therefore, in the Israeli state, the Sephardim had to assimilate with the Ashkenazi majority culture (Murgu 2009: 35-36). Thus, the Sephardim, some of whom had lived in Palestine for centuries, were to lose some of their distinct ethnic and cultural identity in order to adopt a new Israeli culture in which the mainstream educational institutions and the obligatory military service are in part designed to create 'a New Jew' through the use of Modern/Israeli Hebrew (Elazar 1989; cf. Harris 1994: 203-204; Schwarzwald 2011: 523-524; Ginio 2015: 5, 12). In this way, Israel was similarly discouraging of Sephardim's identity as Yugoslavia.

Before the arrival of the modern Zionists, many Sephardim in Jerusalem were fluent in Arabic and worked as interpreters for Ottoman Turks and British. Some Sephardim were traders, others were bankers, civil servants, and government contractors. Across the generations they spoke Judeo-Spanish (cf. Laqueur 2006). However, with Zionism, a nationalist state policy that favored modern Hebrew brought into question the ethnic identity of the Sephardim by stigmatizing Judeo-Spanish and other Jewish languages such as Yiddish and Arabic.[71] Those

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[71] One reason why Ben-Gurion, the first Prime Minister of Israel, immigrated from Polen to Palestine in the first place was his love of the Hebrew language. As a journalist, he argued that reviving Hebrew would lead to unification of the Jewish nation (Bar-Zohar 1967: 25). This meant that he realized in the process of creating a Jewish nation, there would be rival interests, not only among Jews and non-Jews (Arabs and British) but also

Jews who knew Judeo-Spanish were often embarrassed to speak it publicly (Murgu 2009: 32). Anat Malul, a student of Sephardic Studies at the Hebrew University, whom I was recommended to contact by one of her professors, explains the phenomenon as follows:

> With the foundation of Israel, we were all going to be one Jewish people and therefore Hebrew came from above, and we were ashamed of speaking other languages. My professors would say that we had a horrible government [then], but I think we needed the unification. The Arabic connotation was not positive, so [Sephardim] would say they were Europeans or Greeks rather than Sephardim, or they would say that they were 'pure Sephardim' from Jerusalem (A. Malul, Personal Communication, 3.11.2015).

Nevertheless, the Sephardic elite held important positions in the economy and within the main political parties. In fact, it was only the non-wealthy Sephardim who found it hard to assimilate into Israeli society (Elazar 1989; Murgu 2009: 37). Prior to 1948, for example, the electrical grid in the Yishuv (the pre-state Jewish community) was very limited. As a result, many working-class Sephardic women washed clothes together on special laundry days. They used to tell stories and sing *romanzas* in Judeo-Spanish, which they also sang during weddings and other special occasions. When the state of Israel was founded, however, parents gradually stopped speaking Judeo-Spanish with their children (Freidenreich 1979: 13; Kantrowitz & Klepfisz 1989: 217).

In Israel's early years, there was no specific regulation regarding an Israeli language, but with the state's foundation the Zionists enforced a shift to, and revitalization of, the Hebrew culture (Harris 1985: 199; Shohamy 2006). The Nationality Law of 1952, §5(5), proclaims that immigrants need to know Hebrew in order to obtain Israeli citizenship, whereas the recent

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between the Jews themselves (Bar-Zohar 1967: 32; Shindler 2012: 303; cf. Birri-Tomovska 2012: 163). Discussions among the left-wing circles also focused on the possibility of a dual-national Jewish-Arab state. Herzl, however, did not promote a common Hebrew lingua. He saw Hebrew as a religious language and argued that the Jews should speak the languages they brought with them, pointing to Switzerland as an example of another multilingual country (Avineri 2013: 131).

'Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish people' law (2018) clearly defines Hebrew as the official language of Israel.

According to the Zionists in the 1950s, diaspora Jewish languages should be forgotten, and Sephardim should learn Hebrew in order to be 'true [Israeli] Jews' (cf. Shapira 2004; Pinto-Abecasis 2015: 117). Not surprisingly, the slogan, "We're Israeli, speak Hebrew!" was popular in Sephardic homes. For the newly arrived immigrants from 1948 and onwards, the government organized Ulpanim centers, i.e. Hebrew-teaching schools that discouraged the maintenance of diaspora mother tongues (Harris 1985: 197; Sáenz-Badillos 1993: 272; Ginio 2015: 36).

In the backdrop of this decision was Eliezer Ben Yehuda's principle of *Safa Brura* (Clear Speech) which was promoted by an organization established in 1889, with the mission to unite all residents of the 'holy land' in one clear language, i.e. the tongue of their ancestors. The ideology of Hebraicization partly explains why "*(...) the Sephardim were eager to embrace the way of life of the Ashkenazic majority.*" Indeed, *"[Sephardim] became Ashkenazified as soon as possible"* (Harris 1985: 197, emphasis mine). Nevertheless, one of the seven members of *Safa Brura* organization was the Sephardic chief rabbi, Ya'akov Meir, and in this regard the language choice in favor of Hebrew could be considered a joint Sephardic-Ashkenazi one. Choosing Hebrew as the national language was certainly supported by Sephardic intellectuals. Evidence of this support is found in a booklet by Shelomo Haramati entitled *Three Who Preceded Ben Yehudah* (1978). Here, Haramati tells about four Sephardic teachers – Menachem Farhi, Baruch Mitrani, Yosef Halevi and Nissim Bechar – who started teaching Hebrew as school language in Jerusalem during the last decades of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth.

When the process of making Hebrew the national language was taking place, Ashkenazi Jews considered the Sephardic Hebrew pronunciation to be strange and non-Western. In 1913 however, the Hebrew Language Committee of the Yishuv decided to make the Sephardic

pronunciation the modern Hebrew standard (Morag 1987: 194; Rosenthal 2005: 102). The pronunciation chosen by the language committee was at least Sephardic in some aspects: it included five vowels out of seven for example. On the other hand, the normative pronunciation was Ashkenazi in other aspects, as for instance in the sound of the letter 'ayin (ע) (Sáenz-Badillos 1993: 282; Morag 1993: 208-221; Schwarzwald 2008: 444; Efron 2016: 52). However, the chosen form was predominantly a Sephardic Hebrew. This option was motivated by the notion of the Ashkenazi intellectuals in the committee that Yiddish was a 'non-language'—a diaspora jargon of sorts, not a proper tongue—and that the sacred Hebrew, the language of the (secular) Jewish renaissance, should be clearly distinguished from Yiddish's diasporic sound (Schorsch 1989: 53-54; Efron 2016: 39). The high prestige of Sephardi culture that was manifested in this decision derives from the Middle Ages, when the myth developed that some Jewish spiritual authorities moved from Babylonia to Andalusia (Hetzer 2001: V; cf. Freidenreich 1979: 6; Schapkow 2011: 13).

Jacob Landau (1990: 137-138) distinguishes three periods in the establishment of modern Hebrew as national language in the Land of Israel: first, from 1890 to 1920, when the first Hebrew Language Committee was founded with the mission of determining a one-language policy for the old Jewish residents of Palestine and the new Jewish immigrants; second, from 1928 to 1948, when the Hebrew Language Committee worked towards standardizing Hebrew pronunciation and spelling; and finally, from 1948 onwards, when the Hebrew Language Committee became the Academy of the Hebrew Language.

As Israeli schools were not required to pay attention to Sephardic culture, it became the culture of an ethnic minority, while the Ashkenazi culture was the *de facto* Israeli majority culture (Elazar 1989: 186). In 1996, the educational policy declared that Jews should learn Arabic, English, and another world language in school. Hebrew, however, remained the

dominant language (Murgu 2009: 49).

To sum up, the Sephardic culture in Israel at the time of its foundation was hold back. As I mentioned at the beginning of this section: those Jews who knew Judeo-Spanish were embarrassed to speak it publicly. Nevertheless, there were two mutually conflicting notions embedded in the modernization of the Hebrew national language: first, that Sephardic Hebrew was of low prestige language and, second, that the Sephardic culture should be an integral part of what the Hebrew language ought to be.

As we shall see in the following section, the position of the Sephardic language in Israel changes and today it is no longer regarded as threatening and disloyal to the national idea when people speak a language other than Hebrew (Harris 1985: 205). On the other hand, with new generations, Judeo-Spanish has already been forgotten.

2.5.3 A Rebirth of Judeo-Spanish in Israel?

By the beginning of the 20th century, Spanish scholars, especially the philologist Ramon Menendez Pidal, started to publish books about Ladino literature and the Judeo-Spanish language from a Spanish perspective (Refael 1996: 64). Thus, the Spanish researchers explored angles of their own Hispanic tradition and simultaneously made sure that the diasporic Judeo-Spanish tradition would not be forgotten (Refael 1996: 64). By the end of the 19th century, Amador de los Ríos (who was a student of Pidal's) started to write about the history of the Sephardim in Spain. Moreover, in the 20th century, authors who lived outside of Spain, like Yitzhak Baer and Julio Caro Baroja also wrote about Spain's Sephardim (Menny 2013: 42. 45). Pidal's students were, at this time, arguing about the condition and consequences of the notion

of *convivencia* for Spain's national character (Menny 2013: 46, 51). Scholars now agree that the *convivencia* in Spain was not a situation of mutual tolerance. In fact, as we can learn, anti-Judaism emerged out of this 'tolerant climate' (cf. Menny 2013: 51).

Israel too is currently making efforts to preserve Judeo-Spanish/Ladino (Hetzer 2001: VI). Ladino textbooks are being published in order to facilitate instructional activities in Ladino language (Refael 1996: 67). It is estimated that there are today around 400,000 people in Israel with some kind of knowledge of Judeo-Spanish (Jones, 2017). Especially there is a lot of language mixing occurring among the different Sephardic generations in Israel. One Sephardic grandchild who has chosen to study (standard) Spanish in order to recover some of her Iberian heritage explains that her grandmother always addresses her as *querida mía* and then continues in Hebrew. For instance: Ma shlomech *querida mía*? (How are you my love?) (A. Malul, Personal Communication, 3.11.2015). Further sentences that combine Hebrew and Ladino vocabulary mostly have to do with food.[72] When the grandmother is talking to her sisters she is switching language, especially from Ladino to Hebrew because she is used to speak Hebrew more often (A. Malul, Personal Communication, 3.11.2015).

Politically, Ladino and Sephardic culture has been promoted in several ways: first, on January 16, 1972, the Zionist Congress in Jerusalem heard the president of the Council of the Sephardi Community declare that the Sephardim could not tolerate an Israel in which "All Jews [are] equal but some should be more equal" (Ben-Rafael 1994; Council of the Sephardi Community 1972; Murgu 2009: 41-42; cf. Moreno 2015: 53-54).[73] Second, the conservative religious

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[72] One word from many other words from Ladino that today's spoken Hebrew has incorporated is börek which actually is Turkish or Persian (cf. Schwarzwald 1999: 84-85; Zuckermann 2003: 234).

[73] In 2008, the staff at Israeli universities constituted 90% Ashkenazim and 9% Mizrahim (out of which 2 % were women and 1% Arabs). Women constituted 27% of the total academic staff (Illouz 2015: 185). These figures reveal the structural discrimination towards Mizrahim, Arabs and women and that most of the power is in the hands of Ashkenazi men (Illouz 2015: 185-186).

Moreover, Israel has a huge relational poverty, meaning that the gap between rich and poor is rated to be one of the biggest in the West (only United States' gap is bigger). Only 10% of the total Israeli population owns 70% of the private capital (Shindler 2012: 298).

populist party *Shas*, founded in 1982, has declared its main role to be protection of the interests of the broader 'Sephardic' community (in this case including Jews from Oriental communities).[74] Third, in 1996, when the Knesset decided to establish a National Authority for Ladino Language and Culture (Saban, 1999; Ginio 2015: 12).[75]

At the same time, Ladino culture is being revived through academic channels. Judeo-Spanish is currently taught at the Hebrew University, Tel-Aviv University, Bar-Ilan University, Ben-Gurion University, and the University of Haifa. The Ben Gurion University was the first of the universities to offer Judeo-Spanish courses in 1979 (Alexander & Papo 2004: 95). In 2012, the Moshe David Gaon Center for Ladino Studies of the Ben Gurion University was founded and is headed by Sarajevo's non-residential rabbi, Eliezer Papo. Moreover, in the realm of popular culture, Eliezer Papo published *La Megila de Saray* (1999), a book in Judeo-Spanish based on the stories he had heard as a child about the life of the Sephardim in Sarajevo (E. Papo, Personal Communication, 26.2.2015).

There are further efforts to (re)vitalize *Ha-safa ha-sefardit-yehudit* (the Sephardic-Jewish language) and its culture in Israel (cf. Hetzer 2001: VI). Saban (1999) refers to the Israeli Maale Adumim Institute for the Documentation of Ladino Language and Culture. The institute has a collection of over 1,000 Judeo-Spanish books and various documents and has preserved 3,000 songs and 6,000 expressions in Judeo-Spanish. Moreover, the National Ladino Authority

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[74] There are most probably scholars who would say that *Shas* has nothing to do with Sephardism. Nevertheless, the categories Sephardi and Mizrahi are serving different purposes over time and I argue that the Shas movement is part of a general movement to give voice to marginal cultures in Israel (cf. Moreno 2015: 55). Moreno (2012: 68-69) refers in this regard to that the Mizrahim through the 'Sephardic Shas' were responding to the notion of having been victimized and silenced in the 'Eurocentric Zionist project.' The protest movement *The Black Panthers* was part of this Mizrahi revolts beginning already in the 1970s in Israel (Herschthal, 2010).

Moreover, as Schorsch (2007: 85) acknowledges, the Sephardic community is of course imagined and a clear-cut division between Sephardim and Mizrahim is thus not so relevant. The main difference between the communities is of course the Judeo-Spanish language vs. Arab (cf. Wexler 2005: 37).

[75] The foundation of The National Authority for Ladino Language and Culture was a political act that became possible due to the desire to honor Itzhak Navon, the President of Israel between 1978-1983 and a descendant of a Sephardic family (N. Pinto-Abecasis, Personal Communication, 14.3.2015).

financed the production of a Hebrew–Ladino dictionary, which was published in 2008 and is available at the Maale Adumim Institute.

The Spanish Royal Academy plans to create a Judeo-Spanish branch in Israel (Halon, 2017; Jones, 2017). Furthermore, the National Authority for Ladino Culture organizes lectures, festivals and Judeo-Spanish language courses. The authority also offers various scholarships for students of Sephardic studies (Ellingwood, 2004). The National Ladino Authority collaborates with the Cervantes Institute, which in Israel promotes education in the Spanish and Judeo-Spanish languages (Murgu 2009: 84). Every year, the National Ladino Authority organizes *Festiladino,* which is an international Judeo-Spanish music contest festival. Israel's Channel One broadcasts the programme, and Judeo-Spanish music in general is more and more popular among Sephardic Israeli youngsters (cf. Alexander & Papo 2004: 96). There are also two journals in Israel dedicated to the Sephardim: *Aki Yerushalayim* and *Ladinar*. In Tel Aviv's Habimah National Theatre, the play *Bustan Sepharadi* has been performed many times. The play is performed in Hebrew, but the love songs are in Judeo-Spanish (Murgu 2009: 86). Thus, a revival of Judeo-Spanish is tangible.

Apart from the ongoing Sephardic cultural activities, Held (2010: 83) underscores the existence of Judeo-Spanish online communities where Sephardic identity is (re)constructed and negotiated: *"The Digital Home-Land,* a concept that illuminates not only the contemporary Sephardic situation, but also general aspects of human culture that is situated at a turning point in the technological age" (Held 2010: 84). The Internet chat group *Ladinokomunita* is one of the Sephardic communities where communication is conducted only in Judeo-Spanish (Bortnick 2001), and the Facebook group *Elmundosefarad* is another virtual Sephardic community in the Sephardic cyberspace where people can discuss Sephardic culture (M. Hannau, Personal Communication, 14.3.2015).

The revival of Judeo-Spanish in Israel is thus noticeable in academic and cultural spheres

and is not taking place in everyday life (cf. Harris 2005: 151). Aldina Quintana at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem is moreover concerned about the folklorization of Ladino, as distinct from its thriving, in this phenomenon of supposed 'revival,'

> I'm not so sure about a revival of Judeo-Spanish. I see that every day there are fewer speakers and the 'folklorization' is more evident. Joshua Fishman says that 'folklorization' especially emerges when languages are very close to disappearance. One of my students wrote a work on the attitude of several informants. She has come to the conclusion that the only thing that has changed is that speakers now are not ashamed to speak Judeo-Spanish in public (A. Quintana, Personal Communication, 3.3.2015).

Clearly, Judeo-Spanish speakers in Israel are no longer ashamed to speak Judeo-Spanish in public. I nevertheless think that it is negative perceptions of the Sephardim dating back to the time of Israel's foundation, which have been influencing the ways my interviewees in Sarajevo reflect upon belonging in Israel the most. In the next section I clarify whether the identity-creating factor (Israel) is relevant for my interviewees. The goal is to analyze the interviewees attitudes towards Israel in order to determine whether the country is significant in terms of their identity.

2.5.4 Israel and Jewish-Sephardic Identification in Sarajevo

During my fieldwork, I asked my interviewees a variety of questions to determine the role that Israel plays in their self-perception and national allegiance. For instance, I ask if they consider Hebrew and Israel to be important.

Statements from the youngest and middle generations I have surveyed show that the Sephardim have internalized the official Bosnian cultural grouping assigned to them, and that they are worried about negative associations with Israel. A.A. states:

> I have been a victim of anti-Semitism for the last one and a half years. People in Sarajevo are generalizing and they think Israel with its discriminatory politics is our home country even if I don't feel that way. I feel Bosnian-Jewish. There is no sentiment for Israel.
>
> Actually, Sephardim are from Spain so we have nothing to do with Israel. It's stupid to say that Israel is the center of the Jewish population. Anyway, Israel helped Bosnia during the civil war. Israel really worked hard to stop the war and the convoys weren't full of Jews but Bosnians in general.

As I have shown earlier, medieval Sephardim used to employ a similar claim as A.A., who said that the "Sephardim are from Spain so we have nothing to do with Israel." The medieval Sephardim did so to avoid the Christian accusation of having had killed Jesus (cf. Gerber 1992: 2). They argued that they came to Iberia before Jesus was born, so they could not have killed him. It was the other, bad Jews who did it. From A.A.'s statement, I think she wants to make the point that she ought to feel bonded with Israel but does not. Non-Jewish Bosnians in Sarajevo take for granted that she belongs to Israel by the mere fact that she is Jewish, and this false assumption makes her a victim of anti-Semitism, or rather anti-Israelism.

When discussing a possible move to places beyond Sarajevo, the younger participants show no interest in going to Israel; instead, they would prefer to go to Spain and Western Europe more broadly.

> (Tea Abinun:) If I would live elsewhere I would go to Spain because of my cultural heritage and our people. I don't know where about in Spain they are from but I would go to Madrid. Maybe I would feel close to Toledo also if I would go there […]. But it was 500 years ago! It's difficult to imagine. Or I would go to Sweden because everything seem to function well there.[76]
>
> (Vladimir Andrle:) If not in Sarajevo I would like to live in Western Europe, in Austria or Germany; close to Bosnia.

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[76] Perhaps Tea Abinun also mentions Sweden because it was one of the countries (alongside Austria, Switzerland and West Germany where former Yugoslavs (so called *Gastarbeiter* in the German context) immigrated.

As regards Hebrew, the youngest generation did not show a particular interest either:

> (Vladimir Andrle:) Rather Spanish than Hebrew […]. I don't feel close to Hebrew. And the Spanish temperament is closer to the Bosnian mentality than the Israeli mentality is. It's also because of the war with the Palestinians and the situation there […]. Actually, the Israeli government neglects human rights.

Concerning the choice to move or learn a new language, moving to Spain and/or learning Spanish are seen as more interesting for the youth, and the distinct identification as 'Sephardic' rather than broadly 'Jewish' tends to corroborate the conclusion that for this group Israel, and Hebrew as language, are not appealing. I asked Vladimir to clarify what he means by saying that "the Spanish temperament is closer to the Bosnian mentality than the Israeli mentality is." He said that he draws this conclusion intuitively and does not base it on any particular facts. Moreover, Vladimir pointed out that: "Actually, the Israeli government neglects human rights." This youngest generation object to Israel's politics and the country's 'mentality.' A shared longing for Israel appears to be non-existent for them. Bosnia-Herzegovina/Yugoslavia and Spain are more important identity options.

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The interviewees between the ages of 30 and 55 demonstrated a stronger connection to Israel, either ideologically or in terms of their personal experience, formed partly by having had lived in the country.

Yehuda Kolonomos has nine children with three different wives and also holds four citizenships: Bosnian, Macedonian, Croatian and Norwegian. He is going through his third divorce and when things are more settled he plans to make *aliyah* and to become a *chazan* in Israel. It is important to him to live in Israel so that his children can learn Hebrew. He moreover claims that non-Jews in Bosnia-Herzegovina think that 'Jews own the world.' Because of the predominant secularity of Bosnian Jewish life and these stereotypes, he wants to go to Israel too, though he does not see it as economically sustainable. He explains that he has plans to learn how to slaughter animals in a kosher way because kosher food is not available in Sarajevo. He has already begun to bake kosher bread and has found a list of kosher products one can find in the regular supermarkets. He moreover buys kosher food in Belgrade and Zagreb but would prefer to go to Israel because he feels that he can live more religiously there.

Yehuda associates his Sephardic-Jewish sentiments to Israel as follows:

> Jews were living freely in Yugoslavia, but I grew up in a pro-Israel atmosphere so my parents were against Tito. My dad was a Croat so he was already for this reason not for Yugoslavia. Israel is my ethnic homeland. When I think of Spain I think of Catalonia and Catholicism [...]. Sephardim were not ethnic Spaniards but Jews.

On the other hand, Igor Kožemjakin feels that Israel was a substitute for a homeland, rather than an ethnic homeland in itself:

> I see Bosnia and Herzegovina as our center and not like a diaspora. I decided to go to Israel in 1994 because I was a Zionist who had lost my country, Yugoslavia. With the rise of nation-states in the Balkans I figured that I already had my nation-state as a Jew in Israel. After 24 months of [serving in the] army from 1998 to 2000, I decided to return to Sarajevo. It was actually a very hard time to live in Israel because of personal safety. One could not feel safe anywhere. It was the peak of the second Intifada, and a lot of terrorist attacks on a daily basis. So if you feel unsecure you want to change your place of living and go to a place where you feel more secure. Besides, I have a Bosnian-Sephardic identity. We had lived in Spain 500 years ago […]. But Israel is different of course, it's an eternal home of the Jewish people. Jerusalem will always be in my heart. I'm turning to it when I'm praying and it's easier there with the Jewish holidays. I miss friends and family a lot […].

Igor is moreover making a comparison between what he feels is the greater appeal to him of Sephardi culture versus Ashkenazic culture:

> I have Sephardi and Ashkenazi roots but the Sephardic culture is richer […]. Historically, it's not as ghettoized and isolated as the Ashkenazi culture. Throughout history, the Sephardim have interacted with others in their multicultural environments and that made their culture richer and more accepting of the other.

In a Facebook messenger message (7.6.2018), Igor clarifies that he thinks the Ashkenazim were 'ghettoicized' when they lived in Central and Eastern European shtetls (small towns with predominantly Jewish populations) before the Holocaust.

For her part, Tina Tauber, who had lived in Israel from the age of 10 until 22, referred to the *Mizrahim* as being 'less valued,' as the Sephardic category was not visible or known to Israelis at that time at all. She misses ordinary life in Israel, but did not like that in Israel 'no one' knew about Yugoslavia. "Everyone thought it's a part of Russia." She moreover maintains that "Israel is expensive… It's insane. To do stuff and eat out…" Tina states that "the whole state is in a holiday mode and everyone is Jewish." She would like to return to Israel one day. However, she continues to speak about Yugoslavia as being a better country than Israel and Bosnia and Herzegovina today:

> In Yugoslavia, there was a sense of community – of sisterhood and brotherhood and people cared about their neighbors. Today in Israel Bosnia and Herzegovina and in everyone is looking only to themselves and are willing to crush each other […].

Nationalist and capitalist values in contemporary Israel and in Bosnia-Herzegovina seem to make her especially nostalgic for socialist Yugoslavia. As I mentioned earlier, her middle generation is however more connected to Israel than the youngest. Both Tina and Igor lived in

Israel during the Bosnian war in the 1990s and Yehuda would like to make *aliyah* in the future. Israel plays an important role in their perceptions of what it means to be Jewish.

Israel strives to represent the national life of Jews worldwide, which allows for cultivation of the Jewish religion, but the country and its society are not in and of themselves – at least not officially – 'religious' entities as I already pointed out. Therefore, I think, Igor and Yehuda feel bonded with Israel because they have a strong Jewish *national* identity. As Yehuda said: "Israel is my *ethnic* homeland" (emphasis mine).

When religious Jewish people (such as Igor and Yehuda) feel bonded to Israel, it is, I think, because the basis of Jewish religion is Jewish nationality itself (including a sense of kinship with other Jews) and they have a strong national self-identity. Tina is also bonded to Israel; she misses the country and would like to, one day, return there. I think her bond is likewise based on her sense of a Jewish *national* identity, which, in her case, does not express itself 'religiously.'

It is safe to assume that the political context of the particular generation in which an interviewee was raised has helped to shape his/her views. The reason why this middle generation of my subjects – having been raised in both Yugoslavia and in the independent Bosnia – have a stronger Jewish national identification is probably that two of the three interviewees have lived in Israel during their formative years, which coincided with the Yugoslav civil war of the 1990s. I think because of the time they spent in Israel they have been able to cultivating their Jewish ethnicity. Yehuda has not lived in Israel but he said in one of our conversations that he grew up in a pro-Israel atmosphere and he very much would like to make *aliyah* in the future. Furthermore, even though religion was legally accepted in socialist Yugoslavia, religious practice was considered relatively taboo. Jewish religion has probably become an attractive

option for Igor and Yehuda in Sarajevo today when religious practice is seen as less of a taboo. Yehuda, however, longs for a more Orthodox Jewish way of living which he still finds a difficult prospect in Sarajevo. He thinks he can be more religious in a Jewish community that officially defines itself in secular and national terms (Israel).

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For the oldest generation a (sentimental) longing for Israel is both existent and non-existent:

> (Matilda Finci:) I have relatives in Israel and we speak Serbo-Croatian. Of course, Hebrew is important in order to be able to communicate in Israel. Life in Israel is hard with the capitalism. There are various reasons why I came back from Israel in 1999. Mostly because I was highly educated but couldn't find work there and it's very expensive in Israel […]. My two sons went there as well but couldn't fit in. They told me Sephardic Jews have lower status.

The subjects' connection to Israel is, for them, made problematic by the need to speak Hebrew, and by the fact that in their view, Sephardic identification is not particularly accentuated in Israeli society. Matilda Finci clearly thinks that Sephardim have a lower status than Ashkenazim in Israel. On the other hand, one of the members of this older generation has an explicit religious bond with Israel:

> (Eli Tauber:) I think one can be Jewish without the [religious] belief. I became a believer pretty late when I learnt the sacred language in Israel. Before that I was a secular Jew and now I am a religious Jew.

Identifying as 'Jewish' rather than specifically as '*Sephardic*-Jewish' in relation to Israel is in this case understandable in terms of the subject's relationship with the Hebrew (instead of the Sephardic) language. For Eli Tauber, it is, however, Spain that is in the foreground, not Israel, as the focus of his Jewish identity:

> If not in Sarajevo I would live in Toledo […]. I feel close to those streets and our synagogue in Sarajevo looks like the one in Toledo. My ancestors probably came from Toledo because of what I felt when I was there. I didn't feel Sephardic when I was living in Israel but more Jewish. In Toledo it was magic.

Among this generation, there are people who explicitly understand themselves as Sephardim first and foremost, and perhaps because of this their connection to Spain is more important than the one they have to Israel.

Erna Kaveson Debevec stresses that just because one is Jewish one does not have to identify with Israel. To her mind, the assumption of a bond with Israel comes from the outside:

> We Jews [in Sarajevo] are not Israelis but Bosnians. We are being identified with Jews in Israel, although we don't have the same politics. We are connected, though: either our children live in Israel or we have some other contacts in Israel.

Laura Papo Ostojić points out that there is of course a bond that she experiences with Israel, but this bond does not seem to be very significant to her:

> Well, roots. I know that I am a Jew. My name is Jewish and do feel a special sentimentality towards the country of Israel, I come here to the Jewish community, I attend all holidays, that is my Jewish identity. It's not really a religious community. There is Shabbat in the synagogue every Friday but most people come to meet friends.

Summing up the attitudes towards Israel, only one-person (Yehuda Kolonomos) longs for Israel in a way that associates the country with his Sephardic identification. An explicit understanding as being Sephardic probably makes the connection to Spain more important than the one to Israel. A statement from the middle generation indicates that there is not only more interest in the Sephardic tradition among its members than among the younger Sarajevan Jews, but moreover a sense that the history of the Sephardim in Israel is largely unacknowledged there. For instance, Tina Tauber says that the Sephardic category was not visible or known to Israelis at the time she was living in Israel at all. Moreover, Matilda Finci, from the oldest generation, states that there were various reasons why she came back from Israel after having had lived there during and after the war in Bosnia in the 1990s. "Mostly because I was highly educated but couldn't find work there." This statement indicates that she was not well integrated into the Israeli society and hence developed the desire to return to Sarajevo.

Furthermore, there is a perception that anti-Semitism is vital in Sarajevo because the city is predominantly Muslim and the Bosnian Muslims are taking side with the Palestinians in the conflict in the Middle East. Tina Tauber, from the middle generation, reveals that: "Anti-Semitism is connected to Israel-hatred and it's growing because of a sympathy with the Palestinians." This fact that Israel is perceived negatively in Bosnia can be contributing to that many of the interviewees show little to no interest in the country. A.A. from the youngest generation said: "I feel Bosnian-Jewish. There is no sentiment for Israel." Igor Koţemjakin, from the middle generation, explains: "I see Bosnia and Herzegovina as our center and not like a diaspora." Erna Kaveson Debevec, from the oldest generation, stresses that "We Jews are not Israelis but Bosnians." That the Bosnian Jews have lived for very long in Sarajevo and therefore belong here and not in their historical 'homelands' is a recurring statement. Jakob Finci points out optimistically in this regard:

> The young people who came back to Sarajevo from Israel after the war did so because in Bosnia studies are free of charge. Some found a partner for [...] life, they married and then decided to stay here in Sarajevo and to *form really a family* [...]. That was the reason for this recent baby boom[77] (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 6.1.2017).

Jakob Finci thinks it is a good omen of things to come. He knows that "two ladies are expecting babies, and there will maybe be ten or twelve babies this year [...]. It will be something. It's a good sign."

In this chapter I have discussed their reflections on the belonging to 'Yugoslavia,' 'Spain,' and 'Israel.' I began by contextualizing the respective identity options with an overview history, then moved on to present the interviewees' conceptions that in turn were intertwined with the historical backdrop.

I have shown that across the generations, the master narrative is a romantic longing for ordinary life in Yugoslavia. Simultaneously (and contravening) they are longing for Ladino. As I stated, I think this ambiguity of the relationship between language and Sephardic ethnic identification is a core element in the interviewees' notions of their minority membership.

Statements among the younger generations, indicate that Spain of today is not necessarily an attractive place to 'return' to. Nevertheless, as I showed, across the three generations there

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[77] See further: Schuessler (2015).

is more interest in Spain than in Israel. An explicit understanding as being Sephardic probably makes the connection to Spain more important than the one to Israel.

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The next chapter turns to my informant's bond with Sarajevo. I first focus on the Sephardic community in present-day Sarajevo and then present my interviewees' perceptions on belonging to the city. I then develop hypotheses in relation to Sephardic identity formation in Sarajevo – deriving from the reference group's intergenerational cultural memory.

Moreover, this chapter is about my informant's memories of rescue of Jews during the Holocaust and their reflections upon the ongoing economic crisis, as well as the phenomena of anti-Semitism and Islamization of Sarajevo today.

CHAPTER THREE

LOCAL IDENTITY OF THE SEPHARDIM IN SARAJEVO

3.1 The Jewish Minority in Sarajevo Today

This section pinpoints contemporary conditions for Sarajevo Jews. It focuses on the internal dynamic of the Jewish Community organization as well as refers to other Jewish institutions and sites in Sarajevo, not to mention the legendary *Sarajevo Haggadah*[78]. Moreover, the section addresses the external challenges facing the Jewish minority in Sarajevo of today – including the lack of a Bosnian law on return of property, and issues surrounding the state's current formal categorization of Jews and other minorities in the country as 'Others.'

Todays' Bosnian Jewish Community organization is registered in accordance with the Law on the Freedom of Worship and the Legal Position of Churches and Religious Communities. The Jewish Community is located inside the neo-Moorish Ashkenazi synagogue – built in 1902 when the Ashkenazi Jews started arriving from other parts of the Habsburg monarchy – on Hamdije Kreševljakovića St, 59, by the Miljacka river, which flows through Bosnia's capital. Since 1945, this synagogue has been the main operating house for warship. During religious services women sit on the left side and men on the right side of the synagogue.

The old Sephardic temple – built in 1581 – was probably the first synagogue in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It functions as a museum today and the community only celebrates Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year) there (Markowitz 2010: 112, 194; Kožemjakin 2015;

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[78] The *Haggadah* is read during Passover and it is a Jewish text about the Book of Exodus in the Torah.

Carmichael 2015: 45). Another tourist attraction is the *Sarajevo Haggadah,* which was brought by Sephardim to Sarajevo from Spain. Today it is kept in Sarajevo's National Museum (Brooks 2008; Finci 2012; Greble 2011: 37-38; Markowitz 2010: 141).

There are no Jewish day-schools and kindergartens in Sarajevo today and therefore it is the private educational and recreational activities organized by the official Jewish Community in Sarajevo, all of them extracurricular, that function as a Sephardic-Jewish educational institution. There are two Jewish summer camps for children from former Yugoslavia, in Sarvaš in Hungary, and on the Croatian coast in Pirovac. "Every summer some children from here are going to the summer camps" (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 6.1.2017).

Within the Community, there are three educational options: the Sunday School in which currently 15-20 children from the age of 3-13 are meeting once a week on Saturdays; the Teenage Club, where teenagers from the age of 13-17 meet once a month. Currently this club has only about 4 members, so they have merged with the Student Club, the third group, consisting of 15 members who are 18 years and older. The teenagers and older students usually meet on Fridays and attend the Shabbat service together.[79] After the Shabbat service, the youngsters and students socialize and sometimes go to the cinema or invite someone to give a lecture. For example, they invited David Kamhi in 2016, who was *chazan* in the Jewish Community between 1992 and 2017, to speak about Sephardic history. They moreover thematize issues of Jewish identity (A. Andrle, Personal Communication, 29.12.2016).

The teenagers and students often attend different seminars where they explore Jewish topics. In October 2016 they went to Banja Luka, Bosnia's second largest city and capital of the Republika Srpska entity, and spent three days together discussing Jewish music (specifically Sephardic music), food and traditions. The seminar was funded by the *Joint Distribution*

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[79] There is one only Shabbat service that the young join and no specific service for the young.

Committee. In November 2017 they had a seminar in Sarajevo. The target group was ex-Yugoslav Jewish youth, and around 75 people between 18-35 years old from all over the former Yugoslavia attended. This seminar was organized by the Sarajevo Jewish Community. "We had lectures for example about Jewish clothes and the idea was to meet and foster collaborations between the communities in former Yugoslavia, we came to the Community synagogue for the Shabbat service" (A. Andrle, Personal Communication, 19.3.2018). There is also a Community-choir – 'Oskar Danon' – with 10 female vocal members and one male guitarist. Six women are responsible for the Community's educational work (A. Andrle, Personal Communication, 19.3.2018, *Jevrejski glas* 2016: 6).

Furthermore, the *Bohorete Women's Club,* which was founded in 1965, consists of approximately 20 adult members who meet once a week, on Tuesdays, in the facilities of the Jewish Community to gossip about current political, cultural and economic happenings within the community and in Bosnia in general. There are several members of the club who come from mixed (Jewish-non-Jewish) families, and non-Jewish friends are also joining the women's club. Markowitz (2010: 116) writes that the members of the women's group prepare food for Shabbat and the holidays in the synagogue. They moreover visit the sick and keep correspondence with members abroad. It is illustrative that the society is named the *Bohorete Women's Club* after the feminist writer Laura Bohoreta Papo, who played an influential role in Ladino literature and culture within and beyond Sarajevo.

An unofficial club of elderly men meets on Wednesdays in the Community premises. Moreover, the Community has a clinic consisting of one doctor and a nurse who are working Monday-Thursday from 10 am to 2 pm. Anyone, not only members, can visit the clinic for basic health checks and receive prescriptions. The members of the Jewish Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina today are of average age of around 60 (Markowitz 2010: 114; Kožemjakin 2015).

Over 80-year-old David Kamhi has until recently been *chazan* in the Community. His mother tongue is Ladino and therefore he had used both Ladino Hebrew during religious services. When he retired in 2016, the 37-year-old Igor Kožemjakin became the Community's *chazan.* In order to attract younger members of the Community to, for instance, attend the Shabbat-services on Friday evenings, Kožemjakin has approached the Teenage- and Student Clubs and regularly invited them to participate in ritual activities. This has inspired the younger generations to attend the services in the synagogue (I. Kožemjakin, Personal Communication, 28.12.2016).

Igor is also responsible for Jewish burial ceremonies. He reports that some members choose to have a secular Jewish burial ceremony, while others prefer to have a religious one. The Jewish Community does not charge their members for the burial, but the state company of undertakers requires that the Community pays 1,200 Bosnian Marks (around 615 Euro) for any kind of burial. In order to make it possible for its members to be buried, the Jewish Community thus asks for 5 Marks (2,50 Euro) from each of its members when a fellow member dies, so that the whole community can help cover the burial cost (I. Kožemjakin, Personal Communication, 28.12.2016).

Eliezer Papo is the 48-year-old non-residential rabbi of the Community is. He has been coming from Jerusalem to Sarajevo for the High Holidays since 1997. As already mentioned, Papo was raised in Sarajevo but left for Israel during the war of the 1990s. According to him, there were about twenty Jewish wedding ceremonies in total from 1945 to 1992, and after that there has not been a single Jewish marriage ceremony. This is not entirely surprising in light of the emigration of many Jews during the last war and because marriages between Jews and non-Jews are very common (E. Papo, Personal Communication, 15.12.2015). Inter-marriages are moreover important in the formation-processes of multiple and hyphenated identities among the Sarajevo Jews which I will discuss in detail later.

Converts to Judaism, all of whom have learnt about the Jewish tradition with Eliezer Papo, are circumcised, but most of the boys born to Jewish families are not since they do not need to undergo the surgery in order to be recognized by the Community as Jews. My male-interviewees, however, all report that they are circumcised.[80] There have been just a few Bar- and Bat Mitzva ceremonies (Jewish coming of age rituals) in the Community. Nonetheless, today the Community is more 'traditional' than before. For instance, a handful of people put on Tefillin[81], keep Shabbat, and eat kosher-food, while in the 1970s and the 1980s there was only one person in Bosnia who used Tefillin and kept Shabbat (E. Papo, Personal Communication, 15.12.2015).

Religious communities (such as the Jewish one) in Bosnia and Herzegovina are not integrated into the budget of the central government and thus must finance themselves (Hecht, 2007; Kožemjakin, 2015). All the same, these communities may compete for state funding for humanitarian and cultural projects. In one conversation (26.12.2016), Jakob Finci related that the Jewish Community receives 15,000 Bosnian Marks (7,673 Euro) every year from the government for the communal state ceremonies commemorating the Holocaust. The ceremonies are organized by the Jewish Community and on the Holocaust Memorial Day (27th of January) the commemoration is also held at the Jewish Community. Moreover, commemorations are organized by the Community throughout the year, for example at the former Second World War concentration camps Jasenovac and Đakovo in Croatia. Jews from all over former Yugoslavia come to these commemorations. Jakob Finci told me in June 2017:

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[80] Vladimir was circumcised in the hospital in Sarajevo where he was born and after the *B'rit* mila – *B'rit* is unity in Hebrew and *mila* circumcision and the *B'rit mila*; therefore the ritual of Jewish circumcision symbolizes a unity with God and the newborn son – the *chazan* of the Jewish Community came to perform a ritual and to give Vladimir his name. This was because there was and still is no existing *mohel* (responsible for circumcisions) in Sarajevo. Igor hade a similar experience as Vladimir in that he was also circumcised in the hospital in Sarajevo where he was born and blessed by the *chazan* afterwards. Yehuda was circumcised in Salonica because his family had a relative who was living there who was *mohel* (cf. Birri-Tomovska 2012: 49).
[81] Tefillin are black leather boxes containing verses from the Torah that are worn during prayers.

This Sunday we are going to Đakovo to the former camp of Đakovo. It is the only camp from the Second World War with a graveyard with names. In the beginning of the War, Ustašas took women and children to Đakovo and they were not killed there but passed away because of the circumstances and very difficult conditions. The camp was located next door to the cathedral in Đakovo and the seat of the bishop. After six months of having seen all this the bishop said 'enough is enough, take them from here.' And they were taken to Jasenovac and disappeared […] That is the unique graveyard of the prisoners with the names. More than 600 people. We are going there and we will meet people from Belgrade and Zagreb. A huge number of prisoners were from Sarajevo and from Bosnia and naturally later on, the family members went to Belgrade or other places. We'll have a gathering of all this. All communities are going together to show respect to the victims, to remember (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 1.6.2017).

Moreover, in 2016, the Ministry of Education provided financial support (4,000 Euro) to state schools so that their pupils would learn about the Holocaust. "That year the Jewish museum in Sarajevo was probably the most visited museum in the city. But then the minister running this initiative was replaced and therefore the project only lasted for a year" (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 16.3.2018).

Apart from the state-funded projects, there are international organizations supporting the Jewish Community. *Benevolencija Deutschland e.V.* is a multiethnic and non-Jewish organization which has donated 20,000 Euro to the Jewish Community in Sarajevo so that they in turn can support non-Jewish people in the city. The Jewish Community started to help non-Jews already during the war in the 1990s and from this time on, the *Benevolencija Deutschland e.V* has been given money to the Jewish Community so that they can continue to support the multiethnic Sarajevan community. "We provide medical help and we invite the elderly [non-Jews] to eat for free in our restaurant or we bring food to their homes if they our unable to come to the restaurant" (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 16.3.2018). In 2018, the Jewish Community received 25,000 Euro from *Benevolencija Deutschland e.V.*

World Jewish Relief London provides scholarships for Sarajevo Jews studying at any university. Moreover, *Claims Conference* furnishes aid to the 85 Holocaust-survivors living in Bosnia and Herzegovina (64 of whom are based in Sarajevo). *The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee* provides additional funding to the Community and to the work of *La Benevolencia* which is situated in the same building as Sarajevo's Jewish Community (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 26.12.2016, V. Andrle, Personal Communication, 26.12.2016). For instance, the funding from *The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee* has covered the expenses for the religious services in the synagogue and costs of the Sunday school (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 16.3.2018).

La Benevolencia in Sarajevo of today is a non-governmental organization based in the same premises as the Jewish Community and is operating in close cooperation with the Community. Jakob Finci is the President of *La Benevolencia,* and Vladimir Andrle its vice-President. Rahela Džidić serves as vice-President of the Jewish Community and Elma Softić-Kaunić as general Secretary.[82] Both women also represent the *La Benevolencia.* One of *La Benevolencia's* humanitarian projects is to provide support to Bosnian Holocaust-survivors. There are twelve female social workers as well as a male Manager and Assistant Manager who are running this project.

Additionally, Eli Tauber, a Jewish scholar and activist, founded a non-governmental organization, *The Haggadah,* in December 2014. The association helps to promote Jewish culture and tradition and also to increase the city's tourism potential. "Since we established *The Haggadah* many non-Jews here are more aware of the city's Jewish history and culture" (E. Tauber, Personal Communication, 18.3.2018). Since its founding, *The Haggadah* has been engaged in several projects including: an exhibition of the history of the old Jewish cemetery

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[82] Elma Softić-Kaunić was invited to the Stockholm Jewish Community (18.6.2017) to speak about mixed marriages at a conference funded by the *Joint Distribution Committee*: 'The Arithmetic of Interfaith Marriages Stockholm.' The Sarajevo Jews is clearly an important example of mixed marriages practice.

in Sarajevo; a night showcasing the Sephardic culinary art and music as part of the night of the night of Baščaršija[83]; the publication of *Kuhar bosanskih Sefarda*, a book about Sarajevo Sephardic food; and an educational project in which *The Haggadah* taught 18 tourist-guides from Sarajevo and 4 tourist-guides from Mostar about the Sarajevo Jewish culture and history so that they in turn will know how to lead a Jewish tour in Sarajevo. This last project has been funded by Germany's *Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung*. In 2018, Bosnia and Herzegovina's Ministry of Environment and Tourism supported this project as well. As Tauber remarks: "They will give us 2,500 Euro, which is a lot in this country" (E. Tauber, Personal Communication, 18.3.2018). Other sponsors of *The Haggadah* have so far been the municipality and canton of Sarajevo and the UNESCO. Moreover, *The Haggadah* sells Sephardic souvenirs that Eli Tauber's wife Mirjam Tauber makes.

Currently, there is no law on return of property in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Jakob Finci believs the Bosnian government should follow the example of Serbia and adopt such a law (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 26.12.2016). The 2006 Serbian law requires the Serbian government to give the Belgrade Jewish Community 950,000 Euro every year (with the first installment in 2017) during 25 years' time as compensation for the Community's property-losses during the Second World War (cf. Ivanković 2009: 73).

According to the 1995 'Dayton' Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is a legal distinction between the three "constituent Bosniak (Bošnjaci), Serb, and Croat peoples' and 'Others'." The 'Others' are members of ethnic minorities and persons who do not declare affiliation with any particular group. Because of this, "the Jews have become Ostali [Others] in

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[83] The Baščaršija is the old historical and cultural center of Sarajevo. Every year in July, the canton of Sarajevo organizes the night of the Baščaršija which is the biggest cultural festival in the country.

the constitution and on the census" (Markowitz 2010: 132). As a matter of fact, only persons declaring affiliation with a 'constituent people' are entitled to run for the House of Peoples (the second chamber of the State Parliament) and the Presidency (the collective Head of State). Because this regulation is discriminatory, Jakob Finci and Dervo Sejdić, the Roma Monitor of the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe, filed a lawsuit in the European Court of Human Rights, which in turn, in 2009, found that the constitution does indeed violate human rights (Case of Sejdić and Finci v. Bosnia and Herzegovina). Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot be a candidate for the membership of the European Union until the constitution is amended. In 2006, Finci tried to run for presidency by sending a letter to the central election commission. When asked whether he wanted to stand as a Serb, Croat or a Bosniak person, he answered 'as a Jew,' and he was told that being Jewish was a 'private matter', and therefore he could not run (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 26.12.2016).

> It's not a Jewish question anymore, you know. It's a general question of equality of all the citizens. And this little thing started by someone who is Jewish and Roma. In the meantime, there were other complaints, one was a Muslim who was living in Republika Srpska and could not compete to be the President. Secondly it was a woman from Sarajevo, and she refused to declare an ethnicity. She said 'as a citizen of Bosnia I should be allowed to participate, without even answering the question of my ethnicity, affiliation or whatever' and the court said yes, you are right (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 6.1.2017).

According to Finci (Personal Communication 27.12.2016), the 2016 Bosnian Questionnaire – requested by the European Commission to the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the preparation of the EU's Opinion on the Application of Bosnia and Herzegovina for membership in the European Union – is the longest among the questionnaires for other applicants to the European Union, totaling 399 pages. Bosnia and Herzegovina were expected to hand in answers by the end of May 2017, but because it was difficult to translate the answers into English and to agree upon the number of citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the

Questionnaire was handed in on the 28th of February 2018 (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 16.3.2018).

Under the section on *Respect for and Protection of Minority Rights* (pp. 48-51), the European Commission requested assurance that persons belonging to minority groups enjoy full access to political and civil liberties. The section on *Right to Property* furthermore states that Bosnia and Herzegovina should provide information regarding any legal uncertainties in relation to property restitution, as well as their plans to solve these uncertainties (p. 44). Moreover, according to the questionnaire, information from the State Council for National Minorities in Bosnia must provide information regarding the number of people belonging to minority groups according to the latest census in 2013. However, when Jakob Finci contacted the State Council for National Minorities in Bosnia in 2016, the council still did not have information available regarding how many persons declared themselves as Jews on the population census (J. Finci, Personal Communication 26.12.2016). Only recently has the number been made public. There were 282 declared Jews. The paradox of this outcome of the census is that the organized Jewish Community of Bosnia and Hercegovina has 880 members in total (J. Finci, Personal Communication 5.6.2017). Jakob Finci elaborates further:

> Many argue that the [official] result is wrong and the question is what is wrong. Is it the people who collect the data or the people who didn't declare themselves as Jews? We have a list of Jewish Community-members in all six communities in Bosnia. Altogether we are around 880 people now (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 5.6.2017).
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> Even nowadays [like in former Yugoslavia when Jews declared themselves Yugoslavs] Jews hide that they are Jewish. On the 2013' census, we were 290 Jews – because why be a minority if you can be the majority? Especially, having in mind, that everything here is divided into the three ethnic groups. You hardly can reach any position in the government, in the economy and so forth if you say you belong to a minority. The biggest minority in this country are the Romani. They have around 80,000 members while on the 2013 population census there were only 9,000 declared Romani. This way of hiding one's ethnicity was the case for Jews already in the 1991' census when there were 340 declared Jews out of approximately 1,500 community-members (J. Finci, Personal Communication, 16.3.2018).

In the 2012 and 2015 Periodical Reports on Bosnia and Herzegovina (which are compiled by the council of experts of the Implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages) the Jews appear to be one of the 13 listed national minority groups (cf. Perry & Keil 2013: 383). The others are: Albanians, Montenegrins, Czechs, Italians, Hungarians, Macedonians, Germans, Poles, Roma, Slovaks, Slovenians and Ukrainians. The self-declared 'Yugoslavs' are thus not recognized as a national minority. According to the law the minorities should enjoy the same rights that all other citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina do.[84] However, this was not the case when Jakob Finci wanted to run for the Presidency.[85]

On the basis of my field studies in Sarajevo, I argue that the post-Yugoslav Jewish community is an ethnic community and that currently a reinforcement of religion is taking place among its members. There is moreover a touristifying dimension of today's Sarajevan Jewish life. Some of the activities in the synagogue, for instance, seem to have been organized for people who are coming to visit the Community. While this is probably a survival strategy for the Community more than anything else, it also has the tendency of making its activities resemble a show in which different aspects such as the religious worship can appear strained.

The renewed interest in religion and tradition is a well-known trend in all post-Yugoslav states and is thus specific neither to Bosnia and Herzegovina nor to the Jews there, nor to Sarajevo. In some ways, the situation of Jews in Sarajevo may resemble similar cases elsewhere in Europe and specifically Southeastern Europe. In other ways, the situation in Sarajevo is unique. The

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[84] The *OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina* has moreover supported the development of education tools to teach about the country's national minorities, with the aim of integrating people from different ethnic backgrounds. The schools could choose to use these tools on a voluntary basis (Perry & Keil 2013: 383-384).

[85] In the latest Periodical Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina (2015) it is stated that because there are so few members of national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina there are also very few members who actually actively speak their minorty languages; because of this, the law protecting minority rights cannot be fully exercised and thus the rights that are granted to the minorities are limited to a certain extent. Bosnia and Herzegovina declare that the Charter shall apply in relation to the following languages: Albanian, Montenegrin, Czech, Italian, Hungarian, Macedonian, German, Polish, Romani, Romanian, Rysin, Slovak, Slovene, Turkish, Ukrainian and Jewish (Yiddish and Ladino). The reason why Yiddish and Ladino are in brackets is because these languages are used less frequently than the others.

unique characteristics in this context include the status of minorities given: the discriminatory Bosnian Constitution; the absence of a law in Bosnia on the return of property; the special situation wherein three major ethnic groups, and not just a single, ethnically homogeneous 'majority,' dominate the country – specifically, Muslims, Serbs and Croats, which in turn assign the minorities a special status; the lack of a complete, not to mention well-developed Jewish cultural infrastructure, as there is no *mohel* (responsible for circumcisions) nor residential rabbi, and kosher grocery store, or Jewish schools. Despite all of this, a rapprochement between the Sarajevo Jewish Community members and their religion and tradition is taking place. This phenomenon is partly attributable to the fact that the Community counts with a young and open-minded religious activist and *chazan,* Igor Kožemjakin, who has attracted younger members to the religious services, which is itself key to the revitalization process.

As I mentioned, Kožemjakin would like to open a Jewish kindergarten and elementary school in Sarajevo, while maintaining that "these institutions should of course be welcoming non-Jews as well" (I. Kožemjakin, Personal Communication, 28.12.2016). He has already requested the state to return property to the Jewish Community so that it can establish full-fledged Jewish educational institutions. However, the response has been that the Jewish Community would have to rent rooms for this purpose, and the prohibitive cost of doing this has demotivated Kožemjakin to continue working to establish these Jewish institutions in the city with the full-blown cooperation of the state. As he observes, "the Jewish community once owned 10% of the property in the city center and 30% of the houses were in private Jewish hands" (I. Kožemjakin, Personal Communication, 28.12.2016). If the Jewish Community could get property returned, he would certainly endeavour to establish the institutions. He is currently considering looking for funding from international organizations.

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I have shown how present-days Sarajevo Jewish Community is organized. I moreover mentioned the 'touristfying dimension' of the community-life as well as a interest in religion among its community-members. I now illustrate – on the bases of my interviews – how voices from the three generations reflect upon the possibility of practicing Sephardic culture in Sarajevo today, that is, how they experience their Jewishness in the city.

3.2 Jewish-Sephardic Identification in Sarajevo

One of my under-30 interviewees, Vladimir Andrle, states:

> I started to engage in Jewish community life when I was 16. I think the majority is Sephardic but it's the Ashkenazi synagogue [where this happened] […]. There are Sephardic books and jewelry in the synagogue. We have a non-residential rabbi coming twice a year, he is very relaxed […]. Everything I know about Judaism I've learnt in the Jewish Community. I would say the Community is both Sephardic and Ashkenazi because after the Second World War both communities are one. The Community [building] is open every day and you can eat lunch here.

It is clear from these statements that the Jewish Community building in Sarajevo functions as a hub of the Sephardic-Jewish network in Sarajevo and that the Community's restaurant is a building-block in the process of creation. In another conversation with Vladimir he revealed

that the Jewish Community restaurant provides free meals to poor Community-members.[86] The

restaurant is staffed by one male manager; one female cook and two female servants. The food

is freshly made, and for 6 Marks (3,50 Euro) you can get a full meal including soup and dessert.

Therefore, many people from the Community as well as persons living nearby come to eat here.

Tea Abinun elaborates further on the Jewish Community restaurant in an e-mail (6.11.2015):

> Some of the meals at the Jewish Community restaurant are influenced by the Sephardic cuisine. My father is the cook there and he makes pašas di karni kon porus, mijnika di spinaka, frtuljikas, guevos inhaminadus, sungatu, pastel di leči and lokumikus.[87] The food in the restaurant is not kosher and during the regular week the lunch that is served is from a mixed cuisine and there are also traditional Bosnian or Balkan meals: sarma, buranija, čorba and mućkalica.[88] There is a book 'Dobar tek' [bon appétit] by Sonja Samokovlija with some of my father's Sephardic recipes.

The same young woman explains:

> My father was born Sephardic-Jewish and my mother was born Serbian-Orthodox. My mother is practicing Judaism but she did not formally convert. To practice Judaism is to celebrate Shabbat, that is enough. We only celebrate Hanukkah at home and all other holidays in the Community. I am of course Jewish by blood because my father is Jewish but Halacha is not important. I think I am just as much woman, Jewish and Bosnian and all identities are equally important. There is no real conflict between the different identities.

There is a contradicting belief here that, on one hand, the practice of Judaism is unimportant,

perhaps because Jews were persecuted throughout history and thus they should not have to

prove their cultural vitality in order to be considered a vital culture. On the other hand, Tea

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[86] These poor members would have to demonstrate their state of income to the General Secretary of the Community, Elma Softic-Kaunitz. Additionally, they can get a part of their heating bills paid for by the Community.

[87] *Pašas di karni kon porus* are deep fried patties with minced meat and leek. *Mijnika di spinaka* is a pie stuffed with cheese, matza and spinach. *Frtuljikas* is a deep fried matza cake with sirup. *Guevos inhaminadus* are eggs boiled in oil and onion crust for at least ten hours. *Sungatu* are patties made of minced meat, leek and motzot. *Pastel di leči* is a cheesecake and lokumikus a sponge cake.

[88] *Sarma* is a dish made of cabbage or wine leaves rolled around minced meat. *Buranija* is a green bean stew with other vegetebles and sometimes meat. *Čorba* is a soup or stew made of vegetables and sometimes meat. *Mućkalica* is usually made from cold, leftover barbecued meat which is stewed with various other vegetables.

intimates that for her, the celebration of Shabbat is crucial. In other words, traditional practice does have a place in her Jewish life.

A.A. believes that religion is explicitly a private and secondary matter:

> My nationality is Bosnian and Herzegovinian and my religion is separate. It's personal and involves some of the holidays' like Passover, Hanukkah and Purim. I come from a mixed family. My mum comes from a Croatian-Catholic family and my dad from a Jewish-Sephardic family. I am Bosanka [Bosnian] and/or Jevjrejka [Jewish] in different contexts. I think most of all I am Sarajevan. I see someone as a person. The religious belonging is not important.

In her statement, hybrid and hyphenated identifications are prevalent due to her membership in different identity-creating processes. As she emphasized: "I come from a mixed family." A.A. continues:

> It's not common in the Balkans to be proud of one's Jewish heritage and there are very few Jews here so I don't think one has to celebrate the holidays in order to be considered Jewish. You can be Jewish also if you have Jewish roots. I was in a Jewish Sunday-school when I was 3-12 years old and then I attended the youth-club and we also have a choir where we sing in Hebrew and Ladino. *Jevrejski glas* [Jewish Voice: a periodical about Jewish life and culture in Bosnia-Herzegovina] is given out by the Jewish Community but there are no Jewish TV-shows in Sarajevo. Once there was a TV-documentary about Hanukkah. They always broadcast documentaries about Bajram and Christmas and I was really happy that they once sent a programme about Hanukkah. Nevertheless, there is no need for a Jewish store here. It would be really expensive to import wine for instance but it's not expensive to be a member of the Community. You pay a minimum sum every year, I think it's 15 Marks [8 Euro]. Pesach is special in the Jewish Community. A rabbi is coming here and usually we don't have a rabbi. We read the Haggadah and it's special in every way.

A.A.'s Sarajevan Judaism is oscillating between practice and non-practice. On one hand, she does not think "one has to celebrate the holidays in order to be considered Jewish." On the other, she stresses that being Jewish does not necessarily have to do with one's roots, but can rather form through one's engagement in Jewish activities. In her case, having been enrolled in the Jewish Sunday-school as a child and later in the youth club – to sing there in the choir and

to read the Jewish periodical – 'make her Jewish.' In Sarajevo, membership of the Jewish Community is affordable, whereas in other European Jewish Communities (such as in Stockholm and Vienna it is not). This means that it could cost too much money in the other places for young people to become members and be active in their respective Jewish Communities.

A.A. moreover mentions that the celebration of Pesach (Passover) is special in Sarajevo. In a way, there is Pesach all year round in the Community Center because pictures from the story of the Exodus are hung in the Community building. The non-residential rabbi, Eliezer Papo told me (Personal Communication, 06.08.2016) that this is because Pesach is considered a socialist and not a religious holiday, and it therefore feels more natural for Sarajevo Jews to connect with it. At the same time, even though A.A. refers to Jewish activities and the celebration of Pesach in Sarajevo, she says that Judaism in the city is absent. The Muslim and Christian cultures are much more present. In A.A.'s words: "They always broadcast documentaries about Bajram and Christmas and I was really happy that they once sent a programme about Hanukkah". She moreover points out that it is not common "to be proud of one's Jewish heritage." Clearly, the place for (her) Jewish culture in Sarajevo is marginal and, according to her, the connotation that Judaism has, is negative.

Tea Abinun wants to leave Sarajevo for a better kind of life, and to live in a place with a better government. Her most recent plan is to learn Portuguese in order to apply for a citizenship in Portugal because the process is easier than the one in Spain. "Israel doesn't interest me at all, but Spain and Portugal do because I know a little Spanish and I love the cultures. I also want to leave because of my profession." Tea tells me:

> I need input from the West. But then I would of course return to Sarajevo and bring my knowledge here […]. Here are my roots and I'll always be a stranger elsewhere […]. This is my home. I am a Bosnian Jew.
>
> Since a few months ago I have more motivation to be active in my [Jewish] community. I want to apply for a scholarship from the Community so that I can continue my studies. Right now, I also see that our Jewish community is dying […]. So I am more active. I am in the Jewish Community all the time, even during working days. I come by to talk with the people. My father and mother began volunteering in the Community during the war in the 1990s. My father cooks at the restaurant and my mum works at the reception. I have been a vice-President of our Jewish Community's Youth- and Student club for two years now […]. I want the Community to be more media-exposed and that the world should see that there really is a Jewish community in Sarajevo. I also would like to introduce Jewish dancing in the Community. I am not religious at all. But I believe in religious practice because of the tradition. And I want to learn Ladino, so if there would be a possibility to learn it here I would do so.

In a Facebook messenger message 29.6.2018, Tea clarifies what she means by Jewish dancing. She says,

> I want to start a dance activity in our Jewish Community. I would teach Horah [a circle dance which traditionally is danced at Jewish weddings]. I was introduced to Horah in the Community's Sunday School when I was a child and later at Jewish seminars and in the Jewish summer-camp Szarvas [in Hungary].

Tea continues to talk about Sarajevo,

> I was born after the war. I am not married [laughs]. I don't have a boyfriend. It would be weird to marry a Jew here. Because we all know each other for so long

[…]. Since there are so few Jews in Sarajevo, it would not be possible, I think, to marry a Jewish man.

Tea moreover says the pollution in Sarajevo is "really, really dangerous actually, and some time ago, many people took the streets and were demonstrating against the bad air and some people wanted to turn to the government and protest but they didn't do it. I was in that echo-action group and nothing changed, no," "I am left-wing," she says and continues:

> There is one party which is called 'our party.' I vote for them but for the presidency I voted for Damir Nikšić. He is a Bosnian comedian, artist and politician. No, not politician but more […]. He is a kind of politician because he is really […]. I don't know he is more like a commentator on politics. I think he would be a great president or at least I want him to be the president of my 'region,' in the center of the city. I don't really know who my father voted for in the 1990s elections but I know that my mother voted to stay in Yugoslavia. That I know for sure […].

Tea is disappointed with the politics in Bosnia Herzegovina and plans to leave the country and then to return to Sarajevo and the Jewish community where she feels she belongs. She chooses to vote for Damir Nikšić, who in turn speaks of Bosnia in a political satire way.

A.A., for her part, would like to leave Sarajevo because of the economic situation. "There are no jobs here and this is why I want to leave Sarajevo. I also think you get paid for the work you do elsewhere and here jobs are very badly paid." A.A. is going to apply for a Croatian citizenship in order to become a member of the EU, but it is expensive so she is saving money. "In order to apply for the Spanish citizenship I would have to learn Spanish and that takes time."

Since the beginning of 2016, A.A. has been elected (by other members of the club) as the President of the Jewish Community's Youth- and Student club. She explains that the youth club also has members who are non-Jews, but who are friends with Jews in the club so for this reason they like to be members. She continues:

Even though we are a few, we can keep the traditions alive. For example, the Bohorete club is preparing meals for our holidays and now we had a project in the youth club where the Boherete women were teaching us how to make those meals – so that we can make them in the future. There is also more interest in the religious service. We have two guys who are coming regularly to Shabbat.

In the 1990s, I don't think my parents voted for a nationalist party because they are, how to say, pro-Communists, more leftist. I really don't know what to vote today because I can't put myself in that situation […]. I really don't know what I will vote. Yugoslavia already fell apart so, I don't know. Already everything is separated […]. I think there were so few declared 'Jews' in the 2013' census because many Jews here probably think they have more rights if they declare as one of the majorities.

A.A., like Tea, is expressing disappointment with the politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina. She would like to leave the country and does not know what party she would vote for today. According to her, there is more interest in the religious aspect of Judaism among the youth than when I first interviewed her in 2014. As President of the Community's Youth- and Student club she is very concerned about keeping Jewish traditions alive and that the younger generation come to the Jewish Community.

Vladimir Andrle has been vice-President of *La Benevolencija* since the beginning of 2016. In June 2017, he went to represent the Sarajevo Jewish Community in Brussels and in Washington DC. In October 2017 he organized the celebration of the 125th anniversary of *La Benevolencija*. Among this youngest generation, all my respondents have gotten prestigious positions within the Jewish Community organization – Vladimir as a vice-President of *La Benevolencija,* A.A. as the President of the Jewish Community's Youth- and Student club and Tea its vice-President.

Vladimir Andrle already has a Croatian citizenship and plans eventually to leave to Berlin, where he is currently looking for a job opportunity. He says,

Things in Bosnia-Herzegovina are getting worse if you look at the political situation and the rise of right-wing politics. Even the leftist party here is slowly becoming anti-Semitic. I guess it's when the German social democrats starts to be anti-Semitic also our social democrats will be so […]. I am thinking of my unborn children you know […]. I don't want them to be raised in this unhealthy environment. I think

there were many Jews who didn't declare themselves as Jews in the 2013 population census because they are afraid even if I don't think they have a reason to be afraid but I think they are afraid of anti-Semitism, of not getting a job and they think people are spying on them.

Since a few months, I am thinking of applying for the Spanish citizenship. It's for symbolic reasons, I would not move to Spain. But I would like to use this opportunity to connect a bit with my ancestors who came from Spain. But it's expensive so we'll see.

Vladimir is similar to the two other respondents from this generation, in that he hopes to leave Sarajevo. One could of course wonder why he wishes to leave to Berlin and not, say, Canada, which has liberal immigration rules and is comparatively peaceful and does not struggle with a historical legacy of anti-Semitism. In an e-mail (7.3.2018) he clarifies that: "I want to move to Berlin because I like the city a lot and because of job opportunities once I move." Perhaps he also wants to leave to Berlin because West Germany was one of the countries where (former) Yugoslavs usually immigrated. Above all, however, it seems to be because Berlin is a vibrant and fun city to live in.

Vladimir voted 'blank' in the last elections and he thinks that Damir Nikšić (whom Tea voted for) is a charlatan. "I don't respect him at all, he's only doing politics for his own promotion."

All three respondents from the youngest generation speak negatively about Bosnia today. Tea and Vladimir are moreover interested in obtaining Spanish or Portuguese citizenship. Iberia has become a more attractive option for them than before. I think they say this partly because they want me to perceive them as Sephardim. Vladimir said he wishes: "(…) to connect a bit with my ancestors who came from Spain." It seems as though Tea's plans have nothing to do with being Jewish and/or Sephardi. The option of Portugal is merely convenient. In other words, requesting Spanish/Portuguese citizenship solely because one wants to escape a bad economy and anti-Semitism in Bosnia-Herzegovina without knowing, let alone cultivating, any aspect of Sephardi traditions beyond the fact that "my ancestors came from Spain" may not be a

'Sephardic' behavior per se. It may just be an example of desperation and opportunism. So what does this tell us about Tea's 'Sephardism' and/or her 'Jewishness'? I would say that Tea's, and her generation's, Sarajevo Sephardic identities are essentially residual, if still meaningful somehow, because they are based on a very attenuated Jewish Community infrastructure and very limited concrete knowledge of Jewish and/or Sephardic history and culture writ large.

⸎

Clearly, there is no special place in Sarajevo today where Jews live. Tea Abinun and A.A. reveal,

> (Tea Abinun:) I live in the center and the majority is Muslim but there are also Serbs and Croats and probably other peoples (naroda). I think Serbs are closer to Jews because they were also victims of genocide during the Holocaust in the Independent State of Croatia. Before there were ethnic boarders but not any longer.
> (A.A.:) I live with my parents in novi Sarajevo, it's 10 minutes with tram from the center. There is no Jewish ghetto.

According to this youngest generation, other groups of people perceive a need for separation between the various ethnicities of Bosnia. The Bosnian politics of language reflects this need. At the same time, A.A. expresses a wish not to hurt anyone or to point out the Muslim influence and its increasing dominance in the Bosnian language.

> (Tea Abinun:) Shmahala instead of mahala [district/neighborhood in Bosnian] […]. There is a need of separation for peoples and their languages and yes, yes, yes, certainly an Islamization is taking place in the Bosnian language!

(A.A.:) I would not call it an Islamization just because more Turkish originated words are coming up. I think Bosnian has always had these words. People coming from outside Sarajevo, from Mostar and other places come with an accent and a different mentality. Anyway, it doesn't sound nice to say that Bosnian is Islamized or to point at this. Actually, in Serbian there are also many Turkish words.

(Vladimir Andrle:) Croats and Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina are neglecting the existence of the Bosnian language, politicians, even ordinary people. Bosnia-Herzegovina exists now as an independent country so why wouldn't we have the Bosnian language as well?

Igor Kožemjakin maintains that if the political radicalization intensifies in Sarajevo, it will be very hard to be 'different' and he will consider leaving the city again, as during the war. He says that the majority of Muslims between 30 and 50 years old are ethno-nationalist, stressing that they belong to the Bosniak nation-state and promote a Muslim patriarchal traditional way of living. Igor thinks it is more difficult for ethnic minorities to be employed because businesses and government agencies have no minority quotas to fulfill. He argues that:

> Since I came back to Sarajevo from Israel in 2001, people with a non-Muslim name receive less respect from Bosniaks' in public institutions. The Bosniaks' do this because they are dependent on the state in order to be employed in the public sector, and the economic situation today triggers their traumas of the Bosnian war. The Muslim thinking here is very ethnocentric even if they might declare themselves as religious.

Igor thinks so few Jews declared themselves as Jews in the 2013 population census because they are assimilated. "I don't think they are afraid to declare themselves Jews. The three bigger

ethnic groups here are too busy hating each other so they don't have time for such a small minority." Igor could not vote in 1990 but his parents voted for Marković. As for today, the social-liberal Naša stranka (Our party) is the most appealing party to him but he does not think they could lead the country. He had a civil marriage in Split and a Jewish celebration after the marriage-ceremony.

> (Igor Koržemjakin:) I am *chazan* in the community and it fulfills me in a religious way. There are three of us and the main one, David Kamhi, leads the prayers on Friday nights. He doesn't read Hebrew like me, so I step in and do that whenever it is required, for example for our biggest holidays. Eli Tauber is the third *chazan*.
>
> I have learnt about Sephardic culture and religion from our non-residential rabbi, Eliezer Papo[89] and from our *chazan* David Kamhi. I would say the Community is Sephardic with an Ashkenazi-Shalom-Aleichem-touch. The liturgical melodies are Sephardic and [so is] the food.
>
> For Hanukkah and the other holidays, we all come together in the Community unlike Jews from other countries, who I think celebrate mostly at home. We are a small community and we can bring all our members. We put a big Menorah here in the garden of our Synagogue and at this event our friends from different religious groups are coming to join us. Judaism is a religion of practice not of believing. The fact that people from other religions participate brings us closer honoring the Torah. For them, it's not a religious moment but a cultural; they feel it's a part of their own identity. Even people who say they're atheist come before Shabbat and other holidays to at least keep the tradition. On Friday evening, there are maybe 12-13 men, because there are still no women allowed in the Minyan. It's a contradiction but it's the traditional Sephardic life. The Sephardim behaved this way even during socialism. I would love it to have a female Minyan and I think it's going to happen. With new generations, this Community will turn more to the essence and less to the form of the religion. I would like this contradiction to be nullified. However, the Community feels good with it and I think that the younger population is more interested in reformed Judaism.

In a Facebook messenger message (7.5.2018), Igor Koržemjakin clarifies what he means when he says that the Community has an Ashkenazi-Shalom-Aleichem-touch: "We use Ashkenazi tunes for the 'Shalom Aleichem' song before the Kiddush for Shabbat." He explains that the Sephardic culture is present in the Community because of the liturgical melodies and the food.

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[89] Eliezer Papo has in turn learnt his liturgical tradition from Rabbi Cadik Danon, the chief-rabbi in Yugoslavia and its aftermath (1972-1998) (Skype-conversation with E. Papo, 5.12.2015; cf Ivanković 2011: 145).

Igor has an outspoken 'religious' identity and at the same time he understands that Jewish 'religion' is at base practical, communal and ethnic, and not necessarily 'religious.' In his own words: "Judaism is a religion of practice not of believing." These words of his correspond very well with the ones of Mendelssohn's which I mentioned earlier. I showed that Mendelssohn maintained that the Jewish 'religion,' unlike Christianity, is a matter of behavior and thought rather than belief (Batnitzky 2011: 20, 22, 27). I furthermore made the point that in modern times, Jews in the diaspora adopted the dominant culture and 'national' identity of their host-countries (Pianko 2015: 20). "(…) many reinterpreted their Jewish identity as a purely *religious* one and eschewed any Jewish *national*, or what came later to be known as Zionist, identity" (Sharot 2011: 170, emphasis mine). Again, however, it is obvious from Igor's statement that his Jewish 'religion' is conform to the premodern historical reality of Jewish life and that it is based on a Jewish *national* identity.

It is moreover clear from Igor's statement that the Jewish Community members in Sarajevo remain tradition-oriented but at the same time the younger are interested in a reformed Judaism with more gender equality (the Sephardic tradition was not reformed as the Ashkenazi was, and, as an example, gender separation in religious services remained).[90]

Igor continues to reflect upon the community life in Sarajevo:

> I read the *Jevrejski glas* of course and Jewish periodicals from Belgrade and Zagreb. There are TV-programmes in the Internet in Hebrew and the Jerusalem Post. Jewishness is a religion first of all and then a nationality in relation to Israel. Shabbat is in the center of our lives. We light candles, read prayers and go to the synagogue. I have the traditions from my mother.

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[90] The Sephardic tradition has been considered more liberal or relaxed than the Ashkenazi tradition. Thus, one could argue that the Sephardim did not need the reform movement in the same extent since they were already emancipated. The question of liberalism and emancipation can, on the one hand, involve greater legal rights and opportunities for women. On the other hand, Jews feared and felt threatened by the rise of nation-states and the sense of liberalism that accompanied nationalism and anti-Semitism (S. Abrevaya Stein, Personal Communication, 14.7.2016).

At the beginning of 2018, Igor was approached by a rabbi from the Modern Orthodox rabbinical seminary Ohr Torah Stone in Efrat (in Israel) who was visiting the Community in Sarajevo. He notes,

> I maybe will leave in September 2019 for Israel for two years to study rabbinical studies at the Ohr Torah Stone and then I would come back to Sarajevo and serve as rabbi. This yeshiva is designed for rabbis in the diaspora and one of their rabbis came to the Community and offered such a possibility. I have spoken to Finci and other leaders of the Community to see if this meets the needs of the Community and they will think about it and then we will talk again. They think it's a good idea so we'll see what happens next. I would also learn to slaughter animals in a kosher way. I see this as an opportunity for the Community to have a local residential rabbi.

Yehuda Kolonomos from the same middle generation reflects upon his Sarajevo Jewish identification in the following way:

> I direct a choir and we mix various traditions to capture the whole picture of the Jewish tradition. We sing in Yiddish, Ladino and local languages. The choir-members are all non-Jews. We turn to everyone, not only towards Jews.[91]
>
> My children listen to Hebrew songs on You Tube and in Zagreb there is a kosher bakery. The Balkan countries are still one, in football I am for all of these countries.
>
> I was a member of several communities, bigger ones also which were more closed, especially also because they were Orthodox Jews in Oslo. A good thing in the Balkans is that people make friends easily; it's their mentality. It's a hope to create an atmosphere of good communication and coexisting.
>
> Intermarriages are common in this society. I would say that this Jewish community in Sarajevo will last only for 20 more years. Because of the mixing of different cultures there is not much tradition and religion. It's a very delicate question. When I was a child, my mother told me Orthodox rabbis came to Sarajevo and tried to encourage a more Jewish way of life in the community. And all their attempts were suppressed. Our Jewish community didn't want that it was too strict. Probably it's because of Communism. You couldn't just go around and spread your religion because there was a strict regime of Communism.

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[91] The choir is called *Beyachad* (together in Hebrew) and the members are mainly Serbs who are studying or who have studied music in Banja Luka. There is another choir in Sarajevo called Pontanima and they have integrated Jewish songs in their repertoire.

There seems to be some ambivalence under the surface here. On one hand, Yehuda praises the fact that ex-Yugoslav Jews are open-minded and cosmopolitan; on the other, he acknowledges that there is a high cost to this openness and aversion to tradition. The community is so open and anti-traditional that it has essentially signed its own death warrant ("20 years left…").

During the elections in 1990 Yehuda voted for the Croatian nationalists because he thought they might be favorable to compensating him for the property that was taken from his family during the Second World War. He was not against Yugoslavia as a concept but he was against the idea that it should be a communist country. He harbors additional hostility toward that Serbian-dominated country in light of the fact that Serbian partisans killed his uncle during the Second World War. In his eyes, Yugoslavia was a corrupt country dedicated to making sure that that its citizens would not be against the political system. To him, the country was easier economically but not necessarily better than the new Bosnia.

Yehuda is active in the HDZ BiH (the Bosnian branch of the Croatian nationalist party) and was previously (between the years 2013-2014) appointed as advisor of the President of HDZ. He thinks the national separation between groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the most realistic. He moreover thinks that in today's Bosnia, it is no longer seen as taboo to be religious: "I am Jewish from my mother who is from Bitola, Macedonia and she was on the Croatian side because she was married to a Croatian man for 40 years, my father." Yehuda's maternal family came to Bitola from Salonica but has since dispersed. For example, he has relatives in Chicago with whom he communicates via Facebook. On the conundrum of maintaining a Jewish identity in today's Bosnia, he notes,

> I think there were so few declared Jews on the 2013 population census because of assimilation and mixed marriages from the former first Yugoslavia to the present day. I am engaged in the HDZ and I declare myself as a Jew. I didn't have any troubles because of that. If I were active in the Communist party I most probably would have problems declaring myself Jewish.

Moreover, Yehuda thinks that the membership of the Jewish Community is corrupt – the Jewish Community giving money only to their own children – and is not seeing his own contribution to the Community benefiting him or his family. ("It's all about their own projects"). He has become active in the Jewish Community in Banja Luka instead, and organizes concerts there.

Throughout my research, Yehuda has become very open with me about his opinions and his identification with Judaism – which is very much linked to Israel – and about his thoughts concerning Yugoslavia and Bosnia today. He is the only interviewee who opted to join a nationalist Croatian party in the 1990s. He is generally more critical of Yugoslavia as a state than my other informants, in large part due to his family's bad experiences with property losses and the partisans. Moreover, he considers that it is easier to be religious in Bosnia today, even though he is upset with the Jewish Community and wishes to have another kind of Jewish organization in which he could participate more.

Tina Tauber started working in the library of the Jewish Community in 2016, but lost her job in 2017 to the General Secretary's husband, who was appointed to her position. Since then, Tina has been working in the *Haggadah,* the Jewish tourist center that her father, Eli Tauber, established in 2014.

There is a high level of nepotism within the Sarajevo Jewish community in the sense that the main community bodies (the Jewish Community, La Benevolencija and the Haggadah) assign relatives and friends to important positions. This is most probably a survival strategy, since the Jewish minority in Sarajevo is so small that it functions like a family enterprise in which the trust and loyalty for one's closest are prioritized.

On her part, Tina would like to leave Sarajevo and return to Israel if it were not for her boyfriend who is a 'Bosnian patriot.' "We are not married, it's too expensive." Moreover, Tina

tells me that she does not care about Bosnian politics, and that she has little clue about the current state of political affairs in the country. In the most recent elections, she voted for Damir Nikšić because, as she remarks, she thinks his perspectives on Bosnia are appealing.

She earns enough to live well. She adds that most of the Jewish pensioners in Bosnia receive support from the Claims Conference because they were born during or before the Second World War, and therefore, they have enough to live on as well. However, she acknowledges that younger Jewish generations are often struggling economically.

During the course of this research, Tina has also become much more open with me over time, and she likes to complain about how the Jewish Community is organized. She would like to change the Community, for instance to renovate its facilities, paint the walls and make it more beautiful. "It's as if time has been paralyzed since Yugoslavia, nothing has changed." She also wants to make the celebration of holidays in the Community more attractive to younger members. I think she would like to be more included, and that her knowledge about Israel and Jewish culture should be seen more as an asset to the Jewish Community than it is now. She comments on her Jewishness:

> Just because you don't celebrate Shabbat doesn't mean you're not Jewish. You can't choose it, it's in your blood. I am Jewish 'po narodnost' [as a minority]. It's a blood-ties-thing. I am Bosnian and Herzegovinian 'po nacionalnost' [my nationality] but we mix the definitions; national, ethnic, religious and I switch identity according to the context. Because I am not one of the majorities I can oscillate between inside and outside and be more neutral. I like the Jewish holidays.

Tina considers the celebration of Jewish-religious acts, maxims, festivals and holidays to be important to her but it is not necessarily connected with a faith in God. Moreover, she mentions blood-ties but they do not correlate with an ideal of Jewishness in *Halacha* since her mother is not born Jewish, only her father.

Concerning the current language situation in Bosnia, Tina says:

> Every day we learn a new word. I think we are going backwards. We talk like we used to talk and we're going backwards in all aspects mentally […]. Back to the Ottoman Empire, maybe earlier.

Other members of Tina's generation add:

> (Igor Kožemjakin:) Lahko, mehko [instead of lako (easily), meko (soft)] [...]. I have no problem with this, the important thing is to understand each other. There are archaisms in Bosnian coming up. This wish and right to be a specific group is also related to the language […]. For me personally all three [Yugoslav] languages are one.
>   (Yehuda Kolonomos:) I would rather call it [linguistic] individualization than Islamization. [The] Turkish people is a *narod* [nation] and not necessarily Islamic. I think it's a political rather than religious process.

When reflecting upon its current places of residence and the relations between the local ethnic groups, informants from this generation reveal:

> (Yehuda Kolonomos:) There is of course a welcome-sign when you enter Republika Srpska[92] but no checkpoint […]. Before you knew exactly where the Jews lived, in a special part of the Old Town, but now we are so few. The Jewish Community is neutral.
>   (Igor Kožemjakin:) 5-6 ethnic groups live together in one mahala [district/neighborhood]. Sarajevo is very multiethnic even if today many would declare themselves as Bosniaks. There are also many minorities. If not in Sarajevo I would like to live in Stockholm. I studied there for one year and that's where I met my wife.
>   (Tina Tauber:) I live in the old Jewish Bjelave district that Isak Samokovlija describes in his books. Lightening the Hanukah candles makes me feel that I am bringing back the old Bjelave even if today you cannot see many Hanukah candles in the windows.

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[92] Republika Srpska is a product of the 1992-1995 war. According to the Dayton agreement 49% of the Bosnian territory was formally formed and recognized as Republika Srpska, an autonomous entity. In 1993, Bosnian Serbs held two thirds of the Bosnian territory (Djokić 2006: 2802; Markowitz 2010: 9; Djokić 2013: 70). According to the population census in 2013, Republika Srpska was populated by 171.839 declared Bosniaks, 29.645 declared Croats, 1.001.299 declared Serbs, 8.189 declared undeclared, 15.325 others and 2.127 with no answer (Jukić 2016: 54).

As I stated in the thesis introduction, the Sarajevo Sephardim have long reflected the complex relationship between language, religion and ethnicities in their own loyalties. Therefore, they seem to be uniquely positioned to offer their views on the contemporary language situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The younger and middle Sephardic generations acknowledge the wish among ordinary Bosnians/Bosnian language planners to have their own Bosnian language. Vladimir Andrle said that "Bosnia-Herzegovina exists now as an independent country so why wouldn't we have the Bosnian language as well?" The interviewees are positive towards the development of standardizing Bosnian, but as Igor Kožemjakin says "the important thing is to understand each other."

The Yugoslav tradition in present-day Jewish Community makes the younger members unsettled. Similarly today, as in former socialist Yugoslavia, religious Jews will have to go elsewhere to find a developed social infrastructure and community that can support religious practice comfortably. Yehuda, for instance, buys kosher food in Belgrade and Zagreb. My younger interviewees wish to reform the Jewish Community so as to facilitate traditional religious practice—to introduce kosher food, as an example—but because of the 'old-school' Yugoslav-oriented leadership, this seems to be a difficult prospect for them.

Members of the over-55 generation express the following ideas about a Sephardic-Jewish Sarajevan communal life:

> (Laura Papo Ostojić:) The holiday [services] in the synagogue are in Serbo-Croatian and the prayers are in Hebrew and in Ladino. I celebrate Jewish national holidays. Only Orthodox Jews keep kosher! There are no real Orthodox Jews in this country.
>   (Matilda Finci:) Judaism is like an ethnicity because we were living in socialism and religion was not central. I have a Jewish name and I feel sentiments towards Israel. We come to the Community and celebrate the holidays.

(Erna Kaveson Debevec:) It's not really a religious Community. There is Shabbat in the synagogue every Friday but most people come to meet friends.

The ethnic identification is crucial for the elderly Sephardim. I do not think the official Yugoslav compartmentalization of Jewishness as a private religious identity is the only reason that many of my subjects – from this older generation in particular – do not feel 'religious.' In fact, I would argue that they partly feel this way because Jewishness is not a 'religious' phenomenon, if by religion we mean something like Christianity. Jews are a people, and private 'belief' is largely irrelevant to Jewish identity by classic, traditional terms of the culture itself. Jewishness at its historical base is collective, public, and national (cf. 1.2 The Specific Contours of Jewish Culture and History). In this context, Jakob Finci tellingly expresses the following in one of our conversations (4.10.2015): "I was born Jewish and brought up in a Jewish family. I had a Jewish childhood with Jewish friends." This statement, rather than the Yugoslav official definitions alone, are what make an 'ethnic' Jew. Finci continues:

Usually we know each other just by nicknames and I don't know the real name or a persons' nationality or religion. First of all, we are human beings. Because of many mixed marriages some don't know where they belong. It's important 'who you are' and this is why you fall in love with someone – because you feel good in somebody's company.

These days there are no differences between the Sephardic and Ashkenazi Community. We are frequently asked by other European, American and Israeli Jews, what kind of Community we are. We are expected to answer Orthodox, Reform or so, and our answer is always that we are a traditional Sephardic Community. That doesn't mean anything, but it sounds very serious you know […]. Because all of us, we are Jews and this is enough. Without investigating who have been our predecessors and so on. All of us are one Community […].

Our rules are like Nuremberg laws: if any of your grandmothers or your grandfathers are Jewish and if you're not already a member of a different religious Community, you can become a member of the Jewish Community. The good thing is that we have a book here from 1850 in which we have a list of all Jewish families who were born where, who married with whom and so on. So, it's very easy to find out if you're of Jewish origin.

It seems like Finci is suggesting (humorously) that without Nazi definitions, the Jewish community in Sarajevo disappears. A recourse to Nazi concepts on the part of my subjects speaks not to 'vitality' but to a negative identity ('I am X because I am not Y'). In line with Finci's statement about the Nuremberg laws, Tina Tauber says that one cannot choose if one is Jewish or not, but that Jewishness is in one's blood: "It's a blood-ties-thing." Tina defines as genetic or physical that which is actually cultural and mental, and quintessentially ethnic: namely, a perception of kinship between Jews, the feeling that Jews constitute an extended family. The fact that Tina and Jakob make recourse to racial-essentialist concepts to define what is actually an ethnic reality tells me that the grounds of ethnic self-understanding for Jews in Bosnia-Herzegovina have been practically squeezed out of existence. My middle-aged and elderly subjects feel 'in their bones' that they form an ethnic community, but they lack the conceptual language and the certainty to make of this an affirmative identity without relying on the concepts of religion and race. The youngest subjects are only residually connected to this ethnic reality, and, because they tend to reject religion and racism, lean instead on universalism and Western models of cosmopolitanism.

Eli Tauber, who belongs to the oldest generation of my informants says:

> That one's mother is Jewish-born is not so important. My children's mother was born Serbian Orthodox. My mother's parents were Sephardim, and they spoke Hebrew-Spanish language – Ladino. And my father's parents were Ashkenazim and they spoke Yiddish. That means […] in Sarajevo, we call people who come from intermarriages of Sephardim and Ashkenazim 'Ashkefardi.' That means that they are neither Sephardim nor Ashkenazim, but Ashkefardi. Every nation here is part of my everyday life. Important is if someone is a good man or not.

Laura Papo Ostojić voted for Ante Marković in 1990. She used to declare herself Yugoslav. Since the collapse of Yugoslavia she primarily thinks of herself as Jewish. At the same time, she says that she is very sad she never learnt Ladino. She is not a Communist, but she feels sympathy for the partisans who saved her life during the Second World War.

Laura's husband died during the war in 1992 because he had diabetes and there was a shortage of insulin. His father was an Orthodox Serb and his mother Jewish. Laura spent her time in the Jewish Community during the war. When she hears thunder today she becomes afraid, because it triggers memories of the war.

Both Laura's parents were Sephardic Jews. Her mother was a Levy and her father a Papo. Laura says that:

> Economically it's very difficult, but I get support from the Community – from the Claims Conference. It helps a lot, but still it's difficult because I have two sons and both of them are unemployed. They studied at the Music Academy.
> I haven't been raised religiously but I learnt to cook Sephardic meals from my mother. I went to a Jewish summer camp in Croatia and that's where I met my husband. My sons went to that summer camp too.
> A beautiful memory is when Blanka, my granddaughter was born […]. My mother was also called Blanka. Both my sons live in mixed marriages. My older would love to get a Spanish citizenship, but he's not very active about it. He wants it because of the EU, but a little bit of his ancestors, too […]. Actually, I would love it if all of us living in former Yugoslavia would speak our old unique common language Serbo-Croatian.

Laura is keen to say that she can cook Sephardic meals, and that her parents were Sephardim. In her speech she shifts from a Yugoslav to a Jewish self-declared identity, but this does not make her less nostalgic about Yugoslavia. As we have seen, she thinks that everyone in the former Yugoslavia should speak Serbo-Croatian.

Matilda Finci also voted for Ante Marković in 1990. Like Laura, she declared herself Yugoslav in Yugoslavia, but is now Jewish. Her best friend is a Muslim and Matilda respects non-Jewish holidays like Ramadan. Matilda's husband is Sephardic. By making these facts about her life

clear, she seems to want to make the point that she is very tolerant towards other religions and ethnicities, even if she remains and proudly maintains she is Sephardic and is married to a Sephardic man as well. Matilda is nostalgic about Yugoslavia:

> Life before 1992 was a good life. People were different, no nationalists. You couldn't have practiced your religion, indeed, but it was only a small sacrifice for such an amazing life.
>   When everyone suddenly have to declare what they 'are' today, I declare myself as Jewish of course because I cannot be anything else […].

Like Laura and Matilda, Erna Kaveson Debevec voted for Ante Marković in the 1990 election. She declared herself Yugoslav in Yugoslavia and Jewish today. Erna believes that Israel is the only country in the world where Jews are welcome.

Erna's mother was an atheist, so her family ate pork and did not celebrate Jewish holidays at home. Religion as a whole was not central to her family life when she was growing up, but for Erna, the linguistic element is crucial for her identification as Jewish. She is one of the few remaining Ladino speakers in Sarajevo. She tells me that her son has pursued this tradition and has obtained Spanish citizenship.

Erna is now a widow. She lives well with her pension because she worked as a lawyer for many years, and she gets extra support from the Community for being a Holocaust survivor. She receives medical assistance from the Community as well. Erna recalls:

> Both of my parents were Sephardic Jews, but practicing religion was unimportant when I grew up. I care about my Jewish nationality. I speak Serbo-Croatian as I spoke it before. People can call it whatever they want but I speak now as I spoke always. We understand each other perfectly and nobody of us elderly will change anything that is for sure.
>   Maybe I can refer to Spain a little bit […]. When I was in Spain for the first time, I felt very familiar with the country. I am sorry we've been expelled from it. I always say I am the Mediterranean type of person. I love the heat. I speak the Ladino language. I speak [it] sometimes with David and Morica Albahari. We practice and joke around a little bit. I have one son. He lived in Spain, learnt the language and worked as a translator for the Spanish army. My parents knew a lot of languages; my father was a translator of six languages. When I went to Spain, a person recognized my dialect and asked if I am

Sephardic. We [Ladino speakers] better understand the language and dialect of Mexicans and people from Argentina than the people from Spain.

I am not particularly connected to Israel. I have cousins in Israel, but most of them died a natural death. They were visiting us here, but I never had the special wish to visit them. My husband was not a Jew and by the way: there weren't a lot of Jewish men after the Second World War[…]. In this Community, we have maybe one or two 'real Jewish' marriages (Papo Ostojić and the Albahari family). I mean, it never crossed my mind to only look for a Jewish man, I didn't care about such things. Matilda Finci had a Sephardic marriage, but she got divorced.

Erna says that pursuing a Jewish marriage was not important to her. The ethnic affiliation with Judaism matters to her: "Both of my parents were Sephardic Jews, but practicing of religion was unimportant when I grew up. I care about my Jewish nationality." The fact that Erna can still speak Judeo-Spanish with two community members is also important to her.

Regarding language politics and their own living conditions, members of the elderly generation contemplate:

(Laura Papo Ostojić:) I've noticed [the reappearance of] some slang from Turkish. There are more archaisms. But we have no problem with communication in this country. We understand each other. Religion is a problem.

(Erna Kaveson Debevec:) I live in Novi [New] Sarajevo and there are no ethnic [neighborhoods there]. I am the only Jew in my house. We have neighbors from many countries, from Albania, Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia. Before the war the Jews used to live in the Old City but now they live all over.

(Matilda Finci:) There was never a ghetto here. I live in the center and there is no strict division of peoples.

In section III. ('Reference Group and Research Questions'), I maintained that the intergenerational dialogue that I explore in this thesis can help to build a greater degree of self-understanding of how individual subjects negotiate multiple possible identities in order to build a sense of individual and collective belonging, which is a crucial prerequisite for constructive cultural diversity. In light of the reflections by members of the three generations I have surveyed, I argue that among the Sephardim in Sarajevo hybrid and hyphenated identities – owing to inter-marriages between Jews and non-Jews and between Sephardim and Ashkenazim – are present to a high degree, and that therefore, Sarajevo—the city, its patterns of ethnic relations, its language politics, and its demography—is key to the subjects' self-perception. The centrality of Sarajevo as an identity-creating factor is manifested through the fact that members of all three generations are firstly, conscious that they and other Jews live throughout Sarajevo and are not concentrated in a separate area and are thus not segregated from others; second, the subjects are aware that they do not adhere to a halachic interpretation of Judaism, according to which the mother must be Jewish in order to transmit the legal status of 'Jew' to her offspring; and third, the subjects assign a positive value to the mixed marriages and correspondingly mixed backgrounds of the members of their community (cf. Brubaker 2004: 48, 54). These three factors singled out—non-segregation from others, distancing from the halachic definition of Jewishness, and a positive view of mixed marriages—shaped Yugoslav Jews of previous periods and are not specific to contemporary Sarajevo.

Currently, there is a process among my subjects whereby a Sephardic identification, and an identification with Judaism, are being transferred from the elderly to the younger generations. While all of the informants seem to conceive of their Jewish identification as divergent from halakhic definitions of matrilineal descent, they nevertheless see themselves as 'Jews.' The younger generations define themselves more in religious terms than the elderly, yet there are also continuities across the generations regarding their respective conceptions of what it means

to be Jewish. Members of the three generational groups speak of celebration of Shabbat, and other Jewish holidays. Among the youngest, there are those who express grief and a sense of loss because the increasingly untenable and quite marginal place of Judaism in the Bosnian society. Simultaneously, the interviewees–across the generations–seem to be also asserting alternative forms of being 'Bosnian.' These forms differ from official ones, in that the Jews' Bosnian-ness entails multi-ethnicity, and relies on hyphenated religious ascriptions.

The older generation have emotional ties with the now-dissolved Yugoslavia and say they belong to 'Yugoslavia' above all. A new identity pattern is that they declare themselves as 'Jews' in Bosnia and Herzegovina today. The younger generations rely on the old Yugo-nostalgic pattern of identification on the one hand, and on the other hand, they are interested in reforming the Jewish Community – as for example to welcome women in the Minyan and to build a greater Jewish infrastructure including a Jewish school, kindergarten and access to kosher food. I believe that this contradictory and ambivalent conception among the younger generations – of feeling nostalgic about Yugoslavia on the one hand, and on the other hand, expressing a wish to reform the Jewish Community organization today in Bosnia and Herzegovina – has become more articulated through their engagement in this research.

As I have already argued in chapter one, identity is typically classified according to the following categories: nationality, ethnicity, religion and culture. These categories denote identification with people of the same 'kind' or who share the same background. Obviously, race, class and gender are also categories according to which identities often are classified but in the context of former-Yugoslav states' official nomenclature nationality, ethnicity, religion and culture are crucial.

It seems that my subjects are in the process of reconfiguring their own understandings of what it means to be Jewish, sometimes by idiosyncratic reference to these 'standard' categories

of identity. As importantly, the subjects do this on an individual basis rather than collectively; moreover, certain individuals – Eliezer Papo who is the non-residential rabbi and Igor Koženjakin who is a *chazan* – seem to be generating new paths of creation and preservation. For instance, Koženjakin approaches younger Community-members and tells them about the religious service in the synagogue and therefore many of them come there for Shabbat on Friday evenings. Moreover, as Vladimir Andrle said: "We have a non-residential rabbi coming twice a year, he is very relaxed […]." The fact that both Koženjakin and Papo are relatively young in comparison to the other persons who are involved in the Community (Jakob Finci, Eli Tauber, David Kamhi, Boris Koženjakin) – seems to inspire the younger Sarajevo Jews to learn from them and to get engaged in Jewish creation.

What specifically threads together the concept of 'identity' in the minds of these interlocutors seems to be their concern that Sephardi culture and the identification with Judaism be transferred from the elderly to the younger generations. Among the younger generations, the concept of Sephardism is present throughout the conversation, filtered on the one hand through the notion of a parallel coexistence of ethnicities and languages in Bosnia and shaped by the conception of that multiple and hyphenated identifications are possible, even desirable. Along with this concern for Sephardic identity, especially among the youngest, is a fear and an acknowledgment of loss of the Sephardic-Jewish dimension in their way of life. As A.A. told me:

> Once there was a TV-documentary about Hanukkah. They always broadcast documentaries about Bajram and Christmas and I was really happy that they once sent a programme about Hanukkah. The Sephardic culture is important but there is no chance to preserve it here.

Having referred to the youngest generation's fear about the complete loss of the Sephardic-Jewish dimension in their lives, I will now move on to the interviewees' memories of rescue during the Holocaust—memories both personal (in the case of the older informants) and 'inherited,' so to speak, which are themselves indicative of a perception of past cultural loss. Obviously, the effects of the Holocaust have made Sephardic culture in Sarajevo very difficult to preserve: most of the city's Sephardim were killed during the war. Here, therefore, I focus on the theme of 'rescue' as my interviewees' response to what they have experienced as the lack of a Jewish dimension in their post-war lives. To gauge this perception of loss and absence, we must first ask, what remained Jewish after the war? Which mechanisms made some Sarajevo Jews survive the Holocaust, and how has the surviving Jewish culture transformed Jews' perception of Sarajevo itself, and of themselves as residents of the city?

3.3 Rescue during the Holocaust in memory of the Sephardic Community in Sarajevo

This section reflects on the ways in which the (remembered) rescue of Sarajevo Jews during the Second World War has shaped patterns of Jewish identification in contemporary Sarajevo. The idea is to shed light on the interviewees' perceptions of Jewish survival and rescue during the war in order to determine whether these first-, second-, and third-hand memories are significant in terms of the subjects' respective identities.

Statements from the under-30 generation show that they have heard stories of rescue of Jews during the Second World War, and that these stories have made them realize that there were 'good guys' involved in the war as well as perpetrators of genocide and their collaborators. For example A.A. says:

During my childhood, I often heard stories from family-members and at the Jewish Community about neighbors who were hiding Jews during the Second World War. The Jews were given clothes and fake papers […]. So as in every war, you cannot judge the whole nation. There are always good guys too. I especially remember a story about a Jew whose surname was Danon [a typical Sephardi family name], and who was brought by his Muslim neighbor to Mostar and so he survived!

There is, in fact, a generalized perception that there were Muslims who risked their lives to save Jews. This narrative paints a brighter picture of the situation during the war, *contra* perceptions of present day Sarajevo, in which anti-Semitism is recurring. A.A. comments about the current climate: "No one would tell you something [anti-Jewish] face-to-face but the comments online are really, really bad, I'm quite shocked." To illustrate, she showed me an example of an anti-Semitic comment below an article about the Jewish Community's Chanukah celebration on the webportal klix.ba (13.12.2017): "Volimo vas dok vas je malo. Da vas je 40 u Sarajevu prevrnuli bi čaršiju naopačke." ("We love you when there are only a few of you. If there were 40 of you in Sarajevo you would turn the town upside down").[93] A.A. adds that she often finds the word čifut in the comments, which is pejorative for a Jew in Serbo-Croat.

Tea Abinun also tells me that she has heard about several Jewish families and individuals who were rescued during the Holocaust, and she connects these stories with the situation today:

Ever since I was seven this was the narrative: neighbors helping neighbors. Those stories of rescue I heard as a child changed my perception of Sarajevo the Second World War. I thought it was quite a good place if you compare with other places in Europe. Now I'm thinking differently of Sarajevo because of recurrent anti-Semitism. For example, I went with my friend on a student gathering and met a guy who didn't know I was Jewish, and I didn't tell him either, and he said really nasty things about Jews. He sympathized with Hitler and separated Jews from others. He's Muslim and he doesn't hate Croats and Serbs, so he thinks he's progressive because of that but he hates the Jews! When I revealed to him that I'm Jewish he was very embarrassed and said that I'm the first Jewish person he has ever met. There is also an elementary school here named after Mustafa Busuladžić, who was against Jews during the Second World War. I am personally offended that they name the school after this anti-Semitic person and the Israeli government also

[93] See more examples under 'Komentari': https://www.klix.ba/vijesti/bih/finci-povodom-hanuke-u-ovo-mracno-doba-svjetlost-nam-je-svima-potrebna/171213008 (last accessed 4.5.2018).

protested and now the local government has agreed to change the name of the school, I think. We shall see.

Vladimir Andrle from this generation says:

> There were good people among other peoples and religions during the Second World War, but that didn't change my opinion that the war was devastating for the Jewish people. I remember hearing stories of a Muslim woman with the surname Hardaga, who saved her Jewish neighbors. During the war in Bosnia in the 1990's she got help from the Jewish Community to leave to Israel and there she was recognized as a 'Righteous Among the Nations.' Giving her the medal was a way of saying 'thank you,' and I think that's a good thing to have ceremonies like that in order to remember those people's great deeds.
>
> Today, we're the only Jewish Community in Europe with no security [guards and installations]! Consider the fact that nobody ever attacked the synagogue and the Jewish Community. We don't have the same degree of anti-Semitism as in other European countries. Most of it takes place on the Internet where people insult the Jewish people, but it doesn't occur in 'real life.' Not in Sarajevo.

Clearly the stories that the youngsters heard about the rescue of Jews during the Second World War have influenced their perceptions of that war. As A.A. said: "[A]s in every war, you cannot judge the whole nation." Vladimir Andrle similarly expressed his opinion that, "There were good people among other peoples and religions during the Second World War, but that didn't change my opinion that the war was devastating for the Jewish people." As we have seen, Tea Abinun revealed that because of the stories of rescue she thought Sarajevo was a better place than others: "I thought it was quite a good place if you compare with other places in Europe." Obviously, the stories about rescue that these young adults have heard, have made them see the war and their hometown Sarajevo in a positive light. All three respondents of this generation however, mention the recurrence of anti-Semitism in Sarajevo in the context of their memories of rescue, as if to underscore that the coexistence of peoples in the city is not as free of friction as one may think. Nevertheless, the subjects still view Sarajevo as *less* anti-Semitic than other European cities.

Yehuda Kolonomos, from the middle generation, has a more personal connection to the rescue than the informants of the two younger generations:

> My family was helped by a German officer of the Wehrmacht, lieutenant Franz Gruber, who died in 1956. That he saved us made me understand that goodness exists. I think it's important to focus on that in order to feel enthusiasm and optimism; to see the Second World War in a positive light as well. That gives me strength to believe in the land of Israel and the continuation of our Jewish people.

Apparently, Yehuda's memories of Franz Gruber, who helped to save his family from being murdered in the Holocaust, has been a source of empowerment and has helped strengthen his belief in Israel and the Jewish people. I, however, do not understand the connection Yehuda is making. How does a single German's goodness translate into belief in Israel and the Jewish People? I would expect Yehuda to express belief in the goodness of humanity in general, not to refer to his attachment to Israel and to Jews here.

Igor Kožemjakin observes that, "Many really risked their lives to save Jews, and these stories were always told in the Jewish Community when I grew up." He mentions three groups of Righteous Among the Nations about whom he heard: the Hardaga family, the Begić family and the Petrović family, all families from Sarajevo. He is especially fascinated with the story he heard of Mauricette Begić from Paris:

> Mauricette met her future husband, Midhat Begić, a Muslim who was working as a teacher in Paris. When they married in 1939 they moved to Sarajevo and lived next doors to Georgina and Leon Papo. When the war broke out Midhat was recruited to the Croatian army and Leon was sent to Jasenovac. Mauricette and Georgina were helping each other out and Mauricette was especially helpful with Georgina's and Leon's baby daughter Zlata who she, by the end of the war, adopted and brought [her] to France. I think this story shows that not everyone during the Second World War was evil.

Tina Tauber recalls the story she heard about Zeinaba Herdaga who hid members of the Jewish Khavilio family to prevent their capture by the Nazis. She also remembers the story of the rescue, during the war, of the famous Sarajevo Haggadah, a 14th century, illustrated manuscript of the Passover liturgy that had been preserved since its creation in Iberia, and is until today to be found in Sarajevo's National Museum. Tina observes:

> I see the Holocaust as a war. It was hell but as in every war there are good people who are trying to help the ones who are being persecuted. I have different standards for different countries. There were countries that were better, like Bulgaria. Here in Sarajevo it's good to focus on rescue of Jews because there was no anti-Semitism here or a ghetto. Jews were living here as if it was their own country. Besides, the people who killed Jews during the Second World War were not locals. Locals tried to save Jews even though there were many collaborating with the Ustašas and Nazis, but anti-Semitism was brought here. So that's why I think it's important to focus on rescue in Sarajevo whereas in Poland, for instance, they were really anti-Semites.

Tina says that "Jews were living here as if it was their own country," which is very telling. Here, Here she reveals that even under the best of circumstances, she and other Jews were guests in Bosnia—it is not 'their own country.'

Compared with the younger generation, the middle generation has more concrete memories of rescue. They mention both the first names and surnames of the individuals in the stories they were told, and not only surnames as the youngest did. Again, for instance, Igor Kožemjakin said that he is especially fascinated with the story he heard about Mauricette Begić and Yehuda Kolonomos tells about Franz Gruber who saved his family and Tina Tauber recalls Zeinaba Herdaga.

Apparently, Sarajevo holds a special place in memories of rescue for this group of respondents as well as for the youngest. The city indeed has a better record in this regard than other places in Europe, which were more anti-Semitic. Moreover, the subjects remember that the Nazis and

the Ustašas came (largely if not exclusively) from outside the city. As Tina Tauber said: "Locals tried to save Jews even though there were many collaborating with the Ustašas and Nazis, but anti-Semitism was brought here." Tellingly, the middle generation did not bring up stories of recurrent anti-Semitism in Sarajevo, much less connect them in any way with the Second World War.

For the older generation, in short, it is clear that memories of rescue have been central in their lives. A paradigmatic case is that of Eli Tauber. He tells me:

> It completely changed my life and my thoughts about the Holocaust when I met the woman, Zora Krajina, who saved my mother's life. I met her in Israel when she came to receive a medal of honor at Yad Vashem. When I was back in Sarajevo I went to the Sarajevo Jewish museum and in that moment [I realized]: there's nothing [here] about people who saved Jews during the Holocaust! So, I decided to write and research about this and then we had an exhibition on the rescue during the Second World War in the Sarajevo Jewish museum. I am really connected to these stories about neighbors saving Jews.

Tauber has written a book called *Kada su komšije bili ljudi* (When Neighbors Were Real Human Beings) (2010). He explains that the purpose of the book and the exhibition was to show that Sarajevo during the Holocaust was also a city of coexisting peoples who were helping each other.

Erna Kaveson Debevec recalls the following memories of the war:

> During the Second World War many of my family members were killed in concentration camps. In September 1941, my mother went with us to Mostar. We had false documents […]. We were in Mostar for about 18 months and after that we were brought to Brač. I was eight years old and one day we were brought to Rab. We were about 3,000 Jews there in the concentration camp. After four years, the Partisans came, freed us, and brought us back to Split. We were refugees for so many years […]. Maybe this is the reason we didn't want to move [away] during this war in the 1990s. All the time, during this last war, we were here.

Curiously, Erna Kaveson Debevec only refers to the fact that she was freed from a concentration camp by the Yugoslav Partisans. A narrative of 'rescue' is not present in her story. Rather she gives voice to the experience of survival alone. Her perceptions may be influenced by the fact that the partisan 'rescue' of the Jews did not have an ethical objective and was not understood by the partisans themselves (or by the Communist Party) as a rescue operation. The 'rescue' was rather based on the partisans political ideal of a future socialist federation in which the Jews were also part (see my earlier comment) (cf. Kerenji 2016: 59). When referring to the most recent war of the 1990s, Erna merely points out that she stayed in Sarajevo this time. She does not reflect on Sarajevo as a place of inter-ethnic coexistence or attempt to promote the city as a special place.

I think Erna is reticent to speak of 'coexistence' and to idealize or praise Sarajevo because the memories of the war are too raw or painful to summon. I believe that the memories of the other informants are filtered through (comparatively) rose-colored glasses (i.e., wishful thinking) while hers are more reflective of the harsh reality that predominated during the Second World War. Moreover, because the Communist Party and its partisan movement considered Jews as equals–as Yugoslavs and anti-Semitism was viewed by the party as an ideology that was imposed on Yugoslavia by the Nazi invaders and their Ustaša collaborators, being Jewish at this time and place was not something 'unique' in the eyes of the 'rescuers.'

Other Yugoslavs who were being persecuted by the Nazis and Ustašas were freed by the partisans as well (cf. Kerenji 2016: 61). Therefore, it seems to me that Erna does not make a big fuss about having been Jewish during the war. Other Yugoslavs were in the same bad boat as her.

Laura Papo Ostojić remembers:

> When my older sister went to primary school, she was expelled because she was Jewish, so my sister, me and my mum went to Montenegro. By then my father had already been killed in Jasenovac. When we lived in exile we were hiding all the time. As soon as the war was over we returned to Sarajevo. I am still living in the house I was born in. People know that my family has been living there for many generations and they know I'm Jewish. We only lost one little shop during the Second World War

Like Erna Kaveson Debevec, Laura Papo Ostojić does not mention any names of people who helped her to survive the Holocaust. Instead she refers to that she lost property during the Second World War, and refers to the murder of her father quite briefly. It seems to me that Erna and Laura, both of whom have first-hand experiences of the Holocaust, are less interested in bringing forward stories of rescue than those informants who have no first-hand memories of the cataclysm. The two survivors also do not reflect upon the nature of human beings as good or evil. They survived, and that is what matters in their stories.

Memories of stories of rescue have made the younger respondents reflect upon the Holocaust and specially to think about human being's capacity to 'do good.' I think that a grand narrative of rescue during the War has been promoted in Sarajevo by Jewish Community-members as well as by non-Jewish 'ordinary people' across the generations in order to convince themselves/the Jews how tolerant the city was and still is. Instead, my interviewees could have stressed the property that the Nazis and their collaborators appropriated from Yugoslav Jews and never returned to them nor compensated them for it.

As I mentioned, Eli Tauber said that the point of his book about non-Jewish individuals who saved their Jewish neighbors during the war was to show that Sarajevo was a city of coexisting peoples. Jakob Finci mentioned to me in one of our conversations (3.9.2018) that a common narrative among the rescuers is to say that "I didn't help Jews, I helped my neighbor." As if on cue, Tea Abinun, from the youngest generation, said: "Ever since I was seven this was the narrative: neighbors helping neighbors." Tina Tauber, from the middle generation, adds that, "Here in Sarajevo it's good to focus on rescue of Jews because there was no anti-Semitism here or a ghetto." From these and other impressions I gather that an understanding of Sarajevo as a better place than other European cities during the Holocaust is prevalent among the city's Jews. There is moreover a perception among the youngest that anti-Semitism is alive in Sarajevo today, yet that does not overthrow the larger narrative according to which, Sarajevo is 'less anti-Semitic' than other European cities. In a way, episodes of rescue during the Second World war–episodes which generated stories that were handed down across generations–saved Sarajevo for its Jews as well: most of the interviewees still perceive it as a special city in the context of the Holocaust.

At the same time, an idealization of Sarajevo during the Holocaust – a narrative that has circulated among Sarajevo Jews – is perhaps a way of protecting an image of 'tolerant' Sarajevo itself in order to make the present seem less daunting. When all is said and done, however, the

historical picture is not very reassuring: as I showed earlier, not more than 1,400 out of 10,000 Sarajevan Jews survived the war, and those Jews who survived and who had lost their property during the war still have not had the chance to receive any sort of restitution.

In the next section, I move from memories of the Holocaust to my interviewees' reflections upon the ongoing economic crisis, as well as the phenomena of anti-Semitism and Islamization in present-day Sarajevo. I first present an overview of the process of Islamization and recurrent anti-Semitism in Bosnia and Herzegovina today, which I find crucial for an understanding of the Sephardim's reflections upon these issues. In my concluding remarks, I address the problem of xenophobia and anti-Semitism in Sarajevo. Mostly, I interpret this problem as a side effect of the economic crisis and of the contemporary Islamization of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

3.4 The Economic Crisis, Islamization and Anti-Semitism Today

My point of departure is the financial crisis which began with the banking collapse of 2008. This section thus adds to the discussion of identity formation in consideration of contextual factors and including the current phenomena of migration and multiculturalism pertinent in present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina, in Europe and beyond.[94]

In the 1970s and 1980s a revival of Islam became noticeable in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mosques were built and Islamic publications increased. From the 1980s onwards, the revival of Islam has been connected to a broader attempt to define a Bosniak/Bosnian Muslim identity

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[94] See for instance the June 2016 UK referendum on EU membership (Brexit) and the European election victories for right-wing nationalist parties, with their anti-immigrant and xenophobic rhetoric (i.e. Alternative für Deutschland, UK Independence Party, Le Front National and Partij voor de Vrijheid). At present time, almost all European nations (except from Cyprus) have right-wing-extremist parties that are gaining support among their voters.

(Mesarič 2017: 581-582). This attempt has had an important moralistic aspect. As Mesarič

observes,

> It is important to see the Islamic revival as deeply embedded in a social context where pious
> Muslims and other Bosnians alike feel that people have "gone bad," becoming selfish and
> having no respect for others (Mesarič 2017: 584).

Indeed, many Bosnians felt that the war in the 1990s worsened the social relationships between

neighbors and between citizens in general, and this in turn led to a response whereby Bosnians

of Muslim background have strengthened their Muslim identification (Mesarič 2017: 584-585).

After the Bosnian war, Sarajevo has become a predominantly Muslim city. According the

population census of 2013, Sarajevo's population in terms of national/ethnic affiliation was as

follows: 41,702 declared Bosniaks, 3,333 declared Croats, 2,186 declared Serbs, 1,617

'undeclared' subjects, 6,203 declared 'others,' and 140 who provided no answer (Jukić 2016:

57).[95]

Before the Bosnian war, Bosnia and Herzegovina had the most ethnically mixed population

in all of Yugoslavia. In the 1991 population census there were 44% Bosniaks; 31% Serbs; 17%

Croats; and 5.5% Yugoslavs; this out of a total population estimated at 4,35 million people

(Djokić 2006: 2791; Markowitz 2010: 79).[96] At the time, 426 people declared themselves as

Jews (Markowitz 2010: 126; Periodical Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina 2012: 5).

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[95] Moreover, in Sarajevo the population by religion were the following: 42,459 Muslims, 2,887 Catholics, 2,028
Orthodox Christians, 1,569 Agnostics, 3,175 Atheists, 2,364 not declared, 580 others, and 119 who gave no answer
(Jukić 2016: 71). According to the same census, 48,600 persons in Sarajevo declared their mother tongue to be
Bosnian; 2,096 Croatian; 1,271 Serbian; 3,083 "Other"; and 131 gave no answer (Jukić 2016: 85).
   In the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the population, in terms of national/ethnic affiliation, were as follows:
1,769,592 Bosniaks; 544,780 Croats; 1,086,733 Serbs; 27,055 who affirmed that they identified with no particular
ethnicity ('undeclared'); 96,539 others; and 6,460 who provided no answer to the question of ethnicity whatsoever
(Jukić 2016: 54). Regarding the linguistic choice of the population in the whole of Bosnia Herzegovina: 1,866,585
million said they were speakers of Bosnian; 515,481 spoke Croatian; 1,086,027 spoke Serbian; 55,579 spoke other
languages; and 7,487 people gave no answer (Jukić 2016: 82).
[96] In the whole of Yugoslavia, the 1991 census shows that there were approximately 23.5 million people living in
the federation. There were 8,5 million Serbs, 4.65 million Croats, 2.3 million Bosniaks, 1.76 million Slovenes, 1.4
million Macedonians, and 550.000 Montenegrins. Albanians constituted nearly 2,2 million and there were around
380.000 Hungarians. At this census, more than 720.000 persons were declared as Yugoslavs, i.e., persons who
often came from mixed marriages and were "nationally undeclared" (Djokić 2006: 2791).

The 1991 population census in Sarajevo shows that there were 49,3% Muslims; 29,9% Serbs; 6,6% Croats; and 10,7% Yugoslavs (Kočović 1998: 482). Thus, in 1991, none of the three dominant ethnic groups (Croats, Muslims and Serbs) constituted an absolute majority (i.e., above 50%). This absence of an absolute majority had been a constant according to the population censuses carried out in Habsburg and Yugoslav Bosnia and Herzegovina from the early 20th century until 1995, after the war in Bosnia.

In the second Yugoslavia (1945-1992) each republic functioned as a *de facto* nation state for the majority nation (i.e. Serbia for Serbs, Croatia for Croats, Slovenia for Slovenes etc.). Bosnia and Herzegovina was the only republic that was not understood as such, but it was a multinational republic for its Muslims, Serbs and Croats, who also represented Yugoslavia's constituent nations (Serbs in Croatia and Croats in Serbia were not officially considered 'minorities' because each of the six recognized Yugoslav nations shared a 'mother' state and did not constitute an absolute majority within that broader state) (Alibašić & Begović 2017: 20).

The fact that there are so few Croats and Serbs left in Sarajevo after the war and the city's siege in 1992-1995 means that Croats and Serbs are, however, *effectively* minorities. This is especially the case given that it is not clear whether Bosnian refugees abroad took part in the last population census. Tensions currently exist regarding Croats' and Serbs' possible status as 'threatened' constituencies – and regards Bosnia's multiethnic status – now that Muslims constitute a clear majority. Examples of these tensions are politicians' and academics' arguments about the 2013 population census in the Bosnian media (Pavić, 2013). For instance Nenad Stevandić (vice-President of the national assembly of Republika Srbska), Dragan Čović (leader of the Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina party) and Zdravko Grebo (Professor at the faculty of law in Sarajevo), among others, have expressed their views in the

media. One of the main themes that they discuss is that Republika Srbska does not want to recognize the results of the most recent 2013 population census. Essentially, Republika Srpska does not agree with the fact that the 196,000 Bosnian Muslims who work or study abroad gain status on the census as permanent residents of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which has a total population of 4 million people (Karabeg, 2016). Tellingly, the leader of the Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina party, Dragan Čović, expressed to the media that he and his party are afraid that the number of Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina will fall below 10% (Pavić, 2013). Besides, now that there is an above 50% majority group in Bosnia and Herzegovina–the Muslims or Bosniaks–they could legitimately pose the following question: "If we are the absolute majority, why not redefine Bosnia as the Bosniaks'/Muslims' nation state (i.e., like Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia etc. are nation states for Croats, Serbs, Slovenes)?

Moreover, Mayr (2016: 92) asserts that after the Bosnian war, radical Sunni Muslims, who support ISIS, have found a haven in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There are allegedly about 20 places in Bosnia–with economic support from Saudi-Arabia and Sudan–that harbor radical Salafi jihadists, who are characterized by their long beards, and their belief in a 'true,' radicalized, form of Sunni Islam (Markowitz 2010: 133; Mayr 2016: 93-94; cf. Oluic 2008: 41). Furthermore, there are villages in Bosnia where the children attend private schools with a Jordanian curriculum. The local state schools are closed, and ISIS-training camps are operating under the false claim to be NGOs (Oluic 2008: 42; Mayr 2016: 95). It is estimated that there are as many as 64 illegal radical Muslim communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Mayr 2016: 95). This estimate is probably not entirely true, neither is it universally accepted. However, as Oliuc (2008: 36) points out,

> The inability of the state to effectively control its territory leaves a certain level of freedom for extremist elements to operate in the "ungoverned" spaces found mostly in the rugged terrain of central Bosnia (Oliuc 2008: 36).

Thousands (an estimated 3,000 in 1995) of *Mujahiddin* came from North Africa to fight on the Muslim side during the Bosnian war (Oluic 2008: 38; Hajdari & Lazarević, 2015). In 1996, after the war, approximately 200 Islamists were illegally given Bosnian citizenship (Oschlies, 2006; Oluic 2008: 41). Other Islamists got married in Bosnia and could thus become citizens on these grounds (Oschlies, 2006). There were thus Islamists in the Bosnian cities with characteristic beards, short trousers, and distinctive hats (Oschlies, 2006).

Moreover, Saudi-Arabia and Kuwait have given enormous sums of money to Bosnia (Oschlies, 2006; Oluic 2008: 43). With this money, mosques have been built, and women receive economic support on the condition that they send their children to Islamic schools and live according to a strict version of Islam (Oluic 2008: 43; Oschlies, 2006; Hajdari & Lazarević, 2015; Toe, 2016).

According to Hajdari & Lazarević (2015), Bosnia has the highest rate of ISIS recruitment in the whole of Europe (Kogel & Lazarević, 2016). 60% of Bosnian youth are unemployed. Unsurprisingly, many of the local recruits are very young (Kogel & Lazarević, 2016; Mayr 2016: 93). Experts have estimated that at least 1,000 people from the Balkan-region have gone to fight in Iraq and Syria (Hajdari & Lazarević, 2015). Moreover, since the war in Bosnia, the number of adherents of the radical Wahabbi Islam, a type of Islam that is common in Saudi-Arabia, has increased (Alibašić & Begović 2017: 29).

Regarding anti-Semitism in Bosnia and Herzegovina today, Brentin (2015) describes how anti-Semitic incidents prior to and during football games are common among Bosnian fans. For example, when the Israeli national team played against Bosnia-Herzegovina in June 2015, Bosnian fans disrupted the Israeli national anthem, chanting 'Palestine, Palestine,' while stomping on an Israeli flag at the same time. Brentin (2015) argues that, there is an anti-Jewish, anti-Israeli, and anti-Zionist 'solidarity' with the Palestinian people among Bosnia's Muslim

population. While offensive chants at football games are a common occurrence throughout the world and are thus not peculiar to Bosnia, there are numerous examples of 'everyday anti-Semitism' (Brentin, 2015). Indeed, there is in Bosnia an "(…) increasingly radicalized and polarized public discourse in reference to the Middle East in general, and the Israel vs. Palestine conflict in particular" (Brentin, 2015). The same author contends, that one factor that might explain this anti-Semitism is the rise of Salafist and other religiously conservative Muslim groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the last few years. Jikeli (2015: 188-189), however, notes that anti-Semitic utterances and negative ideas about Jews in spoken and written form (as, for instance, in schoolbooks) are very common among the general populations in Muslim countries such as Syria, Iran, Gaza and Turkey, and therefore do not solely come from Muslim fundamentalists.

Schwarz-Friesel (2015: 13) has examined a similar anti-Semitic trend currently raging in Germany.[97] She (2015: 15, 22) illustrates how German Jews are – according to the anti-Semitic logic–'Israelis' and thus responsible for the crimes and injustices allegedly or actually committed by Jews in Israel and in the disputed territories under its control and under the control of the Palestinian Authority.[98] Furthermore, Schwarz-Friesel notes that in Germany there is a growing tendency to make anti-Semitism morally relative, and for writers, bloggers and journalists to express their *personal* standpoints and feelings concerning Israel (Schwarz-Friesel 2015: 296, 299). In this climate, those who criticize Israel, and many in their audiences, consider the criticism to be legitimate 'freedom of speech,' and a hallmark of ethical

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[97] Schwarz-Friesel (2015: 27-28) shows how anti-Jewish sentiments have a long history in Germany's cultural and communicative memory. She points to Hegel's anti-Jewish statements about Jews lacking a soul and Grimm's fairy-tale "Der Jude im Dorn" that was taken out of the Grimm-collection only in 1945. These and other thought-structures have been handed down over the generations and as a result, this *Gedankengut*, she argues, stands in the background of the prevailing anti-Semitism today (Schwarz-Friesel 2015: 29).

[98] Moreover, Schwarz-Friesel (2015: 15, 19) argues that in Germany one problem is that the prevailing definition of anti-Semitism is too vague: those who deny the existence of the *Shoah,* and defenders of the Third Reich, are classified as anti-Semites, while those who merely post anti-Semitic comments that circulate on the Internet about 'Jews' being 'occupiers' and 'criminals' are not perceived as such.

responsibility (Schwarz-Friesel & Reinharz 2012: 200, 202). According to Schwarz-Friesel & Reinharz (2012: 204), the Israel-critique, however, is anti-Semitic when, among other factors: (a) Israel's right to defend itself is questioned; (b) when Israel's right to exist is questioned; (c) when it is argued that Israel, compared to other states, should adhere to a special standard, (e.g., 'you should have learnt from the *Shoah*'); and, (d) when the critique assumes that Jews around the world are responsible for the politics in Israel.

<p style="text-align:center">⚜</p>

In this section, I initially discussed a revival of Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina from the 1970s and 1980s. I moreover reflected upon the predominantly Muslim population in Sarajevo during and after the city's siege in the 1990s. Brentin (2015) argued that the rise of radical Muslim groups in Bosnia has led to anti-Semitism, whereas Jikeli (2015: 188-189) maintained that anti-Semitic utterances and negative ideas about Jews do not solely come from Muslim fundamentalists, but from Muslims in general. I finished off this section up by providing Schwarz-Friesel & Reinharz (2012: 204) definition of anti-Semitic Israel-critique.

In the following section I present empirical findings which are relevant to my interviewees' reflections on the economic crisis, Islamization and anti-Semitism today in Sarajevo.

3.4.1 Reflections upon the Economic Crisis, Islamization and Anti-Semitism Today

Data from the interviewees younger than 30 years show that the Sephardim experience anti-Semitism as part of everyday life in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian society. Vladimir Andrle states:

> Two weeks ago I was in west Mostar which is predominantly Croatian and many Herzegovinian Croats are pro-Ustaša or neo-Ustaša.

Ustaša (which I referred to previously) is the name of the fascist, ultranationalist party in the Croatian Nazi-era puppet state (1929-1945). As I showed; its members murdered Serbs, Jews and Roma as well as political dissidents in Yugoslavia. Clearly, there are however Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina (as well as many Croatians worldwide) who have not come to terms with this dark history. "For years, extremist elements in Croatia have sought to rehabilitate the Ustasa and downplay the atrocities perpetrated at Jasenovac" (Rosensaft, 2018). Moreover, use of Ustaša's symbols ('U' for instance) are not seen as problematic today.

Obviously, anti-Israelism and anti-Semitism is not the same, but from my interviewees' conceptions it is furthermore clear that they believe these two ideologies overlap. The interviewees think ordinary people in Sarajevo are generalizing and that they presume that Jews in Sarajevo automatically identify with Israel and are responsible for the politics in Israel as well. When discussing the current economic crisis and attendant social turmoil more broadly, A.A. sates:

> Regarding terrorism and, for example, people posting on Facebook saying that it's the beginning of a Third World War, I really don't think so. It's been going on in the last ten years and just now terrorism has reached its peak but I don't see a Third World War coming. We humans forget a lot of things that happened to us, and so it's going to be this time too. Of course, Europe is having its crisis but it's nothing compared to the one we have had here. This morning I read an article about a young woman with a doctorate degree leaving Bosnia because she couldn't find a job; I

think that is actually what is going to happen to all Bosnians of my generation, regardless of religion/ethnicity. We are all aware of the fact that we have to be in a political party to be employed someday. As a young individual here in Bosnia, I ask myself: what am I going to do here? I'm afraid for my prosperity. This year I'm going to get my degree. And when I look at my colleagues (in this case from the academy of musicology), they are almost all unemployed.

I think that the fact that I'm Jewish has nothing to do with it. We are all the same and in the same bad situation. Everybody knows that the Bosnian war wasn't a civil one but a political one in which so many civilians died. Nor am I connected to Israel at all […]. My family comes from Sarajevo. A lot of people generalize about Israel. Actually, Sephardim are from Spain so we have nothing to do with Israel. It's stupid to say that Israel is the center of the Jewish population. Anyway, Israel helped Bosnia during the civil war. Israel really worked hard to stop the war and the convoys weren't full of Jews but Bosnians in general.

A.A.'s statement that: "Everybody knows that the Bosnian war wasn't a civil one but a political one in which so many civilians died" seems to me to be wishful thinking. Not that the civil war was no political, but how can one disentangle politics from ethnicity (and ethnic hatreds) in the case of that war? Moreover, I think A.A. tries to make the point that she (and her fellow Sephardim) are Bosnian Jews originating from Spain and not responsible nor supportive of the political reality of contemporary Israel – where Palestinians are oppressed and discriminated upon. At the same time, Israel has a special consideration on A.A.'s part: Israel was good to Bosnia during the war in the 1990s. I think she wants to make the point that she is not *against* Israel per se – and she is not an anti-Semite – but does not think it is obvious that just because one is Jewish one should identify with the country.

Among the interviewees above 30 years of age, Tina Tauber says: "I feel no fear concerning the economic crisis. Since the 1990s there have been crises here and since 2000, it's getting worse; the general living conditions in particular. Everything is getting more expensive and the salaries are shrinking." She continues:

Sarajevo is more Muslim now, but it doesn't relate to an Islamic state or ISIS.[99] Only a few groups are fundamentalist. ISIS is, I think, more present in rural areas, in small villages It's easier to get someone who is hungry for revenge [there] than someone who is into knowledge. Anti-Semitism is connected to Israel-hatred and it's growing because of a sympathy with the Palestinians. There are people who generalize and hate all Jews but most people don't make this assumption. I wouldn't say Sarajevo is anti-Semitic but Bosnia, yes. Besides, in Europe, anti-Islamism is growing too. EU will fall apart before Bosnia will be able to join but that would be the biggest mistake ever. For the politicians, it's probably good but not for the citizens, everybody is talking about something getting better, but nothing is really happening. EU is simply not for the people.

Muslims today in Sarajevo get more into their religion as time goes by. At the same time: people connect Islam with terrorism. People from Arab countries come here and buy land and Bosnia is actually sold out. We don't prosper from it. It's all on Facebook how they sell the property in Arabic. Only the politicians are benefitting from this. Everything leads to a third World War. Every country is in war with someone or hating someone. It's not so bright. Day after day you have to see how you survive. That's what most people think; how to survive until the end of the month. And so many crazy people here in Sarajevo you have to deal with them too. You have some attack every day. Bombs blowing up, some people getting shot or stabbed so we deal first of all with these things.

Igor Koženjakin says the following about the economic crisis:

From my personal perspective, I'm already living in the EU. I was always oriented towards the EU and its values but then I got really disappointed. I see the great crisis happening. I don't think EU will survive unless some big reforms are implemented. Sure, there has been a rise in anti-Semitism in Sarajevo. Nobody blames Israel but in general the Jews. Jews here, Jews there; people generalize and it reflects on the Jews living in this country. I notice it mostly on the Internet. It's kind of a latent anti-Semitism.

We all feel threatened. Terrorism is a big problem, and we are all afraid. Because it doesn't choose religion or age or similar, it can just hit you when you're at a wrong place at the wrong time. I don't know anybody from ISIS but I saw people giving ISIS support on Facebook and that's the problem: this self-radicalization.

A study by a professor has showed that all Bosnian citizens who are ISIS members come from poor environments and are there mostly because of the money. There are few who truly believe in their ideology.

Yehuda Kolonomos from this respondents' group, says on this subject:

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[99] There are probably ideas about ISIS revealed in their statements that are not always accurate, but it is nevertheless clear that ISIS is increasingly being seen in relation to anti-Israelism.

Sarajevo has changed a lot. It's different compared to the city in which I grew up. The changes are unfortunately negative. The reasons are that political and religious differences have culminated after the Bosnian war. The disparity is felt in everyday life and especially because of the media being influenced by the political hatred. The segregation is enormous.

I read the press daily, mostly news in the newspapers and I watch TV (from all over the world). The media transfers only as much information that you need to support already steady and fixed opinions. And I am very disappointed with the media, i.e., worldwide and the Bosnian too.

Objectivity is, of course, a very relative thing. For ISIS, the reality is one word and for the rest it's an opposite thing. There could be war if one side doesn't give in. Everything is connected. There is for sure no coincidence. I'm not a big fan of conspiracy theories but you don't have to be very intelligent to see the matrix. Besides, the war already exists but it has its phases: the limbering up, the culmination and its ending.

Yehuda then discusses the current economic crisis and anti-Semitism:

For the EU crisis, I have a concrete attitude: it generates from the shortage of ideological and moral values of our society. A typical example is the ex-Yugoslavian ideological basis. People trusted in it, believed in it, and so there was harmony. But when material values became more important than ideological, Yugoslavia collapsed. And the same thing is going to happen to Europe. I said that even 20 years ago during the civil war. You can't buy happiness.

Anti-Semitism is a side-effect of every crisis and it shows up in different ways, especially in relation to Israel. People don't make a difference between Jews from Israel and Jews from anywhere else. It's the same to them, and therefore a complicated situation for those Sarajevan Jews coming from mixed Jewish-Muslim families. They don't dare say that they are Jews because then they will be blamed by the Bosnian Muslims for the politics in Israel. On a personal level I have had bad experiences as well: Muslim kids approached my daughter in school asking her why she's killing their people [Muslim Palestinians in Israel]. Even though I insist on wearing my kippah while walking the streets of Sarajevo; not hiding the fact that I'm Jewish, I'm also much more careful than I was a year ago. I think other Jews in Sarajevo are even more afraid to show or say openly that they are Jews.

Among this group there is (similarly to the youngest group of informants) a perception that all Jews, including those in Bosnia and Sarajevo, are seen as Israelis and thus held responsible for the politics of Israel. Among the two younger generations (younger than 55), there is a notion that the Third World War has already started, while others believe it has not (yet).

The oldest generation of my interviewees, those older than 55 years of age, reflects upon the relationship towards the present-day crisis against the backdrop of former Yugoslavia and the war which broke out in the 1990s.

Matilda Finci states in this connection:

> The demographic structure has changed, as always happens after war. It's a special situation here in Bosnia […]. The war formed three different ethnic groups. Everybody went where he felt safe and where the majority of the own kind was. But G-d forbid, no way there is a danger for the Jewish nation living here. We're a tough nation and we have managed to survive through our solidarity. We have proved that all over the world during the past 2000 years.

Matilda seems unaware of or disconnected from the concerns and self-perceptions of the young adults in her Jewish community. The younger generation's concerns and self-perceptions completely contradict what she is saying here: "(…) no way there is a danger for the Jewish nation living here."

According to Laura Papo Ostojić,

> We Jews are not Israelis but Bosnians. So, it's wrong if Muslims anywhere identify themselves with Arabs. They only share the same religion. Besides, they (Muslims from Bosnia) have even less in common with the Arabs then we have with Israelis. I don't know why they need to hate the Jews; maybe because of the Arabians. That's my opinion. But I guess that's what's happening when people here demonstrate and shout 'Palestine, Palestine,' they actually do identify themselves with the Muslims in the Middle East.

Erna Kaveson Debevec's concerns about anti-Semitism include the following:

> I want to say that Jews here are a collateral damage, relating to the politics of Israel. When something happens down there it always reflects a revolt here. For example: the soccer game lately. We are being identified with Jews in Israel, although we don't have the same politics. We are connected though: either our children live in Israel or we have some other relations to Israel. On the one hand, I support the battle

for Israel. Not the battle, better to say is the defending of Israel. Lately a politician said there were Arab posters with the inscriptions 'We hunt all Jews into the sea.' They (Israelis) need to defend themselves. Politics' should be more peaceful. You know how it was reflected on us? Last year there were some demonstrations in Bosnia, with all the happenings in Gaza. People had ribbons on their arms with the inscription 'GAZA,' to allude to the Holocaust. They wanted to make a statement: in Gaza there is a Holocaust happening.

Among this elderly generation there is an anti-nationalist perception and Yugo-nostalgic attitude. Life before 1992 was a good life to them, people were different, and they were not nationalists.

Speaking of anti-Semitism, it seems like there is an almost forced need among my subjects to 'defend Israel'—or, in the case of my youngest subjects, to reject the perceived obligation to do so—because of the prevailing anti-Semitism and perhaps because – as I mentioned in chapter 2: Tito cut off diplomatic communications with Israel in 1967. 'Defending Israel' may be a way of saying that one is not against Israel and an anti-Semite. Moreover, this ambivalent relationship towards Israel among the Sarajevo Sephardim of all three generations is most probably becoming more relevant in the present times of economic crisis, when uncertainty brings inter-ethnic suspicions to the foreground and impoverished Bosnian Muslims opt for radical political and religious alternatives.

From the reflections on contemporary crisis by members of the three generations of Sarajevo Sephardim that I have interviewed, it is clear that the overwhelming view is that the Bosniak population of Bosnia is increasingly becoming more religiously oriented. Members of all three generations express worries and fears about the growing religious fundamentalism in Sarajevo. There is moreover a perception among members of the three generations of my interviewees that anti-Semitism is rife in Sarajevo because the city is predominantly Muslim and the Bosnian Muslims take the side of the Palestinians in the conflict in the Middle East, whom these Bosnians perceive to be their coreligionists categorically (when of course there are many Christian and secular Palestinians, not only Muslim ones). One of my interviewees, Tina

Tauber, believes that "anti-Semitism is connected to Israel-hatred and it's growing because of a sympathy with the Palestinians." Another interviewee, Laura Papo Ostojić, told me: "I guess that's what's happening when people here demonstrate and shout 'Palestine, Palestine,' they actually do identify themselves with the Muslims in the Middle East."

I believe that the older informants' reflections upon the Islamization are transferred to younger generations via the belief that the conflict in the Middle East reminds the Bosnian Muslims of their own local inter-ethnic conflict, and therefore Israel-hatred triggers local anti-Semitism. This position, while critical of the Bosnian Muslims, tends to exonerate them from the charge that what they are expressing is a deep-seated anti-Jewish sentiment that predates the establishment of the State of Israel. The informants' argument seems to be that recent and current anti-Israelism causes local anti-Semitism, and not the other way around.

The aim of this chapter has been to pinpoint the local identity of Sarajevo Sephardim. In this process, the Jewish Community and specifically its synagogue and restaurant are crucial building-blocks in identity creation. Further important characteristics of the Jews local identity is the fact that they live all over the city and are not segregated from 'others' and that mixed marriages between Jews and non-Jews are very common. Moreover, the younger are becoming interested in *religious* Judaism, and they moreover fear a loss of the Jewish dimension in their lifestyles. Obviously, however, stories about rescue during the Holocaust have made the younger generations see the war and their hometown Sarajevo in a positive light. Even when speaking of present-day anti-Semitism in the city they say that – despite recurrent anti-Semitism – Sarajevo is less anti-Semitic than other European cities.

In chapter four, the following chapter, I compare the Jewish predicament in Sarajevo with the position of Sephardim in other important hubs of Balkan Sephardic culture – Belgrade, Salonica and Sofia. This chapter on the different other hubs of Balkan Sephardic culture does not follow chronologically with the historical flow in chapter two. Instead, it has a thematic approach and the focus is on the comparisons between the cities. The aim of the chapter is to place the Sephardic Sarajevo in relation to other Balkan Sephardic centers so that parallels can be drawn between these and the Sarajevo case and so that the latter may be understood in its broader Balkan context.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SEPHARDIC

LANGUAGE AS A SOURCE OF CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION IN

SARAJEVO FROM A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

4.1 Sephardic Belgrade, Salonica and Sofia in Comparison with Sarajevo

This chapter presents empirical findings and applies the theoretical framework outlined in chapter one as well as the historical backdrop in chapter two. I develop hypotheses concerning Sephardic identity formation in Sarajevo – deriving from the reference group's intergenerational cultural memory as compared to that of other Southern and Southeastern European Sephardi groups residing outside of Bosnia.

First, I explore the history of the Sephardim in Sarajevo, Belgrade and Salonica. Then I compare the situation between these cities' Sephardic communities today. In this regard, I focus on the significance of the Sephardic language and Jewish identification more broadly. After my tentative attempts at quantifying Sephardic identity, I delve into the Sephardic Sofia as well. My aim is to make the comparative approach even wider and use Sofia as a 'control group' against the other three cities. I conclude this chapter by summarizing the main differences and similarities between the four Sephardic communities in Belgrade, Salonica, Sarajevo and Sofia.

4.2 Ottoman Sarajevo (1462-1878) and its Sephardim

Sundhaussen (2014: 11-12, 363) pinpoints the unique multi-cultural character of Sarajevo due to the coexistence of Catholics, Muslims, Christians and Jews (predominantly Sephardim) there since the early 16th century. With its synagogues, mosques and churches, the city's architecture reflects this multitude of religions. "Sarajevo [it may be said] developed architecturally, socially, and spiritually into a city of four faiths" (Markowitz 2010: 17). Sundhaussen (2014: 92) however questions whether a multi-religious co-existence and harmony is not just a myth. On his part, Jikeli (2015: 205) argues that the non-Muslims had to subordinate themselves to the dominant Muslims as *Dhimmi*. This was because of the Ottoman citizenship policy, the so-called *Dhimma* (protection)*,* which regulated relations between Muslims and non-Muslims. Non-Muslims were categorized by their religion and were free to practice it although they had to pay a special tax to the Sultan (Rodrigue 1992: 163; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 39, 41). The status of the non-Muslims was hence regulated by *jus religionis* since in the eyes of imperial law they formed relatively autonomous ethno-religious communities (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 3, 17-18; cf. Voss 2008: 110). *Marriage to someone of another faith required conversion and was extremely rare* (Greble 2011: 4, emphasis mine). Moreover, non-believers were discriminated upon – having to wear special clothing and not being allowed to ride horses in town (Freidenreich 1979: 14; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 41-42).

During the Tanzimat (Tanzimat means reform in Ottoman Turkish) (1839-1876), the state wanted to reform its legal system so that it would unite the Ottoman citizens (Hanioğlu 2008: 73). Hanioğlu (2008: 74) writes that this new vision was based on an attempt to transform previous Muslim, Christian and Jewish subjects into *Ottomans.* At first, a new category *ecnebî* (foreigner) began to apply to non-Muslims (i.e., as opposed to *dhimmī*, and regardless of their religious affiliation). This led to the development of new legal terms *Ottoman* and *non-Muslim*

Ottoman, formalized in the 1869 Ottoman Law of Nationality. Thus, the Tanzimat era introduced a more secular approach in conducting affairs of the state (Hanioğlu 2008: 74; Greble 2011: 5; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 39, 42; Cohen 2014: 9-10), yet it did not completely efface the heritage of millets, that is, autonomous communities defined and officially recognized according to religion.[100]

In everyday life in the Ottoman Empire, religious groups blended together, and over time a hybrid culture formed. In the high social circles however, people remained within their own group and therefore in this domain multiculturalism (not a hybrid culture) prevailed (Sundhaussen 2014: 91). Sundhaussen (2014: 92) argues that this dual system of a cultural coexistence in everyday life (hybrid culture) versus the high social circles' multiculturalism is characteristic of Bosnia. Hence, for 'ordinary' people, there occurred a hybridization among the religious and ethnic groups. But in the high culture, there was rather an acknowledgment of cultural distinctiveness among the religious and ethnic groups.

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The Sephardim in Ottoman Sarajevo had moved from Spain to *Muslim* Ottoman lands as what occurred in earlier times, i.e., when they lived in Muslim al-Andalus (711-1474) (Benbassa &

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[100] During the Ottoman period, *Millet* was a legal court under which ethno-religious communities ruled themselves and thus had their own judicial systems (Вучина Симовић 2016: 83). After the Tanzimat-reforms (1839-1876), *Millet* was another term for religious minority-groups. The word (millah) literally means nation in Arabic (Sachedina 2001: 96-97; Markowitz 2010: 17; Вучина Симовић 2016: 102).

Rodrigue 2000: liv, lii; Harris 2008: 21; Schama 2017: 94). At the time, Islam was the religion of the majority of Spaniards in Muslim al-Andalus (Amelang 2013: 7; Cohen 2014: 140).

The Sephardim spoke Judeo-Spanish among themselves and they were often merchants, medical doctors or pharmacists (Вучина Симовић 2016: 96). Rabbis served as lawyers for Jews within an autonomous Jewish system of courts (*batey din*) even if the Sephardim sometimes also turned to Muslim *sharia* courts. In 1581, the Jewish neighborhood in Sarajevo had its own synagogue. A Jewish cemetery, which still exists there today, was probably established in 1631.

Movement in and out of the Jewish neighborhood was unrestricted. Moreover, not all Jews – especially not the wealthy ones – were living in the Jewish neighborhood and thus it could not be considered a ghetto (Sundhaussen 2014: 81-84; Вучина Симовић 2016: 88-89). On the other hand, Jews and other non-Muslims were not allowed to live near mosques or in Muslim districts (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 32).

Most Sephardim lived in residential quarters, the so-called *mahalles[101]*, and their cultural sphere was formed by the *millets'* religious segregation-policy. In fact, it was in this backdrop that the Sephardim managed to preserve their ethno-religious and linguistic identity (Judeo-Spanish) during the 400 years of Ottoman rule, largely by maintaining their own schools and civil service (Freidenreich 1979: 12, 14; Harris 2008: 21; Greble 2011: 37; Schlumpf 2015: 26; Вучина Симовић 2016: 97, 102, 112, 114-115, 141, 174; Ristović 2016: 25).

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[101] *Mahala* is a Turkish loan word in Bosnian for district or neighborhood (cf. Greble 2011: 4; Вучина Симовић 2016: 88). A Jewish courtyard, the so-called mahala Judia was built in the late 16th century near the market in the old town (Carmichael 2015: 31).

4.2.1 The Jews in Habsburg Sarajevo

The Ottoman Empire collapsed after the First World War, when the Turkish Republic was established. In 1878 Sarajevo and Bosnia and Herzegovina still remained nominally Ottoman, but under the terms of the Congress of Berlin, Bosnia and Herzegovina was occupied by Austria-Hungary (which in 1908 annexed the province, thus *de jure* ending the Ottoman rule) (cf. Markowitz 2010: 18; Mitrović 2016: 64).

After 1878, Bosnia's population was extremely poor (Sundhaussen 2014: 170). Sarajevo was seen as an intellectual and economic backwater. The Jewish community was conservative, which is perhaps one of the reasons why there was never an *Alliance* school in Sarajevo (Kerenji 2008: 32-33; Вучина Симовић 2016: 124). During the Habsburg period (1878-1918), Sarajevo began to thrive again – it was Bosnia's cultural, economic and scholarly center. At that time, the Jewish community had close ties with Salonica's Jewish community, while many rabbis in Sarajevo originated from Salonica (Freidenreich 1979: 13).[102]

Jewish culture continued to diversify and a modern literary culture in Sarajevo became more established. As I mention in section 2.2 ('Sephardi Migration from the Iberian to the Balkan Lands'), it was with the occupation of Bosnia by Austro-Hungary in 1878 that Ashkenazi Jews began to settle in Sarajevo as well. They established their own religious community, and eventually, built their own synagogue, own religious educational institutions, cemetery and charitable funds (Freidenreich 1979: 16; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 37; cf. West 2006: 312).

In 1894 and 1902 respectively, the humanitarian, educational and cultural association La Benevolencia and the musical association La Lira were formed as Sephardic cultural institutions. Moreover, the Bosnian Sephardic newspaper, La Alborada, was founded and distributed in Sarajevo in 1900-1901 (Kerenji 2008: 35; Greble 2011: 40; Birri-Tomovska

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[102] In the mid-18th century, rabbi David Pardo had founded a rabbinical training college – a *yeshiva* – in Sarajevo (Levy 1996: 34-36). Until then, rabbis in Sarajevo had been trained at the Jewish Community in Salonica.

2012: 37, 139; Вучина Симовић 2016: 120, 131, 136, 184; Mitrović 2016: 65).[103] At this time, the first generation of secular Sephardic intellectuals was active in the South Slavic Zionist movement that emerged at the beginning of the 20th century (Kerenji 2008: 36). Furthermore, trends towards modernization in daily life also encouraged Sephardic women spend time in cafés instead of being exclusively at home, which was also something that was being discussed in La Alborada (Вучина Симовић 2016: 134, 136).[104] Despite this period of modernization and revitalization, the British travel-writer William Miller observes:

> No doubt the modern part of the town has greatly grown at the expense of the Oriental, but Sarajevo is still the most Oriental city of the Balkan Peninsula. In Belgrade and Sofia you have nothing but brand-new edifices (…). But in Saraj the West and the East meet (…). You may take a walk through the bazar or *čaršija,* and imagine yourself in a purely eastern town, while at a few minutes' distance the shops of the Franje Josipa Ulica transport you back to an Austrian city (Miller 1898: 145).

In 1885, Muslims formed the majority population in Sarajevo, with 60,1% of the city's total population. Serb-Orthodox formed 16,9%, 12,7% was Croat-Catholics and 10% was Jewish. Ten years later, in 1895, Muslims constituted only 45,1%. The Serb-Orthodox percentage grew to 15,4%; the Catholics were 28%; and the Jews 10,7%. In 1895, there were 3,159 Sephardim and 899 Ashkenazim living in the city (Freidenreich 1979: 17). The reason for this change in Sarajevo's population was that Muslims left to other parts of the Empire and Catholics came to Sarajevo from elsewhere in Austro-Hungary.

By 1910, the population was 35,6% Muslim, 16,3% Serb-Orthodox, 34,5% Catholic, and 12,3% Jewish – 4,985 Sephardim and 1,412 Ashkenazim (Freidenreich 1979: 17).[105] For the

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[103] One topic that was elaborated upon in the La Alborada journal was Zionism and the question of having Hebrew as the language of the Sephardim instead of Judeo-Spanish (Вучина Симовић 2016: 259; cf. Simović Vučina & Filipović 2008: 312).

[104] Gordana Kuić's bestselling novel *Miris Kiše na Balkanu* (The Scent of Rain in the Balkans), 1986, illustrates well the emancipation of the Sephardic women at around this period (from the First to the Second World War). Kuić is a Sephardic Serbian author and niece of Luna (Laura) Papo Bohoreta. She has written seven books about her mother Bianki and the mother's four sisters, including Luna. Two of Gordana Kuić's books is about Luna in particular: *Legenda o Luni Levi* (The Legend of Luna Levi) and *Balada o Bohoreti* (The Ballad of Bohoreta). All her books are written from a woman's point of view on the life of Sephardic women in Sarajevo. *Miris Kiše na Balkanu* was partly written in Judeo-Spanish – expressions that she remembers from her childhood. This book has been adapted into a television series as well.

[105] Kerenij (2008: 34) writes that in 1910 there were about 3,600 Ashkenazim, and 8,200 Sephardim, in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

first time in Sarajevo's history, Christians constituted a majority (Sundhaussen 2014: 195, 197). From 1895-1910, the Sarajevan population increased substantially, by 36%. About one third of the city's population consisted of immigrants. Sarajevo was the only location in Bosnia that could be defined as a city (Sundhaussen 2014: 194). Because of the Ashkenazim's arrival to Sarajevo during this time, the Bosnian Jewish population grew and as Mitrović points out: "The rise of the Bosnian Jewish population under Austro-Hungarian rule was rather impressive, from some 3,500 people in 1879, to almost 6,000 in 1885, over 8,000 in 1895 and almost 12,000 in 1910" (Mitrović 2016: 64).

In 1910, almost 95% of the Muslims of Sarajevo were illiterate. So were 90% of the Serb-Orthodox, and 77% of the Catholics. Among the others, including the Jews, 'only' 38% were illiterate. In fact, most Jews were literate (Sundhaussen 2014: 196). That same year, 70% of Sarajevo's population indicated that Serbo-Croatian was their mother tongue; 10% identified German (which was spoken by the Ashkenazim too); 9% Judeo-Spanish; 3% Czech and Hungarian; about 100 people indicated that they spoke Romani, and 30 people declared Turkish to be their mother language (Sundhaussen 2014: 196). 89% of the Bosnian population were impoverished peasants. Djokić (2015: 305-306) argues that these socio-economic circumstances, led to an increasing trend in South Slav nationalism.

Within the Sephardic community in Sarajevo, there was social stratification depending on familial wealth. The poorest families, who formed the majority of the Sephardim were concentrated in the Bjelave district, while the richest remained in the city center (Freidenreich 1979: 17-18, 20). At this time, most Sephardim were merchants, and it is estimated that Jews contributed to about one-third of Sarajevo's commercial activity. Many Sephardim were also doctors, pharmacists and tin-smiths (Freidenreich 1979: 19; Вучина Симовић 2016: 96). Moreover, Sephardic men received strictly religious education in Ladino and in Hebrew, while very few Jews sent their children to public schools (Вучина Симовић 2016: 80).

In 1910, however, the Sephardic religious school closed and the school-building turned into a public school, which "(…) ended the tradition of Jewish separate schools in Sarajevo and the use of Ladino as a language of instruction in the school" (Freidenreich 1979: 21-22). The reason for the closure was that the Sephardim themselves wanted to modernize their education and thought they could not provide modernized education in the Sephardic religious school (I. S. Vučina, Personal Communication, 27.6.2018). Not surprisingly, twenty-one years after the Jewish school had been closed, in the Yugoslav census, approximately 60% of the Sephardim regarded Ladino as their mother tongue and 40% reported Serbo-Croatian as their native language (Freidenreich 1979: 21-22).

4.3 Sephardic Belgrade

In this section, I explore the Sephardic Belgrade. I begin by providing information about the Sephardim's living-conditions during the Ottoman period; for instance, what languages they spoke and their professions. I thereafter elaborate upon the falling apart of the Jewish school system in the second half of the 19th century and the emergence of a Serbian nation-state in this context. I moreover address developments in Belgrade's Jewish life today. I discussed the Sephardim's position in interwar Yugoslavia as well as the impact of the Zionist movement in Yugoslav lands in chapter two.

Simović Vučina (2015: 5) describes the Ottoman period for the Sephardim in Belgrade from 1521 to 1867: they were often merchants, craftsmen, antiquaries and greengrocers (Вучина Симовић 2016: 96). They adjusted their cultural behaviors in terms of food and clothing to the Oriental milieu. Nevertheless, it was the Jewish Community that was responsible for the education of the Sephardim as well as for representing the Sephardim before the Ottoman authorities and for organizing the religious and social Sephardic life. Judeo-Spanish was the language of instruction in the Jewish school so it was not studied as a separate school-subject in and of itself. Aramaic, Hebrew and Ladino were considered to be the more prestigious languages of religion and culture (Simović Vučina 2015: 5). Educated men of the rabbinical elite had knowledge of these languages (I. S. Vučina, Personal Communication, 17.7.2018). The most important foreign language among the male multilingual Sephardim was Ottoman Turkish, the primary language of the Empire (Simović Vučina 2015: 7). The male Sephardim moreover had knowledge of Greek, Italian and Serbian in order to do business (I. S. Vučina, Personal Communication, 17.7.2018).

Vučina Simović (2013: 178) argues that one decisive factor assured that Judeo-Spanish was maintained in Belgrade: the administrative system of *millets* that divided groups into religious communities. Within this system, the Sephardim existed in their own cultural sphere – on the Danube slope – even if contacts with other cultures were of course vital (cf. Вучина Симовић 2016: 85). Moreover, Simović (2013: 180) argues that Sephardic women ensured that the Sephardic language and culture were maintained in daily life. They were monolingual and housewives in the traditional Sephardic Ottoman society, and thus transmitted a basic Ladinophone culture to their children (cf. Вучина Симовић 2016: 93, 95, 97-99, 173). The Sephardi women did however exchange cooking recipes and medical knowledge with other

local women and therefore they learned Serbian to a certain degree (E. Papo, Personal Communication, 17.7.2018). Sephardic girls stayed at home and usually married at the ages of 16 to 18 years old, which accentuated their role as domestic transmitters of Sephardi linguistic, religious, and folk culture (Freidenreich 1979: 21).

In 1804-1839 the Belgrade pashalik transformed into a nascent Serbian nation-state, during/following two anti-Ottoman uprisings.[106] During the Serbian anti-Ottoman rebellion Jews were persecuted, because they were seen as loyal to the Ottomans. Merchants among the Serbian rebels had an added incentive to persecute the Jews, their main rivals in matters of trade. Thus, for instance, in February 1807, over 1,000 Jewish inhabitants of Belgrade were expelled from the city, into the neighboring Austrian town of Semlin (today's Zemun), while those who remained were beaten up, arrested and even murdered (Hrabak 2009: 225-226).

In autonomous Serbia of Prince Miloš, the position of Belgrade's Jews improved. The Serbian prince encouraged immigration of Jews into Serbia because he hoped they would reduce the influence of dominant Greek traders and merchants. Therefore, as a result of Miloš' relatively tolerant policies towards Jews, Jews fleeing revolutionary Greece and Wallachia often moved to Serbia (Hrabak 2009: 265).

In the 1860s the Jewish school system started to fall behind the public education system. As a result, the Sephardim asked the Serbian state authorities if their school could be part of the public school system, with the Serbian majority-language as language of instruction (Simović Vučina 2015: 11). This could be taken as an indication that Jews desired to be more integrated into the majority Serbian society and that they wished to be more modernized (cf. Vučina Simović 2013: 183). It was however only ten years after the Congress of Berlin (1878), that, due to the Great Powers' demands, the rights of Serbs and non-Serbs, including Jews, in Serbia were made equal. Previously Jews had not been allowed to settle in areas where there was no

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[106] For further reading see: Pavlowitch 2002: 26-40.

Jewish presence, and to open shops and start a business in those parts of the country (Hrabak 2009: 419).

The modernist ideas – that were flourishing in Europe in general – radically changed the perception of the language use in Belgrade. Especially German and French (even though there was no Alliance school in the city), but also Italian and English were regarded by Jews, non-Jews and the state-authorities as prestigious languages. Especially German was the *lingua franca* for doing business whereas local languages (other than Serbian), and including Judeo-Spanish, were little by little seen as less valuable (I. S. Vučina, Personal Communication, 17.7.2018). Nevertheless, elderly Sephardim in Belgrade managed to preserve Judeo-Spanish until the Second World War and a few survivors of the Holocaust continued to speak Judeo-Spanish among themselves (Simović Vučina 2015: 10; Вучина Симовић 2016: 228).[107] The 1895 Serbian population census showed that as many as 80% of the Sephardic population (and 77% of these lived in Belgrade) declared Ladino to be their mother language (Freidenreich 1979: 38; Ristović 2016: 40).[108] Freidenreich (1979: 39) claims, however, that the most acculturated Belgrade Sephardim reported much earlier that Serbian was their mother tongue than the Sephardim in Sarajevo. "The evidence would seem to indicate less cultural differentiation and greater overall acculturation among Belgrade Jewry than among Sarajevo Jewry (Freidenreich 1979: 39)." I assert that the Serbianization among the Sephardim was popular because of the emergence of the Serbian nation-state in the early 19th century. Bosnia-Herzegovina, on the contrary, remained Ottoman until 1878. The Sephardim in Belgrade would

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[107] In Vojvodina, the Jewish communities were not linguistically acculturated (Kerenji 2008: 44-45). As late as 1931, 43% of the Vojvodinian Jews considered Hungarian to be there native language, and 29% considered German as their mother tongue. They also spoke Yiddish and Serbo-Croatian (Kerenji 2008: 45).

[108] Filipović (2015: 5) argues that the Balkan nation-states and the formation of standard languages there that were corresponding to national identifications, resulted in a language shift for the Sephardim in Belgrade: from traditionalism (since Judeo-Spanish was once their *lingua franca*) to the standard majority language or, even more radically, to modern Hebrew or Spanish. Filipović (2015: 6) concludes that there is no future for Judeo-Spanish in Belgrade today since there are no speakers. Nevertheless, she points towards an increased academic interest in the dying Judeo-Spanish. An example of this is the conference on Sephardic and other minority issues funded by the European Association for Jewish Studies that was held at the Belgrade Jewish Community in July 6-7, 2016.

also 'Slavicize' their names to a higher degree than Sarajevo Sephardim—adding -ić to their surnames—for example, changing 'Levi' to 'Lević' (Freidenreich 1979: 39; Birri-Tomovska 2012: 183). Unlike in Sarajevo, which had an ethnically homogeneous Jewish population, both Sephardim and Ashkenazim lived in Belgrade, even if the Sephardim were larger in number (Kerenji 2008: 36).

In comparison, the Jewish community in Belgrade was wealthier than its Sarajevan counterpart. As I already mentioned, after 1878, Bosnia's population was extremely poor (Sundhaussen 2014: 170). Just as in Sarajevo, the Jewish authorities had for a long time carried out the education of Jewish children in Belgrade (Freidenreich 1979: 36).

During the German occupation of Serbia, Jews were forced to wear yellow armbands and live in specific areas of the city (Ristović 2010: 266; Levy 2013: 17).

> Immediately following the Yugoslav defeat, the German occupation regime had imposed severe restrictions upon the Serbian Jews, including registration, exclusion from many occupations and social activities, expropriation of property, marking, and forced labor (Browning 1985: 40).

Forced labor and concentration camps were established within Serbian territory, where helping Jews was designated as a criminal act (Browning 1985: 47-48; Ristović 2010: 271; Levy 2013: 17). Eventually, to preempt and quell resistance, the German military – the *Wehrmacht* – adopted a policy of executing one hundred male civilians for every dead German, and fifty for every injured soldier (Byford 2011: 303; Levy 2013: 17). Moreover, in 1941-1942, the Nazis introduced carbon monoxide gas vans and used them as mobile gas chambers (Browning 1985: 58).

> (…) mostly women and children, were placed in a concentration camp at Semlin [Zemun] just across the Sava River from Belgrade, and regardless of age or sex, were murdered in a gas van (…). The last Jews of the Semlin camp had been gassed by early May 1942, before the Polish death camps of Treblinka and Sobibor were even in operation (Browning 1985: 68).

The Nazi occupation destroyed the Jewish community in Serbia. Indeed, Serbia was the first European state to (wrongly so, since there were Serbian Jews who managed to survive[109]) be declared *Judenrein* (also known as *Judenfrei*) in early 1942 (Lebel 2002: 65; Byford 2011: 304, 308). Out of 16,000 local Jews only 2,000 survived the Shoah in Serbia (Levy 2013: 16, cf. Byford 2011: 304).

Since 2006, Serbian law, requires that the Serbian government give the Belgrade Jewish community €950,000 every year for a period of 25 years (with the first installment in 2017) as compensation for the community's property-losses during the Second World War (Dragojlo, 2016). In this way, the Serbian government makes it easier for the Jewish Community to rehabilitate and rebuild a post-World War Two community-life.

The Jewish Community today has 2,500 members and most of them are older than 50 years. There is a Jewish kindergarten in the Community's facilities but no Jewish school. Around 75% of the members are Sephardim and very few speak Ladino. Moreover, Belgrade's Jews live all over the city and there is no Jewish area of living. Kosher food is available at the restaurant belonging to the Jewish Community. However, if the Community members and their guests want kosher food they have to order it in advance (D. Salom, Personal Communication, 15.5.2018).

In Belgrade today, Ultra-Orthodox Jews, who are sometimes called *Haredim,* from Israel have settled. Among them is rabbi Yehoshua Kaminetzky, who opened a Hasidic Chabad synagogue in 2008 and built a *mikve* (a ritual Jewish bath). There are, moreover, many Israeli entrepreneurs, secular, traditional, or Orthodox, who have come to the city to do business. For

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[109] Jaša Almuli has written about the Jasenovac concentration camp – the Yugoslav Auschwitz – and has collected numerous testimonies from Holocaust-survivors (Almuli 2009, 2002).

example, Mr. Goldman moved to Belgrade from Tel Aviv in 2006 and opened *Tel Aviv Hummus House* in the trendy Savamala neighborhood.

The following section on the Sephardic Salonica is quite similar to the sections earlier in this chapter. However, because I explore the question of Zionism among Yugoslav (including Bosnian and Serbian) Jews in more detail under the sub-chapter on an identity-creating factor 'Yugoslavia,' I write about Zionism in the case of Salonica as well. I furthermore describe the circumstances for Salonican Jews during World War II and make reference to Jewish community-life there today.

4.4 Sephardic Salonica

Mark Mazower's (2006: 46) work on the development of Sephardim in Salonica includes his remark that these Jews had become so integrated by the middle of the 16th century "(…) that it seemed impossible to imagine they had not always been there" (Mazower 2006: 46). Already by 1520, more than half of the city's population of more than 15,000 people was Jewish and their primary secular *and* sacred language was Ladino (Mazower 2006: 49, 51; Bossong 2008: 94; Naar 2016: 2).

The Salonican textile industry employed thousands of Sephardim (Rodrigue 1992: 168, cf. Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 39-40). Indeed, the city was one of the main producers and exporters of cloth in the eastern Mediterranean (Mazower 2006: 52).

> Wealthy Jewish merchants bought up the local supply of wool, imported dyes, and set up poorer Jews with equipment and wages for weaving, brushing, dyeing and making up the finished material (Mazower 2006: 52).

The local Muslims were often employed as imams, tax collectors or other servants of the state. Meanwhile, the Jews were running the city's economy (Mazower 2006: 53). They invigorated Salonica's economy and the town started to flourish (Mazower 2006: 63; Ray 2013: 145; Králová 2016a: 61). As Ray (2013: 143) points out: "In Salonica where the majority of the city's population could claim Iberian roots, the popular saying "Ya basta mi nombre ke es Abravanel!" (It's enough that my name is Abravanel!)" (Ray 2013: 143).

Judicial systems rooted in two different religious traditions—the Sephardi-Jewish and the Ottoman-Muslim—were in use during this time, indicating a certain degree of cultural tolerance and exchange. The Sephardim had their own rabbinical courts, but these were not given any formal official recognition and thus Jews attended Muslim courts (Mazower 2006: 60; Bossong 2008: 93). Nevertheless, Muslims supported and cooperated with the Jewish courts even if the latter had no official status. Therefore, rabbis had an enormous power as religious lawyers within their own community and beyond (Mazower 2006: 61).

Salonica's Jews successively adapted to the Muslim legislation (Shari'a) and custom. As Mazower (2006: 61) points out, "(…) the Jews of Sefarad were becoming Ottoman." For instance, Jewish men started growing their beards longer in imitation of Muslim men, and were making sure women were covering themselves more and more (Mazower 2006: 61). However, until 1920 the Ottoman and Greek authorities allowed Jews to observe Saturday instead of Sunday as their day of rest and to keep accounts in Judeo-Spanish (Mazower 2006: 376, 380; Bossong 2008: 93; Králová 2016a: 63). By contrast, after the end of the Ottoman rule in 1830, the Greek policy was to turn their Jewish co-nationals into Greek-speaking people in order to make them full-fledged, assimilated citizens (Mazower 2006: 376-377).

> Local communists stood up for the continued use of Judeo-Spanish, the vernacular of the workers. But a middle-class minority stressed the need for fluency in Greek in order to "give Greece good Greek citizens who will, at the same time, be no less good Jews." In the view of Alliance Israélite Universelle, religion was a matter of private conscience, [and] Judeo-Spanish a backward dialect holding up intellectual progress, and cultural assimilation a necessity (Mazower 2006: 377).

In other words, there was no one among the modernist Jews or among the Greeks who supported the Sephardim's retention of their Sephardi culture for its own sake. Communists supported Ladino as a token of working class identity, not of Jewish identity, while the bourgeois rejected Ladino as 'backward.'

Greece introduced Greek as the compulsory first language in all schools 1922 (Lewkowicz 2006: 44, 47; Molokotos-Liederman 2003: 292). Because Salonica was incorporated into the Greek nation-state only in 1912 there was, however, little assimilation among Salonican Jews at that time (cf. Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 138; Mazower 2006: 375). Turkish had been the *lingua franca* in Salonica until 1912. "Before 1912, few Jews in Salonica had bothered to learn Greek" (Mazower 2006: 376). Moreover, Zionism was popular in Salonica for the same reason (that the city had become part of the nation-state so late). The function of Salonican Zionism after the expansion of the Greek nation-state during the 1912/1913 Balkan Wars, then, was to resist the dominance of the Christian-Greek nation (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 138). Correspondingly, the Zionists demanded a higher status for Hebrew than for Ladino and Greek within the Jewish community:

> They [Greek Zionists] accused the Alliance of betraying Judaism and demanded a prominent place in the school curriculum for Hebrew. (…) But while many sympathized with the Zionists' desire for an assertion of Jewish ethnic identity, they felt there was little point wasting "hour after hour learning a language such as Hebrew, which is of no use to anyone here" (Mazower 2006: 377-378).

In 1914, at the outset of the Great War, the Greek press was explicitly anti-Semitic, accusing Greek Jews of being disloyal and unpatriotic (Mazower 2006: 382-384). Few ethnic Greeks supported the idea that Jews could actually be fellow Greeks (Mazower 2006: 387). Religion remained, as in the Ottoman times, the major symbol for ethnic divisions. Accordingly, for Jews as well as for most Greeks, the term 'Greek' was associated with being an adherent of the

Greek Orthodox Church (or presumably at least being of Greek Christian origin) (Mazower 2006: 390; Bossong 2008: 94).

In the 1920s, Zionism became even more popular in Salonica (Mazower 2006: 377). Although many community members began to lose their confidence in the tenets of the movement over time, the city's Chief Rabbi, Jacob Meir, institutionalized Zionism in Salonica by initiating clubs, schools and newspapers that were supportive of the movement (Mazower 2006: 379).

Due to the tumult of the population exchanges between Greece and Turkey in 1923 and after, Salonican Jews started emigrate in small numbers to France, Italy and to the United States (Mazower 2006: 375, 379; Bossong 2008: 94; Naar 2016: 3). Before the Second World War, 20,000-25,000 Jews had emigrated from Salonica (Mazower 2006: 379). Yet there were many Jewish supporters of Greek patriotism. In 1928, they even founded the Association of Jewish Assimilationists to promote full Hellenization among the Jews (Mazower 2006: 380).

German forces occupied Salonica in 1941, and only some Greeks managed to escape to the Italian-occupied portions of the country, while others took refuge in the mountains along with other resistance fighters (Králová 2016: 264-265). For the first time in Salonica's Jewish history a ghetto was established and all the Jews had to wear yellow stars (Bossong 2008: 111).

Jews were first deported en masse from Salonica to Auschwitz on 15 March 1943 (Carpi 2002: 264; Bossong 2008: 110; Naar 2016: 11; Saltiel 2017: 203). Most of the 1,700 Jews in

this first transport were gassed to death upon arriving at Auschwitz, whereas the others were subjected to forced labor or were used for medical experiments (Weindling 2015: 51-62, Králová 2016: 266). In total, approximately 45,000 Jews were deported from Salonica to Auschwitz. Around 85% of them were killed immediately after their arrival (Carpi 2002: 265, Králová 2016: 266, Saltiel 2017: 203). Salonica stands out as a European city with the highest Jewish mortality rate – 96% were murdered during the Second World War (principally in Auschwitz). Within a few weeks, following the German occupation, Salonica became "a Jewish desert" (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 143).

A small number of Jews (441 persons who had obtained Spanish citizenship) were sent to Bergen-Belsen rather than to Auschwitz (Bossong 2008: 111). Only 350 of these Sephardim survived the Holocaust, after which they managed to flee to Palestine (Bossong 2008: 112). After the war, there were less than 2,000 Jewish survivors who returned to Salonica from the death camps (Králová 2016: 266). Many of these survivors had lost their property during the war and were trying to regain it, but there were delays and complications (Králová 2016: 263). A 1945 law introduced a mechanism for the return of seized property; however, in order to get one's property back, it was necessary to pay a proportional transfer fee to the state, and for most claimants, this fee was impossible to pay (Králová 2016: 270). Moreover, the Greek majority were offended by the fact that the Jews wanted to file claims for the return of their property. Many Greeks, including those who now live in houses formerly owned by Jews, thus labeled Jews as 'profiteers' (Králová 2016: 270). Furthermore, according to a 1927 decree, Greek citizens who fled Greek soil without the intention of returning lost their Greek citizenship. This regulation made it impossible for Jews who lost their Greek citizenship to make a claim on their property. The cumulative effects of property loss and lack of compensation have, in short, made it difficult for Salonica's Jews not only to rebuild their lives, but also to reconstruct their Jewish community and its culture (Králová 2016: 278-279). This has had a drastic impact today in

Salonica, the second largest city on Greece. Jews represent 0.001% of the total population, and the Jewish primary school has approximately 55 pupils (Lewkowicz 2006: 59, 66, cf. Molho 2014: 127).

In addition to Salonica's Jewish school there is a Jewish kindergarten and possibilities to buy kosher meat. The Jews live all over the city and there is no special area where they reside (L. Saltiel, Personal Communication, 15.5.2018). Furthermore, there is a Consulate of Spain in Salonica; the Spanish honorary consul is always an appointed Sephardic person (currently it is Mr. Sam Nahmias). In one of our conversations (15.5.2018), Leon Saltiel, who was raised in Salonica but now lives in Geneva, told me:

> My mother's family is Ashkenazi. They came to Greece in the 19th century and learnt to follow Sephardic customs and to speak Ladino. I would say that a handful of the Jews in Salonica today are Ashkenazim (L. Saltiel, Personal Communication, 15.5.2018).

Nonetheless, while Jewish identity on the whole constitutes the core identity for members of the older generation, their grandchildren consider their core identity to be Greek (Lewkowicz 2006: 238).

The Orthodox Christians decidedly occupy a more comfortable position within Greek society than members of other religious and ethnic groups. Christian Orthodoxy is the prevailing, official religion in the country according to Article 3 of the 1975 Constitution, and there is a symbiotic relationship between church and state (cf. Lewkowicz 2006: 55). For example, religion is considered an integral part of basic education. Article 16: 2 of the same Constitution refers to the development of national and religious consciousness of Greek citizens as one of the basic aims of education. Primary and secondary school teachers usually have degrees in Christian Orthodox theology and are obliged to give courses in religion in line with the tradition of the Eastern Orthodox Church (Papastathis 2010: 356-357; Kerkyra, 2015).

According to Papastathis (2010: 357) however, non-Christian Orthodox pupils are not obliged to attend these courses and there is an ongoing debate in the Greek media about the

inclusion of religious lessons in schools (Kerkyra, 2015). Furthermore, while religion has been noted on Greek identity cards since 1945, it became optional in 1986 (Lewkowicz 2006: 56; Molokotos-Liederman 2003: 296).

Having focused on Sephardic Salonica from the Ottoman times until today, I now move on to my tentative attempts at quantifying Sephardic identity in Belgrade, Salonica and Sarajevo. As I mentioned before, the idea is to pinpoint differences and similarities between the communities.

4.5 Tentative Attempts at Quantifying Sephardic Identity

The survey that I circulated to Jewish community-members in Belgrade, Salonica and Sarajevo was aimed at linking the discussion on Jewish identity and language in Sarajevo with two further groups of Sephardim. I surveyed 10 persons in each city, with participants belonging to different generations (18-80 years old). The diagram below shows the 'average value' among the Sephardim in response to the following assertions:

A='One can be Sephardic without the Sephardic language'

B='Judeo-Spanish is a Spanish dialect'

C='Being Sephardic means practicing Sephardism'

D='I know families where siblings have different nationalities'

E='No one will speak Judeo-Spanish here in a couple of years'

As for the third assertion (C), I have in mind specifically Sephardic customs (see my definition of Sephardism in chapter 2, section 2.1). However, I cannot be sure that my respondents do not refer to Jewish practice generally.
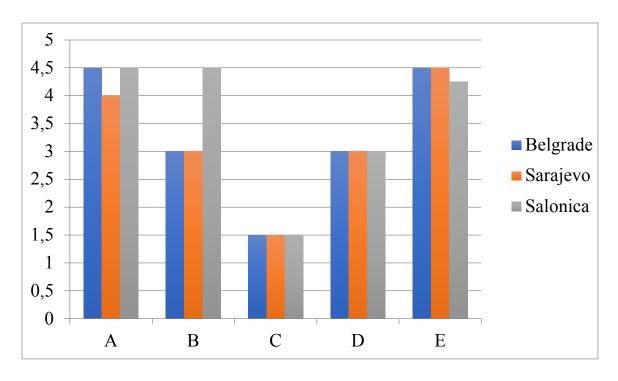
Table 1. Responses from Jewish Community members in Belgrade, Sarajevo and Salonica

The Scale:

1=Strongly disagree

2=Disagree

3=Neutral

4=Agree

5=Strongly agree

From the answers to the survey, I draw the following conclusions:

Most Sephardim from different generations in Belgrade, Sarajevo and Salonica agree upon the fact that 'one can be Sephardic without speaking the Sephardic language.' The majority of the respondents answered with 4 or 5. Nevertheless, two respondents from the elderly generation in Sarajevo answered with 2, and thus do not appear to be convinced that one can be Sephardic without the ability to speak Judeo-Spanish. With regards to the question as to 'whether Judeo-Spanish is a Spanish dialect' the respondents in Salonica indicated it certainly

is (responding with 4 or 5) whereas elderly Sephardim from Belgrade and Sarajevo are doubtful (responding with a 2).

Regarding the question as to whether 'one can be a Sephardic person without practicing Sephardic Judaism,' most of the Sephardim disagree (answering with a 1 or 2). On the fourth assumption, that 'one knows many families in which the siblings have different nationalities from each other,' the responses from the younger as well as elderly people in all three cities were mixed. This demonstrates a great amount of heterogeneity regarding the national identification between as well as within the three communities. Finally, regarding the last assumption about 'whether someone will speak Judeo-Spanish in one's hometown in a couple of years,' all except for one respondent thought that this would be a likely case scenario. The one Salonica-based respondent believing that Judeo-Spanish will be vital in a couple of years (and who answered with a 2) is a 30-year-old male.

Overall, I suggest, that the attitude that one can be Sephardic without the ability to speak the Sephardic language is prevalent. In other words, loyalty towards the Sephardic language does not appear to exist among the Sephardim in Belgrade, Sarajevo and Salonica. Later on in this section I will discuss what I think Sephardi identity consists of for the informants, if according to these subjects, one does not have to do anything 'Sephardic' to be 'Sephardic.'

On the assertion that 'Judeo-Spanish is a Spanish dialect,' there were various different responses, though the Sephardim in Salonica agree that it is indeed a dialect of Spanish; this perhaps suggests that the reference-group in Salonica are more closely tied to Spain than their counterparts in the other two cities. These different conceptions of Judeo-Spanish are, to my mind, due to the fact that there are no (and never were) any language academies for the Sephardic language, and that there is no single geographic area where the Sephardic language was and is spoken. In other words, the subjects do not have a Sephardi linguistic standard upon which to rely for some sort of consensus on what the language is and what its importance may

be to the substance and continuation of a 'Sephardi' identity.

Tellingly, the Sephardim in the three cities believe, independently from each other, that being Sephardic does not necessarily mean that one practices the Sephardic tradition. What exactly my subjects have in mind when they refer to a Sephardic tradition is, as I mentioned earlier, not obvious from their responses to the tentative quantification. The broader Jewish tradition overlaps to some extent with the specifically Sephardic tradition. For instance, on one hand, the holidays are the same, and on the other, the Sephardim's liturgical melodies and food are distinct. Since the Sephardim in the Balkans are so few today, I think they regard it as not important whether someone follows the Sephardic tradition, as well as a broader Jewish tradition, or not. In other words, after the Holocaust, these remaining Jewish communities in Belgrade, Salonica and Sarajevo pay little attention to their distinct Sephardic culture versus a general Jewish culture. As a consequence, it remains unclear what Sephardism actually means to them, if the language is no longer central and the practice of the Sephardic tradition is not prioritized. It seems to me that the subjects' concept of Sephardism consists of their knowledge that they descend from Spanish exiles and this is what defines Sephardism and what remains crucial for the sample in the survey.

Summing up, the differences between the Sephardic community-members' answers to my survey were not significant. Only on the assertion that "[the Sephardic language] is a Spanish dialect," the Salonican respondents were more convinced than others that it is indeed a dialect of Spanish. Thus, I conclude that these respondents' identities are probably more closely tied to Spain than those of the other respondents. This, in turn, can be traced back to the historical fact that Salonica was subsumed into the Greek nation-state late (in 1912). There was therefore little assimilation amongst Salonican Jews and the Iberian connection was, and probably still remains, more central among Sephardim of Salonican origin than for Sephardim in Belgrade (who became part of the Serbian nation-state in the early 19th century).

Overall, these three communities today seem relatively similar, however. For one thing, they are all very small because of the tragic mass-murder of Jews that took place during the Shoah. All three communities have an incomplete Jewish communal infra-structure. In Sarajevo this lack is even more pronounced because in Salonica there is at least a Jewish school and kindergarten while in Belgrade there is a Jewish kindergarten. In both Belgrade and Salonica it is possible to keep kosher, unlike in Sarajevo. The issue of property restitution is problematic in Salonica and Sarajevo–where the possibilities of reclaiming property or receiving compensation for it are small. In Belgrade, by contrast, there is a property law since 2006. Moreover, as I showed previously, since 2017 the Serbian government gives the Belgrade Jewish community €950,000 every year for a period of 25 years as compensation for the community's property losses during the Second World War. This has led to the fact that the Belgrade Jewish Community has had a better chance to rebuild its institutions and other resources. Moreover, Israelis invest in Belgrade, and some religious Israelis are even moving there, as already mentioned.

In the following section, I expand my comparison further by including the Bulgarian capital as well. I begin with the times in Ottoman Sofia and continue to describe the situation for Bulgarian Sofia's Sephardim in the 20th century. This century did, on the one hand bring about a flourishing Jewish community-life and on the other hand, at the time of its second half, most of the city's Jews had left to Israel.

4.6 Sephardic Sofia

During the Ottoman period (1396-1878) (Bulgaria became autonomous in 1878, but independent only in 1908), Jews in Sofia were collectively autonomous and oftentimes served as mediators between the other religious groups (Bar-Zohar 1998: 6). "The Jews governed themselves according to Halakha, and were largely independent of the surrounding gentile communities" (Haskell 1994: 80). The *Millet* allowed the Sephardim to exercise their own laws, religion, language and education.

Adding to the local Jews' sense of cultural separateness was the fact that they had to wear special clothes and they were not allowed to live close to the Sultan's palace (Bar-Zohar 1998: 6). Thus, while culturally autonomous to a significant extent, the Sephardim nonetheless adjusted their cultural behaviors in terms clothing to the Oriental milieu. Most of them made their livings as merchants and artisans. "Turkish, Greek and Ladino were the languages of [Jews'] trade, and Hebrew the language of scholarship and religion" (Haskell 1994: 80). At this time, Yiddish-speaking Ashkenazim made up only about 5% of the Jewish population in Sofia (Bar-Zohar 1998: 6).

From the beginning of the 20th century, the Sephardim in Bulgaria suffered from high levels of unemployment and poverty (Bar-Zohar 1998: 6, Arnold 2016: 62). This situation encouraged

the Sephardim to move to Sofia and, as a result, approximately 45% of Bulgarian Jews lived there by 1932 (Gelber 1946: 106; Bar-Zohar 1998: 8). Despite a growth of anti-Semitism during this period, Jews were able to create a vibrant community that can be seen as an exceptional case in relation to other post-Ottoman Jewish communities (Bar-Zohar 1998: 7; Arnold 2016: 63). In the modern period, Jewish schools were established with support from the Alliance Israélite Universelle. In fact, in 1898, there were 39 Jewish schools in Bulgaria, and by 1931, there were 16 Jewish banks, and the Sephardi Community's Great Synagogue was built in Sofia's center. Moreover, there were about 50 Jewish newspapers, Jewish theaters, libraries and other cultural institutions (Arnold 2016: 63-64). In 1936, there were 50,000 Jews in Bulgaria (i.e., 1% of the total population) (Bar-Zohar 1998: 8). In 1926, 89% of Bulgarian Jews indicated that Judeo-Spanish was their mother tongue. In 1934, 58% did as well (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 94).

A distinct difference between Sofia and the other cities was its Jews' consistent and dominant adherence to the Zionist movement. As Tamir (1979: VIII) writes:

> Nowhere in the world has another Jewish community so totally identified with the Zionist credo since the turn of the century. Nowhere else in the Diaspora have Jewish institutions been governed by a Zionist majority rather than by the religious establishment, as they were in Bulgaria from the early 1920s until the collapse of Jewish freedom in the 1940s (Tamir 1979: VIII).

The Zionist movement in Bulgaria began even before the World Zionist Organization was officially established by Herzl and Nordau (Bechar 1989: 23). The idea of Bulgarian Zionists was less to engage in Herzlian diplomacy than to buy land in Palestine and to build homes there. Bulgarian Jews arrived in Palestine *before* the first Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897 (Bechar 1989: 23).[110] It was especially the influence of the Alliance and local anti-Semitism that made Zionism so popular (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 93).

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[110] For further reading see: Haskell (1994) and Trankova & Georgieff (2011).

During the Second World War, the 48,000 Bulgarian Jews did not suffer from an invasion by the German army. Bulgaria joined the Axis powers and was thus an ally of Nazi Germany but still decided not to deport its Jews (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 178-179). Civilians, the church, the royal court and even pro-fascist politicians all rescued Bulgarian Jews (Bar-Zohar 1998: XI; Arnold 2016: 72). In other words: the Nazis never deported Bulgarian Jews to the death-camps but rather, the Jews were saved (or managed to survive).

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In 1948, more than 90% (45,000) of Bulgaria's Jews emigrated to Israel (Bar-Zohar 1998: VII; Arnold 2016: 88). The historian Marcus Wien identifies various factors that may explain this enormous emigration (M. Wien, Personal Communication, 5.9.2018). First, he mentions that the Bulgarian Jews did not wish to live under the Bulgarian communist regime. Second, that they were marginalized in the post-Ottoman Bulgarian nation-state; for example not represented in public life. Third, that they simply did not feel wanted in Bulgaria and were prompted to leave the country for that reason. Before 1878, they had belonged to the overall Sephardic communities in the Ottoman Empire and afterwards they had to integrate, or not, in the new Bulgarian nation-state. Given the fact that they were segregated linguistically and geographically – living among themselves and oftentimes speaking Judeo-Spanish – it was no wonder, according to Wien, that Zionism offered a more attractive option to them than Bulgaria did; also bearing in mind Bulgaria's anti-Semitic climate from the beginning of the 20th century, as I mentioned earlier.

In the latest 2011 population census, there were only 1,162 Jews left in Bulgaria, i.e., 0,016% of the total population. According to the same census, 757 Jews were living in Sofia. In 2012, however, the Jewish Community reported that they had about 3,800 members. Thus, there were many Jews who did not declare themselves as Jews on the population census (Arnold 2016: 94, 97).

In 1992, Bulgarian Jews began to receive compensation for lost property during the Communist era. In the same year, the Jewish Community was given back some property and a Jewish school was founded (Arnold 2016: 96). In Sofia of today, there is moreover a Jewish kindergarten and kosher meat available. Jews live all over the city and there is no Jewish neighborhood. The Jewish Community is predominantly Sephardic and about 10% of its members are Ashkenazim (Arnold 2016: 13-14).

The Slavic studies scholar Nasrin Arnold (2016: 119) argues that since Bulgarian Jews survived the Holocaust it is the only country in the Balkans where there are still active Judeo-Spanish speakers (currently, about 200 persons). All the same, Studemund-Halévy (2013: 129) refers to the UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages (2003), from which he draws the conclusion that Judeo-Spanish in Bulgaria, while not yet extinct, will be extinct in the next decade. The reason that Judeo-Spanish in Sofia is still spoken at all to this day is that despite the growth of anti-Semitism during the Second World War, a period of extreme distress for Bulgarian Jews, Sephardim in Sofia were nonetheless able to create a vibrant community, as I discussed (Bar-Zohar 1998: 7; Arnold 2016: 63). Arnold (2016: 119) suggests that the situation with the Sephardic language in Bosnia might be similar to the one in Bulgaria. However, this is not the case in light of my empirical findings, since the older generation in Sarajevo (55+) are not active speakers. Moreover, Arnold (2016: 124) states that Bulgarian is, without a doubt, the mother language of Bulgarian Jews. I argue, however, that Bulgarian is not the *only* mother language of these Jews, since Judeo-Spanish is a dying but not dead language,

and that in the process of generational change, linguistic transformations occur. There is no attention to these reflections in Arnold's thesis (2016).

4.7 Differences and Similarities Between the Four Communities

The aim of this section is to compare the situation in Sarajevo with other Balkan Sephardic hubs: Belgrade, Salonica and Sofia. As we have seen, during the period of Ottoman rule the Sephardim in these Balkan communities exhibited a similar pattern of adjusting to the Ottoman cultural milieu on one hand, and on the other, of preserving their ethnic-religious identity as a result of the Jews' official status as a separate *Millet*.

Professionally, the differences between the Jews of the four cities are worth noting. Many of the Jews in Salonica formed part of the local working classes—they were heavily engaged, for example, in the textile-industry; by contrast, Sarajevo's Jews were more frequently 'white collar' professionals, such as pharmacists and doctors, whereas the Jews in Belgrade and Sofia mainly made their living as merchants.

According to I. S. Vučina (Personal Communication, 15.7.2016), during the Ottoman times, there was a high degree of geographic mobility among the Sephardim in the Balkans, intensified by inter-city connections through marriage and business. Because the chief Sephardi rabbinical authorities and institutions were situated in Salonica, it was without a doubt the most important Sephardic center in the Balkans (I. S. Vučina, Personal Communication, 15.7.2016; Fleming 2008: 97).

There are smaller differences and similarities in the Sephardi experience between the four communities. Clearly, Judeo-Spanish was preserved and is still preserved in Sofia, even though there are only around 200 active speakers there. In Sarajevo, by stark contrast, there are not

more than four Judeo-Spanish-speakers today. This difference is due to the fact that the majority of Bulgarian Jews managed to survive the Shoah, while in Sarajevo—and Salonica—there were very few (1,400-2,000) survivors. Moreover, the local Jews' switch to the official language occurred at a different pace and level of intensity in each of the four cities. In Belgrade, for instance, many Jews reported earlier than in Sarajevo that Serbian was their mother-tongue. In Salonica, because of the relative lateness of the implementation of linguistic mandates from the Greek government, and because of a strong trend in Zionism within the Jewish community, it took Jews longer to switch to Greek.

In Belgrade and Sarajevo, Zionism was essential in uniting the Ashkenazi and Sephardi 'Yugoslav Jews.' Very few Jews however left to Palestine before the Second World War. In Salonica, Zionism was popular, so before the Second World War, 20,000-25,000 Jews had emigrated, mostly to Paris or other Western cities and in small numbers to Palestine. Zionism in Sofia was at its peak. Jews from here arrived in Palestine even before the Zionist Congress in Basel.

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At the time of the Second World War, 96% of Salonica's Jews were murdered and the city had the highest death-rate among the four cities. Some Sarajevo Jews succeeded in fleeing to the Italian zone and thereby survived. For this reason, Belgrade suffered even more Jewish lives than Sarajevo. In both of the two cities however, most of the Jewish population, around 80%,

were killed. Sofia is exceptional, because Jews were rescued and/or managed to survive the Holocaust.

Three years after the war, when Israel was founded in 1948, more than 90% of Bulgaria's Zionism-supporting Jews emigrated there. 60% of Yugoslav's Jewry did so as well; between 1948-1952, 4,517 Serbian Jews and 974 Bosnian Jews made *aliyah*. In 1948-1949, there were around 1,500 Greek Jews who emigrated to the newborn State of Israel (Benbassa & Rodrigue 2000: 189).

The remaining communities today are very small. There are around 2,500 community-members in Belgrade; 900 in Sarajevo; 1,200 in Salonica and 3,800 in Sofia. Kosher-food is available in Belgrade, Salonica and Sofia. In Salonica and Sofia there is a Jewish primary schools and a Jewish kindergarten. In Belgrade a Jewish kindergarten only. In Sarajevo there is no Jewish school or kindergarten. Sarajevo is moreover the only city among the four, where there is no existing law for lost property.

All communities are 'Sephardic' to a very high degree. In Belgrade, however, 75% of the community-members are Sephardim, whereas in Salonica, Sarajevo and Sofia the percentage is higher (90-98%). Furthermore, the Sephardim live across the city in all four places and are thus not segregated from non-Jews.

Having drawn parallels between the four hubs of Sephardic culture in the Balkans, I now move on to the next chapter. In this chapter, I begin by presenting six cases of linguistic and ethnic identity formation among other – than the Sarajevo Sephardim – European minority groups. I then use these six cases as examples when analyzing and summarizing my findings regarding Sarajevo Sephardim.

Thus, there are two different comparative chapters in this work – chapter four and five. In the following chapter (five) I make comparisons and draw parallels between the Sarajevo Sephardim and other Sephardim minority groups elsewhere in Europe. I believe that having only one comparative chapter, to for instance, only compare Sarajevo Sephardim with other minority groups in Europe, would not correspond to the Sephardim's complex history: they form part of a larger Balkan Sephardic area of study and are being one of many other minority-groups in Europe. Moreover, even if my comparative research (on the other Sephardic cities in South- and Southeastern Europe, and the other – non-Sephardi – minority groups in Europe) is a separate topic, it is very much related to the Sarajevo Sephardim, i.e. because of the comparisons and parallels with Sarajevo that I draw between these other different settings and contexts.

Regarding the structural order of my comparative approach, the previous chapter started off with an internal comparison between the Sarajevo Sephardim and other Sephardic hubs in the Balkans. What follows now is an external comparison between the Sarajevo Sephardim and non-Sephardi minority groups in Europe. The reader may wonder why I begin with the internal comparison (pinpointing the differences and similarities between the Sephardic communities), and then make a broader external comparison (including non-Sephardi minority groups as well). The structural ordering is this way because, in the last section of this chapter (section 5.2.8), as well as in the following chapter, I further analyze my case study against the non-Sephardi cases and develop hypotheses in this regard. I analyze how Sarajevo Sephardim have negotiated their

identities, how they reflect upon the reality in which they have lived, and the reality in which they live today.

CHAPTER FIVE

PARALLEL CASES OF LINGUISTIC AND ETHNIC

IDENTITY FORMATION IN EUROPEAN MINORITY GROUPS

5.1 Loyalty Towards the 'Mother Tongue,' Vitality and Revival

Scholars have investigated phenomena of linguistic and ethnic identity formation in European

minority groups in different settings. In this section, I will present a few illustrative cases drawn

from several recent studies in order to shed light on the related phenomena that I explore among

Sarajevo Jews of *loyalty towards the 'mother tongue'*[111], *linguistic vitality*[112], and *linguistic*

revival[113].

5.2 Cases 1-6

In the following sections I will describe the challenges of linguistic loyalty, vitality, and revival

that face the Sarajevo Sephardim by comparing and contrasting that community to the six

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[111] The generally accepted definition of the mother tongue – i.e. the language spoken in an individual's home – is obviously not always accurate (since the language spoken at home not always is the first one) and this is why first and second languages might be preferable (cf. Romaine 2005: 19).

[112] By 'loyalty' towards the 'mother tongue,' I have the liveliness of the mother language in mind, i.e. the level of spokenness and various generations' different competencies.

    The first time I heard Michael Studemund-Halévy speak about Sephardi and Ashkenazi culture (Wrocław, 09.05.2016) he quoted sentences from Isaac Bashevis Singer's speech at the Nobel Banquet, December 10, 1978:

    Yiddish may be a dying language but it is the only language I know well. Yiddish is my mother language and a mother is never really dead.

In this thesis, I approach the concept of the vitality of a mother language with a similar attitude, i.e. that the dying of a mother language is a long, transformative and cyclical process and not the same as a language that no longer exists.

[113] A revitalization of a language is typically a process that aims to rescue a dying language as in the case of Welsh (cf. Jones 1998).

following cases: (1) Arvanítika-speakers in Greece; (2) Alsatian-speakers in France; (3) Gaelic-speakers in Scotland; (4) Caribbean communities and their descendants in the United Kingdom; (5) the Kasabali in Macedonia; and (6) Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina. All six cases exemplify the challenge that hegemonic ideologies of *linguistic nationalism* purveyed by governments that represent (or purport to represent) ethnic majorities pose to identity formation among ethnic minorities. I approach such ideologies as national preconditions that clearly affect identity as it expresses itself in the linguistic behavior of minority groups. I believe that a comparison of my subjects to other illustrative cases makes it possible to bring into relief the experiences of Sarajevo Sephardim in relation to, and in the context of, other European minority groups' experiences. After presenting the six cases, I will make comparisons between them and formulate a hypothesis with reference to the Sarajevo Sephardim.

5.2.1 Arvanítika-speakers in Greece

Arvanítika is a variety of the Albanian language, Tosk, that has been spoken in Greece for more than four centuries. Arvanítika's protracted contact with the dominant Greek has led to contention and attrition. Arvanítika is not as polyfunctional as it was in centuries past, as many of its previous functions have been taken over by Greek. In that sense, the situation of Arvanítika in Greece is a good example of on-going tensions between local, minority groups and the hegemonic nation-states in which they are embedded (Tsitsipis 1998: 1-3).

The *one nation–one language* principle has accelerated in Greece since the 1950s (Tsitsipis 1998: 10),

> (…) when the overall modernization of the country proceeded rapidly, and modern transportation and communication, mechanization of agriculture, and compulsory primary education were massively promoted [by successive Greek governments]. Previously isolated communities faced the pressure of urbanization and enhanced governmental control in a

heavily centralized bureaucratic state (Tsitsipis 1995: 543).

It is precisely this control that has conditioned the cultural lives of speakers of Arvanítika. They have accepted Greek as the older and more prestigious language due to its predominant place in the culture of the nation-state, in its literature and its grammar (Tsitsipis 1998: 11). This subordination has led to a gradual dilution of Arvanítika among its users. Moreover, Greek is appealing to Arvanítika-speakers since knowing the language of the majority gives access to economic success, while Arvanítika retards the integration-process into an officially monolingual Greek society (Tsitsipis 1998: 15). Tsitsipis (1998: 18) favors examining this situation from a sociolinguistic angle, since merely looking at the numbers of Greek- and Arvanítika-speakers cannot reveal important information regarding the phenomenon of language-shift.

Arvanítika is an oral language, while Greek is a standardized one. This gives Greek a superior status that is inculcated and enforced in Greek schools and throughout the media. In this backdrop, most Arvanítika-speakers have experienced discrimination in classrooms and in the playground (Tsitsipis 1998: 19). Partly as a consequence of this, Arvanítikes (speakers of Arvanítika) have learned a kind of cultural self-deprecation: they often claim, for example, that Arvanítika is not a 'real' language (Tsitsipis 1998: 32). There is a conception even among these speakers that those who have made a successful shift to Greek, and hence to modernity, are 'awake,' while those who retain Arvanítika are not (Tsitsipis 1998: 130).

Tsitsipis (1998: 118) emphasizes that this language-shift from Arvanítika to Greek carries an ideological and political valence. It is clear, for example, that Greek gradually has become a *power-code* among its speakers and not merely an instrument of communication (Tsitsipis 1998: 120, 122). What this means is that subjects understand and articulate the supposed value of Arvanítika in relation to Greek through particular notions of political legitimacy and illegitimacy, as reflected in Tsitsipis' interviews and participant observation. For instance,

Tsitsipis' subjects perceive that Arvanítika was once 'pure' but is now mixed up with Greek and has therefore become a 'bastardized' language (Tsitsipis 1998: 132). Nevertheless, those same subjects consider that it is important to know Arvanítika in order not to be cheated upon by other Arvanítikans–a perception that reminds us not only of the harsh material conditions that prevail among Arvanítikans (Tsitsipis 1998: 140), but may also reveal an internalized sense of inferiority in terms of social class and even moral status. Tsitsipis (1998: 146) concludes that now when Arvanítikans and their descendants speak Greek, things are easier for them from a material viewpoint, but at a great moral cost.

5.2.2 Alsatian-speakers in France

Residents of the Alsatian region of France have historically been speakers of German. Between 1870 and 1945, Alsace changed hands from Germany to France four times (Vassberg 1993: 1). Regardless of the region's political status, a German dialect has been spoken in Alsace for around 1,500 years. In 1918, 90% of the Alsatian population spoke their own dialect in everyday situations. In the aftermath of the Second World War, however, once the region became part of France one more final time, the Alsatian dialect has given way to the official French (Vassberg 1993: 1).

The standard version of Alsatian is *Hochdeutsch,* yet the latter is not spoken today by French-speaking Alsatians. Moreover, because spoken Alsatian is not standardized, educators oftentimes do not consider it a fully fledged language but simply a dialect or an oral German form (Vassberg 1993: 68).

Today, an elderly generation still feels 'at home' with Alsatian whereas the younger generation is more likely to favor French (Vassberg 1993: 1). Nevertheless, when compared

with other regions in France, Alsace still has the highest percentage of dialect-speakers. Furthermore, the French government, in a language policy shift aimed to protect endangered local and regional dialects (as a response to the situation of local and regional dialects), encourages the teaching of regional culture and languages in local schools. Courses in the Alsatian language are also offered at institutions of higher education in Alsace. An underlying reason for the positive governmental attitude towards Alsatian regional culture is that whereas before the Second World War Alsace was seen as a 'Germanic' threat to French identity, today English is considered a similar threat instead. Moreover, the French government has developed a growing interest in decentralization and regional particularism (Vassberg 1993: 2, 38).

Vassberg (1993: 6) analyzes the use of present-day Alsatian and correlates the attitude towards Alsatian with factors such as age, sex, educational background and place of living (Vassberg 1993: 3). She calls attention to an altered Alsatian identity instead of focusing on the language-shift as a complete break with a previously static linguistic *status quo*. She concludes that for urban speakers use of the 'prestigious' French language is more attractive than reliance on Alsatian German. Urban women also tend to be more aware of the positive connotations connected to French than men. Alsatian is rather spoken by farmers (men and women) and by working-class men (Vassberg 1993: 57). Moreover, many parents no longer speak Alsatian at home with their children. This is related to the fact that after the Second World War, French authorities tried to promote French at the expense of Alsatian. As an example, school officials told parents not to speak Alsatian with their children since it could (according to them) constitute a serious handicap when learning French. Furthermore, dialect-use on playgrounds was forbidden and the speakers felt ashamed of the dialect (Vassberg 1993: 67). French-speakers still accuse Alsatians of speaking a 'broken' German and French, though Vassberg (1993: 69, 80) assumes that the low dialect is more accepted and without a social stigma among the elderly. Indisputably, then, there is a generational language-shift that reflects the central

role of high French for the young in most social domains (Vassberg 1993: 172)

Besides, there is no great interest in reviving the dialect because many Alsatians are busy with pragmatic concerns such as their own education and socioeconomic mobility instead of language-preservation. Furthermore, many Alsatians are afraid of being perceived as insufficiently French (Vassberg 1993: 174). The mental association of speaking Alsatian with the Second World War and with the crimes committed by many German-speaking Nazis in France (and elsewhere) has declined. As a result, local educational policy has tended to foster High German instead of the low Alsatian dialect (Vassberg 1993: 177). Moreover, even if the dialect is being lost, Alsatians still value other Alsatian traditions (holidays, food and other customs). Thus, many Alsatians still feel Alsatian even without the Alsatian language (Vassberg 1993: 179).

5.2.3 Gaelic-speakers in Scotland

In her classic work on language death, *Language Death. The Life Cycle of a Scottish Gaelic Dialect,* Nancy Dorian (1981: 2) clarifies how social elites often play a crucial role in the process of language-extinction when the masses commonly follow the linguistic behavior of the elite. Dorian (1981: 4) focuses specifically on communities of fishermen where English has overtaken the East Sutherland dialect of Scottish Gaelic.

In her field studies, Dorian (1981: 8) finds that while elderly Sutherlanders still feel at home in Gaelic, the younger generation no longer speaks the East Sutherland dialect. Dorian (1981: 38-39) emphasizes the cultural prestige of 'civilized' English in relation to the low status of 'barbarous' Gaelic as a major reason for this generational discrepancy. English, she explains, has been and remains the language of the ruling elite, and thus serves as a 'green card' for

purposes of social mobility. Dorian shows that over time Gaelic passed from being the majority language to that of a minority as a specific response to linguistic elitism (Dorian 1981: 40).

At the time of the fisher-folk's arrival in eastern Sutherland in 1810-1820, the rest of the population was also Gaelic-speaking. It was only in the 1960s that a distinct fisher-folk ethnicity formed on the basis of occupation (they were fishermen), spatial segregation (fisher-folk lived segregated from other social groups), and a distinctive Gaelic language (Dorian 1981: 54). Because of their isolated living conditions, the fisher-folk seldom married outside of their community. In fact, such marriages could only take place secretly owing to the stigma that the fisher-folk attached to it (Dorian 1981: 56). Furthermore, members of the group wore different clothing and had diverse eating-habits than the rest of the population; for instance, they cooked fish dishes that were unknown locally (Dorian 1981: 58). Partly as a result of these factors, the fisher-folk were extraordinarily slow in shifting to English (Dorian 1981: 59-60). This situation changed after the First World War when the fisher-folk entered occupations that were not traditional to them, and thus came into greater contact with the rest of the population (Dorian 1981: 65) than they had ever experienced.

In the 1980s, there was a clear-cut shift in the elements that constitute the fisher-folk ethnicity. Gaelic then became the most crucial element, whereas marriage-patterns, clothing, food-habits, and living conditions receded as sources of distinctiveness (Dorian 1981: 60-61). Gaelic was by that time a stigmatized language, that of the poorest segment of the Scottish population. For this reason, the fisher-folk slowly adapted and came to speak the dominant group's favored English (Dorian 1981: 67-68). The process of adaptation was itself fraught with new challenges. When sheep farming expanded to the Highlands, for example, the fishing-folk were confronted with a more powerful occupational group: the sheep farmers, for whom English was the only language that counted (Dorian 1981: 69-70). Hence, the collapse of the fisher-folk's economic life also led to a gradual integration with the rest of the community, both

linguistically and economically (Dorian 1981: 72).

Dorian (1981: 102-103) argues that in most social settings, people expect each other to be either members of a minority or of a majority, such that adopting to the dominant, majority language, often leads them be viewed as traitors to the minority group. Indeed, mobility out of the stigmatized group requires dissociation from that group. Adoption of the dominant language is one of the dissociative behaviors most obvious to the original (minority) group and consequently bitterly resented by its members (Dorian 1981: 103). Dorian (1981: 104) maintains that among the adult fisher-folk it is still socially inadmissible *not* to know Gaelic, however it is socially acceptable to let the learning of the language lapse in children. Above and beyond the immediate sociocultural and political context, which does not favor traditional language-retention, there are two conditions that stimulate the actual maintenance of Gaelic among the younger generations: when the grandchildren have a close relationship in Gaelic with their grandparents; and in cases where exiles from the ethnic home-place have developed a strong sense of belonging to their fisher-folk community, and in turn cultivate a loyalty towards Gaelic (Dorian 1981: 108).

5.2.4 Caribbean Communities and Their Descendants in the United Kingdom

Le Page & Tabouret-Keller (1985: 5) identify three shared conditions that affect the linguistic behavior of different Caribbean communities and their descendants in London. First, the vernacular of these groups is stigmatized in relation to the majority language. Second, the group-members' language use is unpredictable and thus different from that of the monolingual speakers; and third, the linguistic standards of the Caribbeans and their progeny are 'in the making,' and therefore controversial. Thus, alongside new identities that have emerged in the

Caribbean countries and elsewhere in the post-colonial world, identity shifts are occurring among the people of Caribbean origin in London (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985: 14).

The authors argue that linguistic behavior consists of "(…) *acts of identity* in which people reveal both their personal identity and their search for social roles" (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985: 14, emphasis in original). Le Page and Tabouret-Keller look especially at the role of ethnicity in identity-practices. They (1985: 207-208) contend that the socially constructed, idealistic belief that individuals have social identities whose objective and subjective dimensions align with one another in fact limits our conception of cultural diversity. This is because the ideal of alignment emanates from a worldview according to which cultural-linguistic communities are separated from each other when this is in fact not the case (cf. Wellros 2010: 117), even though groups of people sometimes do see themselves as neatly separated along ethno-linguistic lines. As Gerson (2001: 193, 182) points out:

> (…) it is crucial to recognize that the ways people essentialize and naturalize identity practices are themselves social constructions.
> (…) [W]hat remains vague is how people understand their own identities and represent that understanding to themselves and to others. How do people apprehend their identities forming, changing, and achieving apparent stability? (Gerson 2001: 193, 182).

Le Page and Tabouret-Keller's informants often see *physical features* as dividing factors between, for instance, Spaniards and Creoles. Moreover, those interviewees who perceive themselves as ethnically mixed display a sense of hierarchy between the components that constitute this mixture, and typically rank Spanish identity at the top. That said, many subjects conceive that a person born in Belize, for example, possesses a 'Belizean identity' regardless of race (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985: 210, 213, 219).

Another one of their findings is that members of younger generations are more willing to call themselves 'Creole,' 'Mixed,' and 'Belizean' than their parents. The parents, by contrast, are more concerned with making sure that the ethnic and linguistic choices coincide. In other words, the imagined, chosen coextension of or union between *ethnicity and language* is not as

important to the self-perception of the youngsters as it is to that of their elders (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985: 220-221).

Race is commonly defined in genetic terms (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985: 222-224). The world-population is divided into racial groups that within themselves are biologically similar—or so the groups' members assume. However, there is extensive genetic diversity among members that consider themselves as belonging to the same racial group. Hence the idea of racial 'types' may no longer be a useful one in defining and explaining culture cultural variety, and cultural change. Instead, one can think of each human as unique in his or her genetic potential (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985: 225).

Le Page & Tabouret-Keller (1985: 234-235) reflect on *linguistic communities* in a similar way. Obviously, they argue, linguistic nationalism (which is realized when the educational system and other means of socialization promote the fusion of national/ethnic and linguistic categories) is a politically constructed phenomenon. However, the language we speak may not always correlate to our ethnic self-identity. Language, then, is not necessarily an integral aspect of a person's ethnic/racial identity. In short, the concepts of language and ethnicity/race may indicate quite different content to each member of a group, and thus cannot be looked upon as fixed ideological and/or idealized models (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985: 237-238, 244, 247-248).

5.2.5 The Kasabali in Macedonia

Ellis (2003: 1-2) studies the Kasabali, also known as Şehirli in Tetovo, Western Macedonia. These multilingual urban Muslims come from a variety of backgrounds. There is no single nation-state or 'home' to which they belong. The Şehirli way of life is based on interaction

between various urban Muslim identities that are often non-recognizable by the out-groups but highly relevant to the in-group (Ellis 2003: 2). Ellis (2003: 116) maintains that in former Yugoslavia, Muslims in Macedonia had to adapt to the shifting national identity-categories and decide to be either Turkish or Albanian. The Şehirli decided to resolve the question of their special status by remaining 'Ottoman.' Ellis (2003: 116) claims that this way of protecting their own traditions and at the same time not denying differences between Albanian and Turkish identities was the Sehirli's way of calling attention to their not belonging to a single group. They call themselves Ottomans because the category contains many cultures. The distinctiveness of the Şehirli category is that it illustrates the dynamic of identity construction, which in this case preserves alterity and does not 'reduce' identity to one or another minority element, be it Albanian or Turkish (Ellis 2003: 4-5).

In 1923, modern Macedonia became part of Serbia and its Muslims did no longer belong to the ruling confessional community. The main problem with the growth of nationalism for the multiple Muslim identities was that these identities were not primarily *national,* and the Christian majority expected the minority to manifest itself in national terms.

Ellis (2003: 66) analyzes the creativity and sheer tolerance for multiplicity and change that a minority community such as the Şehirli must muster in order to maintain its vitality. She examines families in which siblings adopted different nationalities and where members have shifted their identities back and forth between, for example, Turkish and Albanian identities or between Muslim and Christian identities. One symptom of this variation is the fact that the number of persons declaring themselves to be Turks among the Şehirli increased from just below 96,000 to almost 204,000 between 1948 and 1953 (Ellis 2003: 75). To complicate matters, between 1953 and 1958 the category 'Yugoslav' was a central aspect of the Yugoslavian state's narrative for classifying its minority elements (Ellis 2003: 80). Moreover, the choice of language of instruction in school (for instance Turkish or Albanian) constituted

and still constitutes a crucial factor for purposes of determining a person's official nationality (Ellis 2003: 83).

5.2.6 Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bringa (1995: 4-5) describes creation within another Muslim community in the outskirts of Sarajevo. She specifically reflects upon a change of awareness among young Muslims from this group in the 1980s. That the youngsters were more aware of the nationality of their classmates, Bringa argues, is a symptom of the impact that the Yugoslavian policy towards nationalities had at that time. However, for those parents who practiced Islam it was common to keep their children away from school since the Yugoslav schools favored atheist identities. Therefore, there developed two Muslim identity-categories: the Yugoslav state's image of Muslims as secular *Yugoslav* nationals, and another one stemming from the Islamic in-group itself, according to which Muslims were an *Islamic* Yugoslav community. Some Muslim children also participated in two educational systems: one religious, one secular (namely, the state schools). The state schools recognized the Muslim culture but portrayed it as old-fashioned and similarly portrayed Muslims as 'losers' throughout Yugoslav history. Therefore, many of the students were ashamed of being Muslims (Bringa 1995: 77).

A Muslim person's neighborhood and his/her names were crucial indicators of their nationality and whether that person was defined as a Muslim in ethnic or religious terms. Thus, the demarcation of the ethnic in-group in relation to other groups constituted a defining factor of ethnic group-ness, and not necessarily the cultural traits that the different ethnic groups possessed in and of themselves (Bringa 1995: 19-20). Perhaps in continuation of the Ottoman heritage, Bosnians viewed themselves primarily or exclusively as Muslims. Likewise many

Croats and Serbs see themselves as Catholics and Orthodox Christians to this day (Bringa 1995: 21). According to Bringa, the Muslims based their identity on their social environment, in which morality was based on Islam. On the contrary, Serbs and Croats were more interested in descent and how their blood ties defined their ethnic affiliation (Bringa 1995: 31). Then again, there were categories that united the different religious ethnicities, such as being 'Bosnian,' regardless of ethnic-religious affiliation (Bringa 1995: 66).

Notably, there is a strict division between Muslims and Catholics in the Muslim-Catholic village outside Sarajevo where Bringa conducted her field-study (1995: 79). She points to the difference in food-habits between the two groups (since Catholics eat pork) as a major obstacle to inter-ethnic unity and intermarriage (Bringa 1995: 79-80). Town-dwellers generally do not consider marriage between Muslims and non-Muslims to be morally correct. Men, however, are allowed to marry non-Muslim women since men are considered 'morally superior' and thus able to uphold their correspondingly 'superior' ethnic identity vis-à-vis their non-Muslim spouses (Bringa 1995: 156). Regardless, a stigma still attaches to intermarriage, especially in light of the notion that the household is the very place for Muslim identity formation and thus that the woman of the household (since she is assumed to be occupying domestic space) is responsible for the construction of Muslim identity (Bringa 1995: 84). The imperative of women's domesticity to the social system is so pronounced that during the day, if a married woman goes for many coffee-visits to other women in the village, her husband looks upon her negatively. Moreover, it is important according to this cultural regime–as a moral fundament– for women to look good, i.e., to dress 'decently' and have a tidy home (Bringa 1995: 89). They should also assist their mothers in their native homes, while the sons are not expected to do so (Bringa 1995: 106). Furthermore, since married women leave their parents' homes to join the homes and villages of their husbands, the women are expected to treat their native villages as unimportant (Bringa 1995: 98).

According to Bringa, Islam is a religion of *practice* more than one that requires a strict *shari'at*—doctrinal interpretation (Bringa 1995: 160). Moreover, the local Islamic culture incorporates an ancient belief in evil spirits that can manifest themselves in the Evil Eye. Therefore, it is common for her subjects to wear an amulet in order to protect themselves from the Evil Eye, even if more educated persons consider these beliefs superstitious. There is a widespread perception that beautiful girls and babies are particularly vulnerable to the Evil Eye (Bringa 1995: 178-179). Another Islamic belief is that souls leave bodies only on the fortieth day after death and until that day the dead person is still 'living' and thus has to be shown the respect befitting a living person. Therefore, it is important during these forty days not to do or say anything that might upset the living dead (Bringa 1995: 185). Besides, it is not allowed to kiss or touch a man/woman during religious rituals because these rituals are meant to be cleansing, and physical and/or sexual relations are considered impure, especially during this time (Bringa 1995: 185).

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In what follows I contrast the cases I have presented in this section with one another. I see this as a first step, before comparing these cases to the one of Sarajevo's Sephardim.

5.2.7 A Comparison of Cases 1-6

The role of an *ideology of linguistic nationalism* is central in all of the six cases I have just surveyed – as a national precondition clearly affects identity formation as it expresses itself in linguistic behavior. In Case 1 the language-shift from Arvanítika to the national Greek language is based, among other things, on the widely-held cultural assumption that Greek is the power code and that non-standardized and oral Arvanítika is no longer a pure but rather a bastardized language (Tsitsipis 1998: 18, 120, 122). The language-shift in Case 2 is based on the same premises: that a non-standardized oral Alsatian language is not as pure and reputable as the national French language (Vassberg 1993: 1, 68). However, in Case 2 the generational language-shift is described as something productive and the author underlines that it is common for Alsatians to feel Alsatian even without speaking the Alsatian language (Vassberg 1993: 179).

Case 3 resembles Cases 1 and 2 in the way it highlights a generational language-shift from the low status Gaelic to the high-status English (Dorian 1981: 40). The author further describes a shift in elements of identity relevant to the fisher-folk's ethnic affiliation (Dorian 1981: 65): The fisher-folk dissociate from the stigmatized group in order to become part of the majority (Dorian 1981: 103). Thus, hybrid and hyphenated identities are absent, and the idea of having to be 100% loyal towards one's mother tongue (Gaelic), or not at all, is central to identity construction.

Case 4 has a different focus. It defines identity as an activity and also points towards the idea of a correspondence of national and linguistic identities to each other. In this case the generational shift occurs in a process of generational change, with the elderly being linguistic nationalists whereas the younger generation rely on other options (Creole, Mixed and Belizien) (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985: 220-221). There is also a shift in the interpretation of

identities–away from the idea of race towards a notion of every person's uniqueness (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985: 225).

Case 5, which concerns the Şehirli-Ottoman way of life, describes a situation of unique and alternative identity formation whereby the subjects do not assert any minority element (the Albanian or the Turk) in their behavior (Ellis 2003: 2, 4-5). The author describes how multiple Muslim identities face a challenge from the growth of the majority group's nationalism, since these identities were not primarily *national,* and nationalism dictates that 'the' national identity, one in this case associated with the Christian majority, be manifested and valued above all others (Ellis 2003: 89). Case 6 stresses again that the Muslim identity was not a national one. Here, Muslim activities (based on traditional Islamic law and morality) are crucial to identity construction while blood ties are not so important (Bringa 1995: 31)

In the following section I undertake a comparative analysis of linguistic identification and vitality in order to draw up and test hypothesis with regard to Sarajevo's Sephardim.

5.2.8 Conclusions and Hypothesis Regarding Cases 1-6 and Sarajevo's Sephardim

The *linguistic nationalism* ideology is central to the shift from a non-standard and strictly oral Judeo-Spanish to the national Serbo-Croatian and/or trans- and multinational Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian languages among the Sephardim of Sarajevo today. As I showed in chapter 1, section 1.4 ('Beyond a Nationalist Ideology') a language ideology is a system of (…) *largely unconscious ideas, attitudes and beliefs pertaining to language and linguistic behavior* (Wingstedt 1996: 10). In the case of my interviewees however, they have become aware of the linguistic nationalism ideology in Bosnia-Herzegovina today because of their first- or second-hand experienced language-shifts from Judeo-Spanish to Serbo-Croatian and then to Bosnian-

Croatian-Serbian. In this way, because of their awareness of the linguistic nationalism ideology, they distant themselves from this ideology and 'choose' what language they say they speak, or what to call the language that they speak. They are, so to speak, beyond a national linguistic ideology.

In the case of Sarajevo Sephardim, the language-shift from Judeo-Spanish to Serbo-Croatian was, just as in case 1 of Arvanítika, based on the assumption that Serbo-Croatian, the majority language, is a power code. For many Sephardim, Judeo-Spanish carried the stigma of an 'unsophisticated language' with which it is supposedly impossible to express modern ideas (Simović & Filipović 2008: 309; Симовић & Филиповић 2009: 118).

Case 2 applies to Sarajevo Sephardim as well, in the sense that my subjects, like the native Germano-ethnic population of French Alsace after the Second World War relation to the Alsatian language, feel that they can be Sephardic even without knowing or using the Sephardic language – Judeo-Spanish. In the words of Igor Kožemjakin from the middle generation of my informants, "(…) of course one can be Sephardic without the Sephardic language; look at our community." Similarly as in Case 3, which concerns the Fisher-folk of Wales, Judeo-Spanish was preserved for many centuries because of relatively isolated living-conditions and absence of mixed marriages among Sephardim and non-Jews in Ottoman times. In Case 3, however, the Gaelic-speakers switched to English in the 1980s whereas the decline of Judeo-Spanish escalated already in interwar Yugoslavia, about 50 years earlier. For this reason, there are no longer Sephardic grandparents who can speak Judeo-Spanish with their grandchildren (cf. Dorian 1981: 108).

All three generations in my study population agreed that one can be Sephardic without necessarlily being a speaker of Judeo-Spanish (cf. Vassberg 1993: 179). This is not as in Case 3: to resist complete assimilation, this minority still values the knowledge and use of Gaelic,

which therefore remains an anchor of Fisher-folk identity. By contrast, the Sephardim do not feel the need to remain loyal to Judeo-Spanish. Instead, a hybridity of identities and multiple loyalties are manifested to a high degree. As A.A. from the youngest generation explained,

> I come from a mixed family. My mum comes from a Croatian-Catholic family and my dad from a Jewish-Sephardic family I am Bosanka and/or Jevjrejka in different contexts. I think most of all I am Sarajevan.

A.A.'s statement also speaks of the applicability of Case 4 to the case of Sarajevo Sephardim. A.A.'s identity is admittedly in 'the making' and she is inventing the category 'Sarajevan' (cf. Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985: 220-221). In the case of my Sephardi subjects, the younger generations are more willing to call themselves 'mixed' or 'Sarajevan' than the elderly – a pattern that is prevalent among the London Caribbeans of Case 4 as well.

Case 4 relates to the imagined, chosen coextension of or union between *ethnicity and language.* In Case 4, a union between ethnicity and language was important to the self-perception of the elderly but not to the young adults (cf. Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985: 220-221). In my case the emotional link to Judeo-Spanish is weakest amongst the youngest Sephardim, indicating that the language is indeed dying. Nonetheless, I argue that the languages my subjects' say that they speak today ('Sarajevan', 'Serbo-Croatian', 'Bosnian') correlate to their minority membership as well (cf. Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985: 237-238, 248) – because they are not sure what to call the south-Slavic language that they speak.

Moreover, just as in the case of Alsatian, the local Jewish Community tends to foster standard Spanish instead of the Judeo-Spanish dialect (cf. Vassberg 1993: 177). Tea Abinun said that she learnt a little Spanish in the Jewish Community. Vladimir Andrle also stated that Spanish (not Judeo-Spanish) was taught in the Sarajevan Jewish Community in 2013. Erna Kaveson Debevec, from the older generation, said that her son has obtained a Spanish citizenship and that he studied Spanish in Sarajevo.

In Case 5 the Şehirli call themselves Ottomans because the category contains many cultures. I think Sarajevo Jews feel most of all belonging to multicultural former Yugoslavia and the elderly say they still speak Serbo-Croatian for the same reason (cf. Ellis 2003: 4-5). Case 5 is moreover an example of a situation in which the majority—the Greek population—expects a national identity to be manifested by the minority—the Şehirli. In my case there is a shift from the eldest to the youngest generations toward an individualist concept of identity (cf. Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985: 220-221, 225). In fact, identity among the youngest Sephardim is not reducible to the Sephardic minority element at all (cf. Ellis 2003: 2, 4-5). Rather, identity is comprised of multiple elements and practices, which each of the subjects combines in unique ways. One of these elements is Bosnian nationalism, yet this factor entails a problem: the problem with the growth of Bosnian nationalism among young Jews in Sarajevo, has been that by identifying as Bosnian, they are asserting a specific *national* belonging, yet this identity is certainly not the one that the state expects them to manifest. Indeed, Jews are officially classified as a religious community by the state today, and not as part of any national group. However, the interviewees' subjective descriptions coincide relatively well with how they say they are perceived by 'other' ordinary people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Based on these outside characterizations – my subjects are seen both as Jews and as people who have hyphenated identities (e.g., Bosnian-Jewish).

Thereore, I conclude that the Sephardi group in Sarajevo experiences a relatively positive minority membership in terms of their hyphenated and multiple identifications and that this may be because of (or at least partly due to) the fact that fellow Bosnian 'Others' also perceive them as a blend of identities. Bosnian Sephardim are, so to speak, integrated and segregated at the same time since the Bosnian state not officially accept 'mixed forms' of identity and neither does it offer legal or political standing to those who belonging to many cultures at the same time. This situation also led to the fact that the Jews of Bosnia have had to declare themselves

on the population census as one or the other, for example, as 'Jews' or 'Serbs' but not both. At the level of popular perceptions and interactions, however, there is in fact a high degree of integration between Jews and non-Jews.

This clash between how the people of my reference group actually feel and interact within the wider Bosnian society–the host culture–on one hand, and how that culture officially discriminates against them on the other hand, causes them to feel a powerful contradiction. A tell-tale sign of this contradiction is what they call the language(s) that they choose to speak in the new Bosnian state: The elderly insist on calling their language Serbo-Croatian, while the younger subjects rely on different labels, sometimes by mixing several languages. In either case, it seems as though the Sephardim feel both at home in *and* somewhat alienated from the Slavophone mainstream.

Case 6 gives an example of the creation of an Islamic religious identity that downgrades the member's blood-ties. The Sephardim in my sample do not consider blood ties to be definitive of identity. The subjects are conscious of their ancestry, be it mixed or 'pure' but they often define their identities in terms of their 'activities.' In that sense they are not so oriented towards the assertion of inert facts or concepts over which they have little or no control. Instead, my subjects rely in their self-descriptions and their narratives on multiple identifications are formed rather situationally and somewhat idiosyncratically.

In light of the six cases I have discussed above, my hypothesis with regard to linguistic choice and Sarajevo Sephardi ethnic identity formation is the following: *despite my subjects' shift to a second language, Serbo-Croation (or variants thereof), the first language is not necessarily dead; rather, it takes a new form as a marker of self-identification and an asset in the politics of ethnicity*. This transformation is explicit in the fact that the reference group refers to its (second, where relevant) language as 'Serbo-Croatian' or 'our language,' in opposition to the government-furnished, formal language classifications that is at hand. Igor Kožemjakin, for example, states that,

> For us it's the question of how to call it. So we often call it the way the person we're talking to is calling it. For me it's one language but I would try to speak 'our language.' That's how I ask at the airport if I hear someone speak my language: Vi govorite naš jezik? [Do you speak our language?].

I further conclude that identity creation within the Sephardi community of Sarajevo is not confined to that community; it involves other groups as well. In other words, Sephardim intermingle with people outside of the community, learning about different traditions and ideas. They then construct their own identity based in part on these new experiences. As Igor Kožemjakin describes it,

> For Hanukkah and the other holidays, we all come together in the Community unlike Jews from other countries, who I think celebrate mostly at home. We are a small Community and we can bring all our members. We put a big Menorah here in the garden of our Synagogue and at this event *our friends from different religious groups are coming to join us* [emphasis mine]. The fact that people from other religions participate brings us closer honoring the Torah. Even people who say they're atheist come before Shabbat and other holidays to at least keep the tradition.

It seems to me that the modality that my subject describes here is a unique way of celebrating Hanukkah. The uniqueness lies principally in the involvement of non-Jews in the celebration, which strongly suggests that Sephardic identity creation in Sarajevo incorporates the influences

of non-Sephardic, non-Jewish communities. Erna Kaveson Debevec illustrates this 'ecumenical' phenomenon further:

> I never had a Jewish 'best friend.' As for the youth right now, I don't know. I love to have people around me who love me for who I am, and not for the fact that I am Jewish. If someone doesn't like me for only being Jewish, then I don't like this person either.

Similarly, Matilda Finci pointed out that she, as a person who publicly identifies as Jewish, has a *Muslim best friend* and that she respects non-Jewish holidays. Obviously, Matilda and Erna feel a lot of tolerance towards other religions and ethnicities, even if they remain Sephardic-self-identified.

<p style="text-align:center">❧❦❧</p>

In my discussion on questions of linguistic and ethnic identity formation in six European minority groups, we have seen that the role of an *ideology of linguistic nationalism* is central in all six cases. We have also seen how this is true in the case of Sarajevo Sephardim as well. What I call 'national preconditions' – beginning with the first Yugoslavia in 1918 – have affected the Sephardim's identity formation as it expresses itself in linguistic behavior.

The following final chapter serves as summary of my arguments. I will continue to draw conclusions about Sarajevo Sephardim in light of the six cases I explored in this chapter. The following chapter sums up 1) the differences in identification between the three Sarajevo Sephardic generations and my interviewees' reflections – or lack thereof – on gender; 2) the

interviewees' absorption of elite-determined linguistic identities; 3) their fear of a loss of the Jewish-Sephardic identification in their lives; 4) the implications of Bosnia and Herzegovina's linguistic discrimination against its Jews and; 5) the combination of South Slavic languages and non-Slavic minorities. I moreover present a broader Jewish relationship with language and culture. At last, I summarize the questions I explored in this thesis and my findings in regard to those questions. The evaluation of my findings is followed by directions for further research.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The Factors of Generational Perspective and Gender

In order to make sense of my subjects' individual concepts of identity, I have focused on their unique understanding of Sephardic identification as such. The desire to be perceived in a particular way may of course vary according to circumstances (e.g. 'Sephardi' among Jews, 'Jewish' among non-Jews). It is worthwhile recalling that a self-constructed identity, is a complicated process, as I already discussed in section 1.3. Oftentimes, we cannot control this process ourselves, and to a certain degree, we are products of the society in which we live. The case study of Sarajevo Sephardim is a perfect example of this. For example in the process of language-shift from Judeo-Spanish to Slavic languages, members of the first and third generations describe the shift as something destructive; they tend to focus on the loss of the Sephardic language and on the sense of grief and confusion that that loss has brought with it. As for the middle generation, its members describe the shift as productive or at least as something less than catastrophic.

The younger generations of Sephardim all dissociate from the in-group in order to become part of the majority, i.e., by internalizing the official Bosnian language classification (cf. Dorian 1981: 103). Again, it is those in the second generation who identify the most with cultural hybridity. However, as I alluded to above, the youngest and the elderly (the first and third generations, respectively) give a clearer voice to their experience of powerlessness and thus of discrimination within and outside the community.

The vulnerability that the Sephardim I have interviewed perceive reveals a Catch-22 situation. As already mentioned, the Bosnian state Constitution is discriminatory since it excludes minorities from the constituent peoples—Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats—and renders Jews (and other minority-groups) as 'Others,' thus positioning them between a rock and hard place: on one hand, the Sephardim want to maintain a minority status, but on the other hand they have had little support to do so. The 'common sense' in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is that the state consists of three nationalities (Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats) and 'Others' obviously serves the interest of particular groups—the most numerous and the most powerful (cf. Brubaker 2015: 2-3, 12). The external category of Jewish ethnicity/religion thus has an *unequal position* in the social sphere in Sarajevo (cf. Brubaker 2015: 12-13). This exclusion is moreover imported to the internal sphere. As Igor Kožemjakin argues, "I have noticed, since I came back to Sarajevo from Israel in 2001 that people with a non-Muslim name receive less respect [from] Bosniaks' in public institutions. The Bosniaks' do this because they are dependent on the state in order to be employed in the public sector, and the economic situation today triggers their traumas of the Bosnian war." At the same time, some of my interviewees are more or less part of the inner Jewish elite, that is, of the inner circle of the Jewish Community organization: Jakob Finci is its President, Igor Kožemjakin is the Community's *chazan,* and so forth. Two interviewees, Tina Tauber and Yehuda Kolonomos, however, complain about being too little involved or included in the Jewish Community work (cf. Brubaker 2015: 16)—but this only reveals their desire to form part of the inner circle, and not necessarily a desire to overcome discrimination by assimilating with the South Slav majorities.

The master-narrative among my interviewees is anti-nationalistic in the main, and there is a Yugo-nostalgic attitude that has been transmitted from the elderly to the younger generations. Still, the first and third generations have adopted national/multinational identities (for example

Bosnian and/or Yugoslav) that they combine with their Sephardic identification. This development, that they identify as both Bosnians and/or Yugoslavs (among other identifications) and as Sephardim at the same time, most probably contribute to the cultural diversity in Sarajevo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole (cf. Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985: 14, 207-208).

Moreover, in the Bosnian-Herzegovina multinational state, religion plays a major role in official definitions of citizenship as well as in social and political relations between citizens. For example, the *halal* kitchen is accessible to Muslim subjects, and during Ramadan there is an official firing of a cannon to mark the breaking of the fast. Yet, doubts about the place of those citizens classified as 'Others' remain. Markowitz (2010: 140) asks the challenging questions with regard to the Jewish 'Others' of Bosnia:

> What are you really [if you are not a Muslim, Serb or Croat]? Are you indeed Ostali [Others], beyond the pale of B-C-S categorization? And if so, whose Jews will you be if forced to choose?
> (…) Can the Jews trust Bosnia's constituent nations to include them as an integral part of the independent state? Doesn't the ambiguous Ostali [Others-label] put them at risk? (Markowitz 2010: 140-142).

The individuals who form part of the group that I have studied have answered these questions variously depending on the generation to which they belong. The principal generational shift in attitudes and self-perceptions between the older and younger interviewees lies in the fact that the youngest of these Sephardim are Bosnian linguistic nationalists, whereas members of the two eldest generations rely on other, more ambiguous or multivalent categories, such as 'Yugoslav' or 'Mixed,' or they rely on narrower, local, non-national categories, such as 'Sarajevan.'

Despite the shift in languages from the eldest to the youngest of my subjects, the 'original languages' of the Sephardim, namely Ladino and Serbo-Croatian, are dying, but are not dead inasmuch as the subjects still identify with these languages—albeit rather passively—to a

greater or lesser extent. Regardless, this process of linguistic decline is to a high degree related to the informants' own self-identification in the new Bosnian context, i.e., it is largely coextensive with their thoughts regarding their linguistic identification as residents and citizens of the Bosnian state of today. Instead of referring and conforming exclusively to formal language classifications of the State, however, they laugh and/or express grief in relation the new linguistic situation. In other words, they retain an important psychic distance from both the vortex of Slavicization, past and present, and from a Sephardi past that they now feel is largely inaccessible.

The question of gender equality does not seem to be a factor of contemplation for the reference group. Only the *chazan,* Igor Kožemjakin, mentions that he would like the Jewish Community to be reformed with more gender equality:

> On Friday evening, there are maybe 12-13 men [present at Shabbat services], because there are still no women allowed in the Minyan. It's a contradiction [of our members' preferences] but it's the traditional Sephardic life. The Sephardim behaved this way even during socialism. I would love it to have a female Minyan and I think it's going to happen. With new generations, this community will turn more to the essence and less to the form of the religion. I would like this contradiction to be nullified. However, the Community feels good with it and I think that the younger population is more interested in reformed Judaism.

Igor says that he "would love it to have a female Minyan." He maintains that "the Community feels good with it [a male-only Minyan]." The Community has a culture of male leadership.

Jakob Finci and Boris Kožemjakin are presidents[114], Eli Tauber is responsible for cultural issues, Igor Kožemjakin is *chazan,* Eliezer Papo is a non-residential rabbi. This male structure, of course, does not mean that the Community is not open to egalitarian options. In other words, without leaders who are women, the Community will not perforce remain patriarchal. Nonetheless, it is a male-leading Community that does not allow for women to take part in the Minyan and in which a gender separation in religious services is a factuality.

Across the generations *Halacha* has certainly been relatively unimportant to my subjects, meaning that, in their view, ones' mother does not have to be Jewish in order for one to receive the Jewish heritage. At the same time, there is a revival among my subjects of the perception that biology is a basis of ethnicity (cf. Brubaker 2015: 57). Specifically, it is important for all my interviewees to clarify that, on the one hand, they come from a mixed background, and on the other hand, that there is a Jewish blood-tie in the family history – through the father or another source.

The following section further summarizes my findings, focusing on my interviewees' linguistic identities.

6.2 Absorption of Elite-Determined Linguistic Identities

The socio-constructivist process of language standardization can be interpreted differently. What I mean is that various viewpoints and circumstances can be given a different emphasis in an analysis of a language's development and standardization. References to pre-standard stages,

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[114] Boris Kožemjakin is President of the Jewish Community in Sarajevo.

for example the eras of Enlightenment and Romanticism in the 18th and 19th centuries, and parallel developments, such as language planning in Western Europe, can be inconclusive, and are thus best regarded as dependent variables (Nuorluoto 2010: 77). Nevertheless, Hobsbawm (1990: 169) points to the commonly held opinion that Western European history has generated forms of ethnic and linguistic nationalism that are exclusivist (Herder, an anti-Semite, was an important proponent of this idea). Hobsbawm (1990: 169) maintains that these exclusivist forms have served as ideological role models for other nationalisms (and movements of emancipation), such as the South Slavic ones, even if the South Slavic states were extremely diverse ethnically and linguistically compared to their Western European counterparts (cf. Blum 2002: 14; Greenberg 2004: 9).

Obviously, the adoption of a structural resemblance between South Slavic nationalisms and Western models of nation-statehood or post-nation-statehood[115] has constituted a decisive underlying reason that *unstandardized* South Slavic dialects, or generally smaller non-Slavic languages (such as Judeo-Spanish), are under threat of extinction. In other words: Judeo-Spanish has not affected the standardization of any of the South-Slavic languages to any degree, but the standardization processes of theses languages, and the specific nationalist language ideologies that accompany them, have led to the endangerment of Judeo-Spanish.

At the same time, as I showed earlier, there is a lack of interest among the younger generations in Sarajevo for Judeo-Spanish, since it has no function in the broader society. The predominant attitudes regarding language acquisition focus on English as *the* desirable language. My subjects are unanimous in their belief that knowledge of English is very important

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[115] And is Western Europe really 'post-national'? The recent European election victories for separatist parties (i.e. Alternative für Deutschland, British National Party, Le Front Nation, Partij voor de Vrijheid) suggest not. Furthermore, the post-national vocabulary implies that the nation-state is a 'point of departure' even though the nation-state is a relatively newly coined term (cf. Brubaker 2004: 156). Since 2017, however, there seem to be a different trend (apart from the Trump's presidency in the USA): a soft Brexit, less support for the anti-immigrants parties and so forth.

and, vice versa, when they speak of the collective Jewish languages they show very little motivation to learn these languages:

> (Vladimir Andrle) I communicate in Bosnian with relatives in Israel […]. I just learnt very little Hebrew and Spanish in the Jewish Community and there is no possibility to learn Ladino, there are no teachers. But only elderly speak Ladino and in five years no one will be able to speak it.
> The Sephardic culture is important but there is no chance to preserve it here. It's positive of course to revitalize Ladino in Israel.

As already shown, statements from the under-30 generation show that the Sephardim have internalized the official national Bosnian or the Bosnian-Serbian-Croatian language-classification. On the other hand, the youngsters are amused when they speak about the national language(s) that have emerged since the breakup of Yugoslavia, and it seems in this meta-linguistic way that they have developed translingual – crossing the language boundaries of Serbo-Croatian, Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian – views on their mother language):

> (Tea Abinun) Our parents spoke Serbo-Croatian with us and they still call their language Serbo-Croatian but we say Bosnian, or Bosnian-Serbian-Croatian [Laugh].

Serbo-Croatian and Yugoslavia roughly correspond to one another, but the confluence of Bosnian-Serbian-Croatian and Bosnia and Herzegovina is not as natural. This 'loose linguistic structure' is also formative (cf. Stukenbrock 2005:3; Voss 2008: 109). Therefore, the 'national project' of coming together as a language-culture within a specific geographic space does not always correspond to the historic distribution and ethnic background of the people (in this case, the Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina) (cf. Nuorluoto 2012: 30). I think the 'loose linguistic structure' in the conceptions of my informants is attributable to the position of Jews as a group in Bosnia-Herzegovina. They have been linguistically discriminated against, particularly during the process of a language-shift from Judeo-Spanish to Serbo-Croatian, and then during the post-

Yugoslav period, with the introduction of three official languages – corresponding to only three ethnic and/or religious groups – in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A 'loose linguistic structure' is manifested when individuals from the younger generations do not always know what to call language they speak, or make light of the new language classifications, while the elderly say they still speak Serbo-Croatian.

The elderly and some of the younger respondents perceive the Sephardic language as a language in itself, and not only as a dialect of Spanish. In fact, there was a belief circulating among uneducated Sephardim in the Ottoman Empire and the Balkans in the 18th and 19th centuries that Judeo-Spanish was a Jewish language (because the speakers were Jewish) rather than a variety of Romance languages (Simović Vučina & Filipović 2008: 307; Симовић 2009: 236). Interestingly, among my interviewees, the middle generation has developed the idea that Judeo-Spanish is not a Spanish dialect attached to the Iberian Peninsula nor to the rest of the world. Igor Kožemjakin believes that: "Ladino is not a dialect but different Ladinos have different influence, like from French and Turkish." The youngest, post-Yugoslav, generation have adopted a different more ambivalent view. A.A. asks: "If Ladino is a Spanish dialect? I don't know […]. (…) Yes, it is a dialect and a combination of different languages."

As I have showed for the middle generation conceptions of the mother tongue are destabilized. This is evident from Igor Kožemjakin's statement that,

> My […]. [This matter of my 'mother tongue' is a] very difficult question, knowing the fact that there have been linguistic disputes. I don't know how to call it anymore […] 'mother language.' So, I speak Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian. I really don't know how to […] Sarajevski [the 'Sarajevo language'] would be the most appropriate name. Sarajevski [Sarajevan].

Here, Igor admits that he is not sure how to classify his own native language, so he invents the category 'Sarajevski' as the most appropriate name. In so doing, he is adopting a new label that falls outside the categorical framework at hand (cf. Brubaker 2016: 133).

The subjects from the two youngest generations express a sense of powerlessness regarding their ability to learn Judeo-Spanish, since opportunities to do so do not exist. At the same time, there is also a lack of interest among the elderly to bring the younger generations closer to the Sephardic language, since it has no function in the broader Bosnian society. Hence, on the one hand the strength of national Slavic languages in Sarajevo has resulted in a weakening of Ladino for the Sephardim. On the other hand, Sarajevo's Sephardim express resistance and grief in relation to dominant, Slavic language ideologies.

From a broader perspective, I consider that the subjects' perceptions are reactive responses to external circumstances: this is why, for instance, the younger generations today show a stronger motivation than their elders to learn English. My finding is that the elderly do not show any motivation to teach the Sephardic language to the younger generations because of external trends/global interests (for example, the stronger role of English as a prospective mode of communication) that are becoming increasingly dominant.

In the following section I continue to summarize the conceptions among my interviewees. I focus on a discriminatory dimension (on the Bosnian-Herzegovinian state-level) against its Sephardim. I moreover pinpoint my interviewees' fear of a loss of their Sephardic identity.

6.2.1 A loss of Jewish-Sephardic Identification or not? A Bosnian-Herzegovinian Linguistic Discrimination against its Jews or not?

I stated in section II. (on 'Methodology') that while analyzing my interview-partners conceptions, I will take into account moments in which me and the interview-partner share non-verbal feelings. These moments were present throughout my field-studies. For example, when the younger generations speak of their language choices, they laugh, express confusion and/or sadness regarding the new linguistic situation. Moreover when the three generations reflect upon the loss (first- or second-hand) of Judeo-Spanish they show grief and powerlessness. Also the youngest *fear* of the lacking Sephardic/Jewish dimension in their lives is displayed in our conversations.

The pattern that I have observed among the younger Sephardic generation in Sarajevo in relation to the Jewish community's place in the Bosnian society is a nostalgic longing for Yugoslavia. Among other factors that I have discussed earlier, this longing probably has to do with the fact that Jews in Bosnia and Herzegovina today do not belong to any of the three recognized, constituent peoples of the state and thus cannot, for instance, run for the Presidency of the country. I think this exclusion makes them especially Yugo-nostalgic and ambivalent towards identifying with new Bosnia.

The other options for national identification, namely Spain and Israel, are difficult prospects. To go to Spain, one must learn standard Spanish, not Judeo-Spanish – a language that my

subjects may sometimes know only some phrases, but that is not even Spain's official language. In Israel, Hebrew is the official language and few of the subjects know that language or identify with it primarily. This lack of a viable Hebraic option probably makes the Sephardim especially ambivalent towards identifying with Israel. In other words: absent the commitment to *aliyah*, the Hebrew language and culture are not so important for my interviewees.

Moreover, there is an expressed fear among all three generations, of losing their Sephardic identity in Bosnia, Israel, and elsewhere. An illustrative example among the youngest is A.A., who is very conscious that the Slavic majority in Bosnia-Herzegovina hardly acknowledges and scarcely values the Sephardi culture:

> Once there was a TV-documentary about Hanukkah. They always broadcast documentaries about Bajram and Christmas and I was really happy that they once sent a programme about Hanukkah. The Sephardic culture is important but there is no chance to preserve it here.

The next-oldest generation reveals a corresponding fear of assimilation (i.e., not hybridization) due to the fact that many cultures coexist in Bosnia at the same time:

> (Yehuda Kolonomos:) I would say that this Jewish community life in Sarajevo will last only for 20 more years. Because of the mixing of different cultures there is not much tradition and religion.

The oldest generation, for its part, approaches the decline of Ladino culture as a kind of organic process, in other words, as something attributable to the modernization of life as new generations are born and take center stage:

> (Jakob Finci:) Ladino is a dying language, similar to Yiddish, which is also dying. The tendency today is to speak modern Spanish […]. Ladino is as an old language and if I may make a comparison, it's as if we speak here the Old Slavic language. Nobody would understand it.

The Sephardic culture among Jews, on one hand, is central for its symbolic value to my subjects as a source of cultural prestige. At the same time, the unstandardized Sephardic language is dying (cf. Brubaker 2015: 42-43). My respondents use various names when they refer to spoken Judeo-Spanish, such as 'Ladino,' 'Djudeo-Espanjol' and 'Ladino Spanish.' That it has many names is a typical sign of an unstandardized language. Even at a UNESCO conference in Paris in 2002, the participants could not agree upon only one name for the language; however, 'Ladino' and 'Judeo-Spanish' are the names used most frequently (Inalco; D. Tutonović, Personal Communication, 31.8.2017).

One may legitimately ask why should we care about the name of a language at all? The answer may be that it is because a name of a language signifies identity while also providing information about the origins of the speakers in question—and arguably, if the language has many names, this may indicate the multivalence and/or variety of the supposedly integral identity in question. As Greenberg observes, "(…) the language you speak defines your place in a society and marks your ethnic identity and even your political orientation" (Greenberg 2002: 159). As regards both Judeo-Spanish and Serbo-Croatian one may pose the following questions: who has the authority to decide what the name of these languages should be and thus the identity of its speakers? Does the name of the language, and do the concomitant identities, have to be based in linguistic-historical tradition, or are new or transformed labels possible? (cf. Şaul 2013). In the context of Judeo-Spanish, the Sephardic studies scholar Ivana Vučina Simović thinks it is important to give space to the Judeo-Spanish speakers to reflect upon what language they speak and for them to decide. Given the cultural-historical context, however, we know that this 'free decision' is not 100% free; for example, the Jewish minority is excluded from being part of the constituent peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A people excluded in this way may seek integration with the majority by adopting the majority's language, or it may

close ranks and choose its own language, but in either case it still would be deciding partly on the basis of its exclusion by the majority.

<div align="center">❧ ⁘ ☙</div>

It seems to me that four factors have led to the gradual decline of Judeo-Spanish in Sarajevo: 1) the official linguistic ideologies that became dominant in the Habsburg period and in the first Yugoslavia; (2) the murder of most speakers of the Sephardic language during the Second World War; (3) the rise of Bosnia-Herzegovina in the post-war period ; and (4) the urban setting in which the Jews of Bosnia-Herzegovina tended not to be afraid of linguistic assimilation into the Slavic majority. This last fact also indicates a willingness on the part of the majority society to accept them. Despite this level of linguistic and social assimilation, the Jews in Sarajevo still care deeply about observing religious holidays and value the feeling of *belonging* to the Jewish community.

Owing to the first two factors, the Sarajevo Jews have suffered linguistic discrimination. Inasmuch as discrimination, or in this case homogenization, often entails a radical, zero-sum relationship between the culture(s) of the majority and that of the minority, this has, I suspect, resulted in the gradual decline of Judeo-Spanish in the case under discussion.

To conclude, my subjects fear what is in fact a very real loss of Sephardic identification across the generations. This fear is based on several factors: (1) the decline and unstandardized nature

of the Sephardic language; (2) the lack of acknowledgment of the Sephardic culture on the part of the Slavic majority in Bosnia; and (3) the reality of a high level of assimilation amongst the Sarajevo Jews into mainstream, non-Jewish society. Moreover, a linguistic discrimination has indeed taken place and is still ongoing because the state is not promoting the Sephardic language.

The following section moves on to a summary and conclusions regarding a South Slavic relationship to languages and minorities.

6.3 Synthesis: South-Slavic Languages and Non-Slavic Minorities

Benedict Anderson's (2006) idea of 'imagined communities'—that is, of communities based on the presumption that any commonality can be found by constructing or combining appropriate conditions for affinity is contradicted by the circumstance that nation-states do not necessarily include people who belong to a 'core-culture' and may not even regard 'old' ways and early outlooks as worthy (cf. Anderson 2006: 5-7; Hastings 1997: 3). This is perhaps why the 'imagined community' is oftentimes artificial and not a perfect reflection of cultural and demographic realities on the ground. As a matter of fact, the idea of determinate identities, i.e., the notion that a person is either one thing or the other (a Serb, a Croat or a Jew) is a central aspect of a fundamentalist and extremist nationalist narrative that persists in many nation-states as well as in multinational states such as Bosnia-Herzegovina. This limited way of thinking sustains the concomitant notion of *us vs. them* (Croats vs. Serbs for example) and rejects the possibility (and the reality) that individuals and groups exhibit multiple layers of identity (cf. Hobsbawm 1990: 174, 176). I submit that the transgenerational dialogue among the Sarajevo

Sephardim on which I have shed light here can help build a greater degree of self-understanding within the Bosnian-Herzegovinian multinational state that behold to absolutist, zero-sum concepts of identity. Having this dialogue, and exploring its consequences, is a crucial prerequisite for considering a more inclusive model of cultural diversity in ostensibly 'diverse' yet actually discriminatory Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Anderson (2006) and Hobsbawm (1990) focus on the construction of nationalism, but less so on communities that are only partly, or not at all, involved in mainstream processes of nation-building. Ellis (2003: 89), on the other hand, examines a community—the Kasabali in Tetovo, Western Macedonia—that was not involved directly in the new national construction. The focus of my work on the Sarajevo Sephardim is analogous to Ellis' case study.

My emphasis on the language question has been deliberate, for, in the Balkan area that question is closely connected with the fact that this area from 16th century until the late 19th century was divided between two large empires: the Ottoman and the Austro-Hungarian Empires. Thus, the discussion of linguistic identities and the sociolinguistic status of what was formerly known as Serbo-Croatian has become especially relevant since the rise of new state-structures in the region since the 1990s (Blum 2002: 129; Bugarski 2010: 44; Nuorluoto 2012: 130). The linguistic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina today, as I have showed, entails three inter-comprehensible languages. Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian–based on the very same neoštokavian (ekavian and ijekavian) dialects–has emerged as three different national standard languages because of state policies and attendant academic notions of South-Slavic national distinctiveness (Nuorluoto 2012: 134).[116]

> Mehrere ethnische Gruppen sprechen dieselbe Sprache, aber durch den Gebrauch einiger weniger lexikalischer oder phonetischer Merkmale können die Gruppengrenzen aufrechterhalten werden (Voss 2008: 112).

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[116] I am of course aware that the distinction 'language' vs. 'dialect' is tricky and very often a political one, not linguistic.

Clearly not every person, obviously not every Jew, in Bosnia and Herzegovina chooses to adopt these dictated linguistic categories in forming his/her own self-perception (cf. Bugarski 2013: 164). Nonetheless, shifting concepts of the *nations-ethnicities-languages* nexus during the past two centuries have definitely shaped South Slavic linguistic identities and standard languages in numerous ways. For instance, the new political landscape of the 1990s led to quite different processes of language differentiation among and between each of the major ethnic groups. Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin, Serbian, and other language-classifications and expressions emerged from these processes (Blum 2002: 129; Bugarski 2010: 44). New relationships between these languages have also taken shape. For instance, Bosnian and Montenegrin are no longer so-called 'sub-variants' of Serbo-Croatian (cf. Blum 2002: 51; Voss 2008: 111; Nuorluoto 2012: 105).[117]

Moreover, in South Slavic lands, owing to a continuous contact between neighboring languages and cultures speakers *actually practice* the cosmopolitan Western ideal of poly-culture and multi-optionality. Thus, the users' mode of coping with language-, and cultural contact—as distinct from the nationalist ideals that supposedly enforce cultural separation—may serve as model for a multicultural Europe. In any event, it seems clear that linguistic and therefore what one may call *hybridité identitaire* characterizes the many South-Slavic minorities. This hybridity is complex and therefore difficult to analyze because of its many

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[117] Another example of linguistic engineering and the role and function of ideology in creating conditions for linguistic identity formation is the *korenizatsija* in the Soviet Union in the 1920's. Local languages were strengthened and thus the communist regime invented ethno-linguistic national autonomous areas (in the modern understanding of nation-states such as France and Italy) where such previously did not exist. Karakalpak in Uzbekistan is an example of a language that had never before been written, and was firstly written with Arabic letters, secondly in Latin and thirdly in the Cyrillic alphabet (the order was different for different languages). It was also possible to acquire an education in many local languages (Hobsbawm 1990: 166, Pavlenko 2008: 280). Ten years after the realization of the *korenizatsija*, the Soviet administration figured that 192 different official languages (according to them) made the administration hard to maneuver and that the Russian language had been neglected (Pavlenko 2008: 280). Already in 1989, 23-47% of the Kazak, Latvian, Moldavian and Ukrainian populations spoke Russian as their first language (Spolsky 1999: 187, Pavlenko 2008: 283). 35% of the Kazaks, Latvians and Ukrainians were ethnic Russians and in Latvia Russian is not considered a minority language. The use of languages in the different Soviet republics was extremely diverse. Nevertheless, Russian was always a *primus inter pares,* especially when it came to the language use in the judicative, political contexts, higher education, the army and so forth (Comrie 1981: 35-36; cf. Landau & Kellner-Heinkele 2001: 51).

layers and because of the different ways in which subjects absorb and domesticate elite notions of 'proper' language and identity.

The whole idea of being and/or belonging to a nation/multinational state relies on shared memories that are constructed and reconstructed by the political surroundings. For that reason among others, multination-building (as in the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina) is a process of negotiation of past and future events (cf. Grandits & Brunnbauer 2013: 11-12). Jansen (2007: 193) stresses that national identities may not always be the most important ones for the Bosnian people in their lived experience. For example, the high number of intermarriages between persons of different nationalities in Bosnia-Herzegovina highlights that national differences carry relatively low significance in everyday life among many ordinary people within that polity (cf. Grandits & Brunnbauer 2013: 14, 16).

My reference group's perceptions are a reminder of the complex Bosnian reality. Their ambiguities with regard to language choices are core questions here, especially in the backdrop of the many ethnically-mixed relationships that exist in the Jewish Community of Sarajevo nowadays. The personal stories of identity formation I have gathered seem to depend, to a high degree, on highly diverse personal experiences even if the Sephardim share a Sephardic background that supposedly renders them culturally homogeneous or at least sets them apart starkly from their non-Sephardi neighbors. The memories that my informants recall, and which I have related in this thesis, are remembered differently, so it is fair to say that there is no single 'Sarajevo Sephardic story.'

The ethnically homogeneous nation-state has, however, become the role model for the whole of Southeastern Europe – and for Israel. In both places a strong western influence, mainly German and Italian models, is evident as a basis. According to modern, secular models of

nationalism, such as the French, religion is a non-essential feature of a nation, even if religion can in some ways impart nationality to individuals and to groups (Sundhaussen 2013: 49). When religion becomes a national and not merely a private matter, its focus shifts and oftentimes there develops a hierarchy among the various religious affiliations within a nation-state.

On one hand, the Sarajevo Jews are participating in the Bosnian multination-building project in the sense that they speak the majority language(s) and are citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina in good, if disadvantaged position. On the other hand, they comprise a minority and, as a minority, Jewish people in Bosnia-Herzegovina are excluded from a multinational legal and political system that recognizes only three 'constituent peoples' with corresponding Christian Orthodox, Catholic and Muslim religious and linguistic identities. To conclude, Croats, Muslims and Serbs comprise the constituent people of Bosnia-Herzegovina and even if the country is not a nation-state per definition it clearly behaves like one when it comes to the treatment of its 13 listed minorities, Jews being one of them. Similarly, the Israeli nation-state law stipulates that Israel is a nation-state only for its Jews and it thus discriminates against the country's Arabs, Druze and Bedouin minorities.

Furthermore, ethnic institutions that permit a minority's successful integration with a social majority—as discussed earlier in chapter one (cf. Magnusson 1989: 181-183)—are to a large extent not available in Sarajevo. By this I mean that there are no Jewish educational institutions or cultural centers with any real political power. I nevertheless believe that the minority-group has access to a living Jewish culture through the Jewish Community building, and through informal programs like the summer camps for the children and youth.

6.4 A European-Jewish Relationship with Language and Culture

The imposed South Slavic standard languages make the Sarajevo Jews linguistically divided. As already shown, when asked about this, they say they still speak Serbo-Croatian, laugh (as if to shrug), or say 'naš jezik' ('our language'), or even assert that they do not know what language they speak. This reflects the phenomenon of 'schizoglossia' that is common in the processes of language standardization (cf. Haugen 1962):

> Schizoglossia may be described as a linguistic malady which may arise in speakers and writers who are exposed to more than one variety of their own language (Haugen 1962: 63). (...) Sufferers are especially common in a society where most people are socially mobile and very few know exactly where they stand (Haugen 1962: 64).

In this particular instance, there is a feeling of instability on the part of the Sarajevo Jewish population that led to destabilized perceptions of language.

While the interlocutors consulted for this work talked extensively about their own lives, it is obvious that they identify at some level with a much longer and broader Jewish story—the story of the life of the Jewish people—and this is partly why they find the celebration of Shabbat and other Jewish holidays meaningful. These celebrations have become *lieux de mémoire* and the points of reference when proposing what it means to be Jewish in Sarajevo today (cf. Nora 1998: 610).

The Jewish people in the modern Diaspora have historically inhabited both the majority and minority societies, and have often mastered both non-Jewish languages at hand, and their ancestors' mother languages. One could argue that their multiculturalism and multilingualism reflect a broader European-Jewish relationship with language and culture. In my study, it is especially the middle generation of my respondents whose conceptions of 'mother tongue' are destabilized and multilingual.

The story of the Sarajevo Sephardim is on one hand part of their collective memory, and they embody and preserve that memory through the commemoration of Sephardic and Jewish holidays. On the other hand, the Sephardim exhibit an individualistic approach, since the individuals at hand also assert hyphenated identities. The perceptions of my reference group are moreover dependent on their knowledge of the past and present, and it is from this frame of knowledge or lack of knowledge that their identifications are being formed (cf. Nandy 1995: 49). A.A., for example, does not identify with Israel as she seems to know very little about its history. Not surprisingly, she does not speak Hebrew and has never been to Israel. Vladimir Andrle says that Yugoslavia is most influential in his life. When it comes to football he is for Bosnia but if Spain would play against someone else than Bosnia he would be for Spain. If Spain and Israel represent for my subjects a too-distant past, and if both countries have little claim on their present, it seems, contrarywise, that my subjects share positive feelings about the Yugoslav period. That period serves the informants in all three generations as a common, usable past. Memories of Yugoslavia may well express a perception of successful integration within the Yugoslav society, yet are perhaps also a reflection of the Jews' relationship with their own culture as one that can coexist with others and serve as an example to various ethnic and religious minorities.

6.5 Evaluation of the Findings

The aim of this whole study was defined accordingly: to give voice to the very marginal Sarajevo Sephardic community and to explore my interviewees' reflections on language and Jewish identification. The aims were specified in research questions, addressing what the interviewees choose to call the language that they speak today in Bosnia-Herzegovina; whether

religion is important to the construction of their Jewish identity; how they have dealt with the political changes after the collapse of Yugoslavia, and how they continue to adapt to the new Bosnia-Herzegovina and at the same time, maintain their Jewish culture.

Building on a multi- and intergenerational perspective, the study combined the identity-conceptions of three Sarajevo Sephardi generations: individuals under-30, who had only lived in Bosnia-Herzegovina, middle-aged subjects between 37 and 49 years, who had lived both in Yugoslavia and in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and persons over-55, who had lived most of their lives in Yugoslavia. I concluded earlier that out of my interviewees, the middle-aged generation, who experienced the collapse of Yugoslavia during their formative years, demonstrate hybrid identities the most. These subjects are moreover very ambivalent about what to call the language that they speak today and they do not necessarily embrace contemporary Bosnia-Herzegovina. They have a strong Jewish national self-identity which make these subjects bonded with Israel. Religion has moreover become an option for interviewees belonging to this generation, now – post-Yugoslavia – that religion is not seen as a taboo. Religion may be comforting to them as well after the traumatic experience of Yugoslavia's collapse.

My research has dealt with different aspects of the Sarajevan Jewish community during different periods of transitions: especially the transition from the socialist Yugoslavia (after the Second World War) to the Bosnian-Herzegovinian multination-state (from 1995 onwards). Furthermore, the interviewees' (real or imaginary) transitions from/to Israel and Spain form parts of their intergenerational memory and for that reason I have showed how they reflect on the belonging in Israel and Spain.

At least four important transitional periods can be introduced in the history of the Sephardim in Sarajevo. The first period covers their heyday in the Ottoman times, while living as a protected *Dhimmi* and being able to building a Sephardic ethno-religious and linguistic identity.

The second period is a period of modernization alongside the official linguistic ideologies that became dominant in Habsburg and in interwar Yugoslavia – which in turn led to a decline of Judeo-Spanish as a spoken language in Sarajevo. I regard the Holocaust as a period of its own, followed by socialist Yugoslavia and then independent Bosnia-Herzegovina. Israel and Spain add to all these transition periods because of the emigration from/to these historical homelands.

The Sarajevan Jewish community has survived and transformed during the course of these transitions. There are however only 880 Jewish Community members today and regarding the three generations I surveyed, on one hand, I can identify a process of ethnic and cultural decline that is, with the youngest generation, in its final stages. Clearly, it is not an easy task to remain Jewish/Sephardic in a post-Shoah Bosnia-Herzegovina, where Jews and the other minorities are on the very margins of the state's political and economic priorities, as I have discussed in detail earlier. On the other hand, across the generations, the Jewish and/or Sephardic tradition is important and highly valued by all my interviewees. Their special ways of celebrating holidays and participating in other social gatherings–gossiping in the Bohorete Women's Club and engaging in the youth club at the Jewish Community Centre for example–are at the very foundation of their, and the continuous Sarajevo Sephardic culture. Which form Sarajevo's Jewry will take in the future – regardless of who will be in power at the Jewish Community as well as in Bosnia-Herzegovina – remains an open question.

6.6 Directions for Further Research

An inevitable consequence of my thesis writing is that many aspects remain unexplored because they fall outside the scope of my study. Moreover, my attained findings have generated issues for further research. In the following, I mention a few aspects that might be interesting to

investigate in the future.

First of all, it is relevant to conduct interviews with Jews from Sarajevo who left to Spain during the most recent war in Bosnia-Herzegovina of the 1990s. In chapter two, I refer to Lea Maestro, who left Sarajevo for Spain during this time and who is still living there today. Finding other members of her reference-group and exploring their conceptions of 'Spain,' and the circumstances surrounding the immigration from Sarajevo to the country would be of great interest.

The second aspect involves a follow-up study with the young adults and middle-aged interviewees included in this study. Time has elapsed since my data was collected and it would be relevant to explore how their identity-conceptions and reflections on belonging in Bosnia-Herzegovina/Yugoslavia, Israel and Spain have developed since then.

A third, different type of research would include many more members of the Sarajevo Jewish Community. Bringing to light a quantity of testimonies of the rescue during the Second World War and the role of these testimonies in shaping Jewish identities in Sarajevo today would be of great importance. To bring the research findings up-to-date and in line with current events, it would be useful to further explore conceptions of anti-Semitism in contemporary Bosnia-Herzegovina and to compare these conceptions with fellow Jews' and also Muslims' experiences of exclusion in other parts of Southeastern Europe.

Additionally, through interviews with Sarajevo Sephardi 'grandparents, parents and their children' we might gain new insights into the linguistic identities of Sarajevo Sephardim and to the linguistic reality of minority groups.

APPENDIX A

(LIST OF INTERVIEWEES WITH SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA)

There were three interlocutors under the age of 30:

Tea Abinun is a 19-year-old female who is a M.A. student of musicology in Sarajevo. She can speak English, Bosnian Serbian Croatian Montenegrin and a little Spanish. She has no connection to Israel.

In the latest population census in 2013, she declared herself Jewish in terms of both religion and ethnicity and that her mother tongue is Bosnian.

Her family lost property during the Second World War that was never returned to them or compensated for.

Vladimir Andrle is a male 29-year-old who is a coordinator of humanitarian and cultural activities at *La Benevolencia.* He has completed a B.A. degree in music in Sarajevo. He speaks English, Bosnian Serbian Croatian Montenegrin and a little German and Spanish. He has been to Israel once in his life for a week on a leadership-programme.

In the latest population census in 2013, he declared himself as Jewish in terms of both religion and ethnicity and that his mother tongue is Bosnian.

His family lost property during the Second World War that was never returned to them or compensated for.

A.A. who did not wish to be named is a female 23-year-old who is a M.A. student of musicology in Sarajevo. She can speak English, Bosnian Serbian Croatian. She has no connection to Israel.

In the latest population census in 2013 she declared herself Jewish by religion and Croatian by ethnicity, and noted that her mother tongue is Bosnian.

Her family lost property during the Second World War that was never returned to them or compensated for.

❧

There were three interlocutors between 30 and 55 years old:

Yehuda Kolonomos is a 49-year-old male who works as senior assistant at the academy of music in Mostar. He has completed a M.A. degree in music in Oslo. He speaks English, Croatian, Macedonian Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, Italian, Hebrew and Ladino. He has been in Israel a few times as a tourist. In the future, he would like to make *aliyah* and settle down in Israel.

In the latest population census in 2013, he declared himself as Jewish in terms of both

religion and ethnicity and that his mother tongue is Croatian.

His family lost property during the Second World War that was never returned to them or compensated for.

Tina Tauber is a 37-year-old female who works as a tour guide. She completed one year of Jewish studies in Stockholm and has studied English in Sarajevo. She speaks Hebrew, English, the Yugoslavian languages, and a little Russian. She made *aliyah* in 1992 and returned to Sarajevo in 2004.

In the latest population census in 2013, she declared herself Jewish by religion, Bosnian by ethnicity and that her mother tongues are Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian.

During the Second World War, her family lost property that was never compensated for. However, the apartment that was taken from her father during the Bosnian war was returned following a court decision.

Igor Kožemjakin is a 37-year-old male who is a counselor involved with ethnic-religious cooperation. He is moreover *chazan* in the Jewish community. He has completed one year of Jewish studies in Stockholm; he has also studied law and economics in Sarajevo. He speaks English, Russian, Hebrew, Bosnian Croatian Serbian Montenegrin, Bulgarian and Macedonian. He made *aliyah* in 1994 and returned to Sarajevo in 2001.

In the latest population census in 2013, he declared himself as Jewish in terms of both religion and ethnicity and that his mother tongues are Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian.

His family lost property during and after the Second World War. This was never returned to them or compensated for.

There were three interlocutors older than 55, all of whom are members of the *Bohorete Women's Club*:

Laura Papo Ostojić is 78 years old and studied architecture in Sarajevo. She speaks English as well as a little French and Italian. She has been to Israel once to visit her two sons who were living there during the Bosnian war but who have come back to Sarajevo after the war.

In the latest population census in 2013, she declared herself Jewish by religion and ethnicity and that her mother tongue is Serbo-Croatian (this was not a given option, but she asked the person asking the questions to write Serbo-Croatian anyway).

In 1948, her family lost property that was never returned or compensated for.

Matilda Finci is 82 years old and studied Romance languages (French, Italian and Latin) in Sarajevo. She speaks French, Italian, Russian, Hebrew and a little Spanish and Ladino. She lived in Israel during the war from 1992 to 1999.

In the latest population census in 2013, she declared herself Jewish in terms of both religion and ethnicity and that her mother tongue is Serbo-Croatian.

In 1948, her family lost property that was never returned or compensated for.

Erna Kaveson Debevec is 84 years old and she studied law in Sarajevo. She speaks English, Spanish and Ladino. She has never lived in Israel, but has family there.

In the latest population census in 2013, she declared herself Jewish in terms of both religion and ethnicity and that her mother tongue is Bosnian.

During the communist regime, her family lost property that was never returned or compensated for. The state has recently sold her former property to a private person.

In addition, I consulted two key experts: Jakob Finci, President of the Jewish Federal Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Eli Tauber, who is responsible for its cultural activities.

Jakob Finci is 74 years old and has completed a postgraduate degree in international trade law. He speaks English, Italian, French, Spanish and Bosnian Serbian Croatian. He has never lived in Israel, but he visits the country twice a year for work and his two sons, who did *aliyah* before the Bosnian war, used to live there (they now reside in California).

In the latest population census in 2013, he declared himself as Jewish in terms of both religion and ethnicity and that his mother tongue is Bosnian.

During the Second World War, his family lost property that was never returned or compensated for.

Eli Tauber is 67 years old and has a PhD in history from Sarajevo. He speaks Hebrew, English, Bosnian Croatian Serbian Montenegrin, as well as a little Ladino, Italian, Spanish and French. He did *aliyah* in 1992 and returned to Sarajevo in 2004 when he got his apartment back. His two sons stayed in Israel and still live there.

In the latest 2013 population census, he declared himself Jewish in terms of both religion and ethnicity, and that his mother tongue is Bosnian.

During the Second World War, his family lost property that was never compensated for. However, the apartment that was taken from him during the war in the 1990s was returned following a court decision.

APPENDIX B

(THE QUALITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE)

1. Koliko godina imate?
2. Koji je Vaš maternji jezik? Koji jezik su govorili roditelji Vaših roditelja?
3. Koliko je jezik važan za vas?
4. Da li ste učili i dzudesmo? Ako da, da li ga još uvijek znate?

(U Jugoslaviji)
5. Koji jezik/jezike ste govorili kod kuće?
6. Koji jezik ste govorili sa svojim prijateljima?
7. Koji jezik ste govorili na radnom mjestu?
8. Na kom jeziku ste čitali novine i knjige?
9. Koji jezik ste govorili na univerzitetu?
10. Koji jezik ste učili i govorili u školi?
11. Da li ste kod kuće slavili Pesach? Koji jezik ste koristili u tom kontekstu?
12. Da li ste slavili božić/bajram? Koji jezik ste koristili u tom kontekstu?
13. Šta mislite, da li je jugoslavensko iskustvo bilo pozitivno?
14. Da li ste ikad vidjeli Tita?
15. Da li ste predosjetili slom Jugoslavije?
16. Da li još uvijek postoje ljudi koji sebe zovu «Jugoslaveni»?
17. Da li je u vremenu nakon jugoslovenskog konflikta postojao i da li sada postoji   dijalog među religijama?
18. Ko su bile i ko su sad „prijateljske strane"?

(Danas)
19. U okviru porodice koristimo se sljedećim jezikom:
20. Jezik koji pričam sa prijateljima je:
21. Koji jezik govorite na poslu?
Šta radite/ čime se bavite?
22. Na kojem jeziku najradije čitate?
23. Koji jezik govorite kad ste uzbuđeni?
24. Da li nekad nesvjesno miješate više jezika u jednoj rečenici?
25. Da li ste primjetili pojavu novih riječi od kada više ne postoji srpsko-hrvatski jezik?
26. Kako vi vidite projekat bosanskog jezika? Kao islamizaciju jezika?
Imate li neki primjer za to?
27. Kakav odnos imate prema židostvu? Mislite li da je ovaj odnos ima veže s vašom uporabom jezika?
28. Postoji li opštinski bilten / jevrejske novine u Sarajevu koje čitate?
29. Gledate li neki poseban jevrejski TV program?
30. Kupujete li rado židovske proizvode?
31. Gdje biste voljeli da živite, ako ne u Sarajevu?
32. Naselja; gdje živite u Sarajevu, postoje li etničke granice?
33. Šta mislite, kako Vas drugi u Sarajevu doživljavaju/posmatraju? Da ste Jevrej/ka?
34. Kako Vi osjećate svoju nacionalnu pripadnost (kao religiju/ etničku pripadnost)?

35. Da li za Vas postoji hijerarhija jezika?

36. Znate li koji je bio razlog dolaska vaših predaka u Balkanu?

39. Imate li članove porodice koji ne žive u BiH i ako da, gdje?

40. Kako komunicirate sa članovima porodice u inostranstvu? Putem mejla/bloga/Skype-a?

41. Da li ste član nekog udruženja? Ukoliko da, iz kog razloga?

42. Šta mislite, biti Jevrej/Jevrejka znači živjeti jevrejstvo u praksi?

43. Da li je neki Vaš identitet ugrožen zbog postojanja nekog drugog identiteta?

44. Da li je kod Vas jedan identitet izraženiji od ostalih?

45. Kad BiH igra fudbal protiv Izraela/Španije, za koga navijate? Iz kojih razloga?

46. Da li govorite/ čitate hebrejski? Da li je hebrejski za Vas važan?

47. Da li govorite/ čitate španski? Da li je španski za Vas važan?

48. Imate li braću i sestre, djecu, rođake: koliko ih ima i čime se bave?

49. Živite li u Izraelu? Hoćete li se vratiti?

50. Imate li unuke i ako da, imaju li njihova imena neka posebna značenja? Da li je neki jevrejski jezik u tom kontekstu od posebnog značaja ili ne?

51. Šta mislite, za 5 godina ovdje više niko neće pričati sefardski?

52. Šta mislite, Ladino je dijalekat španskog jezika?

53. Šta mislite, može se biti Sefard bez da se govori sefardski?

54. Slušate li sefardske pjesme, čitate li sefardsku literaturu?

55. Da li je obnova jezika i kulture važna?

56. Da li se vidjeli pisane sefardske tekstove? Ako da, koje pismo smatrate za to boljim/ podesnijim?

57. Smatrate li da postoji u danasnjici pojacan antisemitizam i ako da, da li je pojacan u BiH zato sto je Sarajevo vecinskim dijelom muslimansko i zato sto su bosanski muslimani na strani Palestinaca na Bliskom Istoku?

58. Da li je Sarajevo religijski tolerantno kao nekada?

59. Šta mislite o islamskoj drzavi i islamizaciji BiH?

60. Moze li se reci da okupacija sarajeva za vrijeme rata podsjeca muslimane na Izrael / budi mrznju prema Izraelu?

61. Kako to izgleda na televiziji. Koje medije citas?

62. Kakve su percepcije o skorasnje dovedenom zakonu o povratku?

63. kako utice ekonomska kriza u Evropi na Jevreje u Sarajevu?

APPENDIX C

(THE TENTATIVE QUANTIFICATION)

Belgrade, Sarajevo					
	Izrazito se ne slažem 1	Ne slažem se 2	Niti se slažem niti se ne slažem 3	Slažem se 4	Izrazito se slažem 5
1 Može se biti Sefard bez da se govori sefardski	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2 Sefardski je dijalekat španskog jezika	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3 Biti Jevrej/Jevrejka znači živjeti jevrejstvo u praksi	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5 Znam porodice u kojima su braća i sestre različitih nacionalnosti	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6 Za nekoliko godina ovdje više niko neće pričati sefardski	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Salonica					
	Διαφωνώ πλήρως 1	Διαφωνώ κάπως 2	Συμβατό, ούτε καλό ούτε κακό 3	Αντιστοιχεί αρκετά καλά 4	Συμφωνώ απόλυτα 5
1 Μπορει καποιοs να εινε σεφαδιτηs χωρις να εινε σε θέση να μιλήσει την σεφαραδίτικη γλωσσα	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2 Η σεφαραδίτικη γλωσσα είναι μια ισπανική διαλεκτοs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3 Για να θεωρειται καποιοs Εβραίος/Εβραια πρεπει να άσκει τον Εβραϊσμό στην πράξη	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5 Γνωρίζω οικογένειες στις οποίες υπάρχουν αδέρφια που έχουν διαφορετικές εθνικές ταυτότητες	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6 Σε λίγα χρόνια δεν θα μιλαει κανείς εδώ την σεφαραδίτικη γλωσσα Sefardski	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

APPENDIX D

(THE FILM – *A SARAJEVO JEWISH STORY*)

A Sarajevo Jewish Story (2017) is a 26:30 minutes long documentary film with English subtitles
A link to the film: https://vimeo.com/235783531 Password: rock

⚜

A Sarajevo Jewish Story is about the Sephardim living today in Bosnia's capital – descendants of the Jews who settled in the Balkans, and elsewhere in the Ottoman Empire, following their expulsion from Catholic Spain in the late 15th century. The Sephardim managed to preserve their ethno-religious and linguistic identity (Judeo-Spanish, also known as Ladino) during some four centuries of the Ottoman rule, which allowed for ethno-religious autonomy of the empire's Christians, Jews and Muslims.

The fall of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires at the end of the First World War and the simultaneous rise of nation-states in the Balkans led to an increase in exposure to Western-style modernization, but a distinct Sephardi identity survived. A once prosperous and relatively large community was nearly destroyed in the Holocaust, and migrations (often to Israel) after the Second World War and during the Bosnian war of the 1990s continued. Today there are only several hundred Sarajevo Sephardim. This film is about different generations of Jews living in Sarajevo now, and their reflections on the changes in their community over time.

The film gives voice to different generations' memories of socialist Yugoslavia, which disintegrated in the early 1990s, when Serbo-Croatian also officially disintegrated. Moreover,

the film explores the interviewees' conceptions of Judeo-Spanish. *A Sarajevo Jewish Story* mirrors the dialogue between different generations and their memories of *now* and *then*. By addressing challenges facing European minorities, particularly with respect to the disappearance and/or transformation of minority languages, the film is fundamentally about Europe today.

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