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ORIGINAL PAPER

Re-imaging and re-imagining the past after 'memoricide': intimate archives as inscribed memories of the missing

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Abstract This paper discusses a number of stories about loss, grief and genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the attempts by the survivors to construct intimate archives about their shattered lives. In addition to the loss of human lives, the deliberate destruction of documents, photographs, books and official records has been deeply felt by the genocide survivors and other victims of 'memoricide' in Bosnia as a very personal loss, an aggravated trauma and a metaphor for annihilation of their personal, family and communal existence. Subsequently, for them, the recreation of personal records and communal archives ultimately becomes an attempt to reclaim their own past and, in the process, to reaffirm their identities and recreate and sustain a sense of continuity in a post-genocide context. Using a series of ethnographic vignettes from Bosnia and the Bosnian refugee diaspora, the paper highlights the importance of the survivors' emotional (and embodied) attachment to various forms of records and archival material. It also demonstrates the potential for research in memory and archival studies to actively engage in the creation of historical narratives about violations of human rights, thus contributing to truth-finding, social healing and reconciliation processes in post-conflict and post-genocide communities.

Keywords 'Memoricide' · Archive · Affect · Photography · Genocide · Bosnia

Introduction: feeling, emotion and affect in the archive

Affects, like feelings and emotions, have come to be associated with something out of control, irrational, weak and feminine, but also something potentially violent, troubling and conflict-generating. Although affect, feeling and emotion are routinely

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used interchangeably, as Shouse (2005) insists, it is important not to confuse these terms with each other: 'feelings are *personal* and *biographical*, emotions are *social*, and affects are *prepersonal*'.

Shouse elaborates on this distinction in his essay 'Feeling, Emotion, Affect', asserting that 'a feeling is a sensation that has been checked against previous experiences…It is personal and biographical because every person has a distinct set of previous sensations from which to draw when interpreting and labelling their feelings' (2005). For Shouse, an emotion is the projection or display of a feeling, while an affect is a non-conscious experience of intensity; it is a moment of unformed and unstructured potential (Shouse 2005). Although distinct, these psychosocial phenomena are interrelated and manifest in the form of a full subjective experience in relation to both our inner and outer worlds. 'Without affect feelings do not "feel" because they have no intensity, and without feelings rational decision-making becomes problematic' (Damasio 2000, p. 204). In Shouse's words, affect plays an important role in determining the relationship between our bodies, our environment, and others, and the subjective experience that we feel/think as affect dissolves into experience (Shouse 2005).

While respecting the outlined taxonomy defining affect, feeling and emotion, in the context of this paper, the term 'affect' is used to refer to a totality of our subjective and emotional reactions, perceptions and experiences of a given phenomenon. Unlike the widespread negative connotations about affect, the adjective 'affectionate' (and the noun 'affection'), while having positive meaning, is a personal quality expected to be kept in the private domain and excluded from our public and professional personas. This paper challenges such a dichotomy by recognising the role of intimacy and affection in researching, interpreting and retrieving material and non-material records and their storytelling potential. However, established disciplinary boundaries, based on positivist principles separating 'objective' and 'subjective', remain in place in spite of their increasingly porous state, especially in the discourse of archival science. Far from the realm of affect, intimacy and affection, archives and records are most commonly and canonically understood to be about facts, and are closely associated with words resonating with positivity such as 'evidence', 'digital object', 'resource', 'metadata', 'trustworthy', and the phrase 'authentic and reliable' (Pearce-Moses 2005, p. xviii). In the best of positivist traditions, archives and records imply objectivity, neutrality, impartiality and personal detachment—that is, everything that is the opposite of subjective, emotional and affective.

By bringing these seemingly distant terms and phenomena together, this paper—and other papers in this volume—aims to challenge the entrenched, artificial separation between affect and archive, and to make a contribution towards the emerging debate not only about affect and archive but also about the role of affect in archive and about the interrelation between subject and object, self and other and the multiplicity of synergies and meanings created in the process. The term archive, in the context of this paper, is used rather fluidly and does not necessarily refer to an institution, building or organisation 'maintaining records of enduring value' (Pearce-Moses 2005, p. 30), but to any collection of 'stuff', tangible or intangible, 'worthy of continued preservation' (Doyle 2001, p. 353) that is utilised to mediate creation of a historical narrative of a particular event or person.

While largely remaining unacknowledged, affects and emotions, subjective and personal, have always been an integral part of archives and records in all their various forms, even though to uncover these links might require some imagination, creativity and reading between, beyond and behind the lines of a particular text or document. And as archivists recognise better than possibly any other discipline, text here does not refer exclusively to a written language but to all forms of texture in which humans have been inscribing their codes and symbols as evidence of their own or someone else's existence, or absence.

As argued in this paper, the connection between affect and archive runs along many different lines. In a broader social as well as a narrow personal sense, record creators' and record retrievers' affects are an integral part of that connection, and so is the content recorded about those who are both subject and object of a particular record. There is also another dimension, another *meta* level, where affect and archive form a dialectical relationship; namely, when a record is turned into a story, both narrative and evidence—which is subsequently contextualised, theorised, analysed and personalised. In the process, a record also gets a social life on its own, as Michelle Caswell has evocatively described in her book *Archiving the Unspeakable* (2014). This is where we, researchers and other people interested in studying records and archives, with all our subjective, personal and affective qualities and biases, come into the picture.

While researchers' positionalities and subjectivities are an important dimension of affect in the archive and should be appropriately acknowledged, in this paper I focus primarily on the affective relationship between archives and archival material in various tangible and intangible forms and people whose lives, identities and memories have been in many ways embedded in, defined by and often reduced to mere records, private fonds and fragmented ephemera. The paper also discusses various approaches and strategies that the survivors of genocide employ in reclaiming, recreating and reintegrating records of their own past in their everyday lives. Ultimately, the paper attempts to tackle broader more practical, methodological and ethical questions and challenges facing the archival field including: (1) The role of affect in archives; (2) How archival theory and research, framed by long-standing positivisms, can open up space for recording the personal experiences and perceptions of those who directly experienced the trauma of genocide and war; and (3) What is the role of the researcher in a post-genocide context?

A note on method

The paper is based on a series of ethnographies from Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH)[1] and the Bosnian refugee diaspora, involving genocide survivors, mostly women who lost their loved ones in the 1992–1995 war. The fieldwork sites, i.e. the places where my participants live, and to which I have been repeatedly returning over the last several years, are literally spread across three continents, from the Bosnian towns of

[1] I use the shorter and more commonly used name of the country 'Bosnia' and the acronym 'BiH', instead of its full name.

Sarajevo, Srebrenica and Prijedor to Melbourne in Australia, St. Louis in the USA and Vienna in Austria.

Defined as a holistic qualitative method, ethnography applies a variety of approaches and techniques to studying human actors in a social context. The most common ethnographic approaches involve participant observation, in-depth interviews and participating in the everyday realities of research participants as well as a reflexive engagement with the subject of study—i.e. people, their stories and their respective material and non-material cultures (Halilovich 2014a). Hence, to unveil a full meaning of different records, fonds and ephemera in the possession of my participants, and to gain understanding of how both tangible and intangible archival materials are utilised in the storytelling—and meaning-making—process, my ethnographic engagement in the 'sites' involved many prolonged conversations, participant observation and active participation and mediation in creating a missing historical narrative about their loss and survival. Such an approach is in line with the core principles of ethnography, putting an emphasis on practice and agency, that is, the experiences, feelings, meanings, imagination, narratives, metaphors and social networks of the people who are the subjects of scholarly inquiry, the aim of which is production of a 'thick description' of the cultural phenomena explored (Geertz 1973).

However, it needs to be noted that this is not just conventional ethnographic research such as, for instance, Clifford Geertz's (in)famous analysis of Balinese culture through the Balinese cockfight, but rather one that emerges from a gut-wrenching historical episode. Consequently, the challenges that researchers involved in this kind of research face are often more of an ontological than an epistemological nature. While being aware of their own positionality—i.e. moral, social and emotional investment in the research topic—researchers are also required to frame and articulate their research approaches and findings in a way that does not widen the disjuncture(s) between academic discourse and those who directly experienced and continue to live the magnitude of horrible events such as genocide. As Thomas Cushman (2004, p. 7) argues, such '…scholars are bound by two main ethical obligations: first, to avoid producing work that legitimises or rationalises the accounts of perpetrators of mass violence; and, second, to avoid producing accounts that deny the phenomenological realities of social suffering'.

As a researcher of the Bosnian genocide who is also a cultural insider with many personal connections to this tragic historic episode, I have come not only to appreciate but also to utilise my dual roles as a professional outsider and a cultural insider and to embed my personal positionality and reflexivity in the findings rather than to distance myself from the phenomenological realities of social suffering of those I write about (Halilovich 2011). Subsequently, my relationships with the people whose stories I have been recording as well as the relationships that the participants have with each other have also been an integral part of the research context and a broader genocide narrative. To capture this complexity and unveil the multiplicity of meanings within these relationships, I have tailored my research approach, so that in addition to conventional and multisided ethnography, it also often includes elements of autoethnography and participatory action research (Halilovich 2014b). The researcher–participant relationships have been fostered and

sustained not only through the fieldwork at my participants' homes and in their former and new neighbourhoods, but also at communal gatherings such as commemorations and collective burials of genocide victims in Srebrenica and Prijedor, the places that have become synonymous with the mass atrocities and genocide committed in Bosnia between 1992 and 1995. In post-war Bosnia, the commemorations have been focal events where the past and the present intersect in very real and at the same time very imagined ways. As Grenfell (2015, p. 16) argues, 'remembering of the dead by the living…draws people into a kind of simultaneity across time and binds them not only to a distinctive past, but also to a new, re-imagined future through collective mourning and recognition'. At the commemorations and burials, I have not only been a sympathetic observer and researcher-witness, but also a participant carrying caskets of the dead (sometimes containing only a handful of bones recovered from a mass grave site), shovelling the earth into the graves and taking part in other communal rituals as an expression of my solidarity with the survivors and paying respect to the victims. Adopting a more distant or 'neutral' position would be ethically and culturally inappropriate and would set me apart from my participants and fellow Bosnians. Being one of them in such situations, which in many respects I am, is what they expect me to be and what they value in my role as an 'archivist' recording their pain and the injustices they and their loved ones suffered. Entrusting me with this privileged role and sharing with me the profoundly painful and intimate details about their sufferings for me carries a responsibility to be a worthy keeper and conveyer of their stories. As there is no an archival institution, in the traditional sense of the term, that contains records of physical, social and affective dimensions of the genocide, any researcher involved in researching the effects of mass violence committed in Bosnia and in similar places ultimately performs the role of an archivist creating records of the war crimes often involving witnesses' and survivors' first-hand accounts and information of forensic value.

While, for an anthropologist like myself, ethnography constitutes both main method of inquiry and the 'final written product', in the context of this paper, for the described archival ethnographies, as Lynch (1999, p. 83) argues, 'archives [are] salient less as methodological resources than as historical phenomena in their own right…[which] does not negate the scholarly use of archival information; instead, it shifts attention to archives in formation and the localized gathering of histories'. As such, these ethnographies can be regarded not as finished stories or fixed archives, but as privileged insights into the everyday intimacy of personal 'archives in formation' that get reimaged, re-imagined and recreated on a daily basis. The ultimate aim of such an engaged and reflexive research approach was to highlight the relationship between survivors' social, emotional and embodied attachment to various forms of archives and records and the potential of ethnography in archival research to actively engage in the recreation of meaning and identities in the affected communities. Along with this, the paper aspires to make a contribution to the advancement of human rights and provide a personal dimension to truth-finding, transitional justice and reconciliation in post-conflict and post-genocide societies such as BiH.

Bosnia: a post-genocide society

It has been two decades since the four-year-long war in Bosnia ended. The first European war since 1945 resulted in the widespread abuse of human rights and a broad spectrum of war crimes involving systematic violence against the ethnic 'other' through the genocidal campaigns of 'ethnic cleansing' (Cigar 1995). In addition to the loss of human lives, the conflict in Bosnia will also be remembered for systematic annihilation of material culture, ranging from the destruction of sacred buildings, historical sites, the UNESCO-listed monuments and bridges, libraries, museums and archives to historical documents, unique manuscripts and official records held at various local government and state institutions. The violence behind the destruction was not some spontaneous rampage, but a diligently planned and executed military campaign aimed at erasing any evidence that those who were ethnically cleansed once existed (Becirevic 2014; Hoare 2008). However, the destruction of material culture did not remain some symbolic erasure of those whom it represented or with whom it was associated; their physical elimination was also a part of the 'joint criminal enterprise', a term that, many years later, came out of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) proceedings against those responsible for the war crimes in BiH (Nettelfield 2010).

The perpetrators paid close attention to hiding and destroying the evidence about the crimes they committed, not just by burning material culture but also by burying the bodies of the victims in mass graves at secret locations, dumping them into rivers and lakes and in many instances destroying the bodies. Without a body, there was no evidence of a crime. At the end of the war in 1995, there were close to 40,000 missing presumably killed individuals, almost 9000 of whom have still not been found or identified (ICMP 2015). These are some of the many lasting legacies of genocide and war, still affecting thousands of individuals, families and their respective local communities as well as reflecting on politics and culture within the broader Bosnian society. In such a society, records keep having 'consequences in both their presence and their absence' (Gilliland 2014, p. 251).

'Memoricide' and memories of the destruction of Sarajevo *Vijećnica*

Two decades after the war ended, Bosnia continues to be an exemplar of a post-conflict and post-genocide society, where justice, truth-finding and reconciliation have made many U-turns and the progress towards achieving a just and lasting peace has been halted by many unresolved issues from the past, including the issue of the missing. In addition to 'ethnic cleansing', genocide, siege and destructions of cities and violence against civilian populations in a manner unseen in Europe since the Second World War, the long-lasting effects of the 1992–1995 war in Bosnia also include the legacy and memory of the systematic obliteration of archives and cultural heritage. Ivan Lovrenović named this 'memoricide' in his essay 'The Hatred of Memory: In Sarajevo, Burned Books and Murdered Pictures', published in 1994 in *The New York Times*. More than 20 years after the events, the destruction

of the unique records, historical documents and books continues to affect many individuals and communities in Bosnia attempting to rebuild their lives not only in a material sense but also socially, culturally and psychologically.

To the genocide survivors and those who survived the 'memoricide' in Bosnia, the destruction of documents, photographs, books and official records has been deeply felt as a very personal loss, an aggravated trauma and a metaphor for annihilation of their personal, family and communal existence (cf. Halilovich 2014a). Hence, for them, the recreation of personal records, family histories and communal identities ultimately becomes an attempt to reclaim and reconstruct their shattered lives and to honour the memory of those who perished.

Between 1992 and 1995, Sarajevo was at the epicentre of the Bosnian 'memoricide' involving the destruction of archives and other depositories of cultural memory. The deliberate targeting and setting ablaze of the *Vijećnica*—which housed the National and University Library—and of the Oriental Museum destroyed the largest collections of books and written documents in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In these two attacks, more than two million books and more than two hundred thousand rare historical documents and unique manuscripts were destroyed (Riedlmayer 2002, pp. 105–6). Bakaršić (1994), a librarian of Bosnia's National Museum who risked his life attempting to save books from the burning *Vijećnica*, captured the moment in the following two sentences:

> The sun was obscured by the smoke of books, all over the city sheets of burned paper, fragile pages of grey ashes, floated down like a dirty black snow. Catching a page you could feel its heat, and for a moment read a fragment of text in a strange kind of black and grey negative, until, as the heat dissipated, the page melted to dust in your hand. (Bakaršić 1994, p 14)

These written words might have immortalised the destruction of *Vijećnica* much more than any camera that filmed the event, which took place from 25 to 27 August 1992. What Kemal Bakaršić personally experienced, and described in these sentences, has become Sarajevo's intimate collective memory, a shared emotion, of the burning *Vijećnica*. In the memories of many Sarajevans, other Bosnians and sympathetic outsiders, Kemal Bakaršić has posthumously become something of an urban hero, someone who defended Sarajevo's cultural memory and who in turn has become a part of the memory of many of his fellow citizens and the collective memory of his city.

Ivan Lovrenović, a Bosnian writer and historian, also witnessed and described how ordinary Sarajevans reacted to the burning of the National Library in an affective rather than a merely documentary way. Unable to save the flying burned pages of documents disappearing in flame and smoke, Professor Lovrenović may have done something equally as important; he managed to describe and preserve—i.e. create a record of—the sadness of those who bore witness this unspeakable crime against culture:

> Black, sooty, still hot butterflies—books and papers aflame, the library's treasure—were flying around and falling over distant parts of the city. Crowding in from the surrounding streets and alleys in total disregard of

> danger, half of Sarajevo—starved and misery-stricken people, exhausted by a long and cruel siege—rushed to save the soul of their city. […] As the blaze reached Neronian proportions, every access to the *Vijećnica* was blocked by constant, maniacal fire from machine guns and mortars. Hundreds of thousands of volumes—rare books, manuscripts, periodicals, precious documents—all had disappeared by daybreak (Lovrenović 1994).

As these short, dramatic passages illustrate, destruction of the books and documents was felt by the residents of Sarajevo as destruction of their city's and their country's soul, something very personal and deeply affective.

Indeed, hardly anyone remained indifferent to such ferocious and unjustified destruction of cultural heritage. While there could be no justification for the destruction of any religious or cultural site, the *Vijećnica*, a symbol of Sarajevo's civic identity, was not even a religious or exclusive ethnic symbol. The *Vijećnica* was destroyed, as András J. Riedlmayer—a Harvard scholar and an expert on Bosnia's cultural heritage—stated in an interview, because it represented exactly that: the civic identity of the city, a communal archive and the material evidence that people of different ethnicities and religions could live together sharing common cultural heritage as part of their collective cultural memory (Čečo 2008).

Many Bosnians have responded to this attempt to murder their 'collective soul' through a form of collective psychological defence by integrating the burning of *Vijećnica* and the destruction of other institutions of cultural memory into their own personal memories and narratives, even though many of them were not actually present at the places when and where these dramatic and traumatic events took place.

Stana,[2] a Sarajevan who lived near *the Library* before the war, is one such ordinary person with a somewhat extraordinary memory of its destruction. She 'remembers', in her own words, 'a countless number of burning books and the flames and smoke reaching close to my house…I felt all my life and the lives of everyone I knew went up in smoke…and I couldn't stop crying'.

More than 20 years later, she is still emotionally shaken when recounting her memories, even though these are actually memories of her feelings about the actual event. In reality, she watched the burning library and 'a countless number of burning books' and the 'flames and smoke reaching close to her house' far away from her house in Bistrik, a hill overlooking the *Vijećnica*, on television in a *Flüchtlingsheim* (refugee centre) in Germany, where she fled with her two children at the outbreak of the war, a few months before the burning of the Library. However, the intensity of her feelings and the sense of personal loss represented in the burning of the *Vijećnica* led her to adopt the image of the burning books as it would have been seen from her own house at the time. We could even argue that affect altered her memory in a cognitive sense, but for Stana it has nonetheless become her lived memory—something that happened to her personally and emotionally—regardless of where she was physically at the time. The fact that, since her return home in 1996 and until May 2014 when the rebuilt library was reopened, for many years she saw the ruins

[2] Stana's story features in my book *Places of Pain* (2013).

of the burned-down library on a daily basis might have contributed to how she had embedded, internalised and kept alive this collective Sarajevan memory. Stana has not been alone in such an experience.

'Sarajevo Roses'

While Sarajevans like Stana can only resort to the affective and emotional aspects of their memories of *Vijećnica* and the flames that took away a part of the material culture representing their personal and collective identities, they have managed to hold on to some of the wartime memories in a way that is both symbolic and affective and simultaneously serves as preservation of material evidence of violence. The most notable such example is epitomised by the *Sarajevo Roses*; I would argue possibly the saddest roses to symbolise any flowers, representing both evidence of the war crimes against Sarajevo civilians and memorials to the victims of the crimes (Halilovich 2013).

Spread throughout the city, the 'Sarajevo Roses,' the simplest and most unique of monuments in BiH, remain the clearest reminder that people were massacred on the streets of the city (Tumarkin 2005). The Roses are actually the original flower-shaped craters created by exploding shells that killed nine or more people in a single attack by the artillery surrounding the city and that were later filled with red plastic to memorialise the locations and those who were lost. Being killed by a shell or sniper fire on the streets of Sarajevo was one of the most common ways to die in the city that was under siege for more than 1400 days, the longest siege of a city in modern history. People were killed while queuing for bread and water, trying to trade at the market place, or doing any other 'ordinary' everyday activity. In some of these attacks, more than 70 people were massacred at once. After the war, many of the larger 'Sarajevo Roses' were filled in with proper cement, leaving only the smaller shrapnel scars in red.

For Sarajevans and those visiting the city, the sight of the 'roses'—that so closely resemble blood—serves as a prompt to remember, to bring back the visceral, affective memories of the war. On many occasions, I have observed how people avoid stepping on the red plastic at any cost, as if they felt that stepping on the spot where their fellow citizens lost their lives was disrespectful. Rather than storing these memories in an archive out of site, and potentially out of mind, Sarajevans insist on the importance of keeping the 'roses' as a public city-wide people's memorial to the thousands of civilians killed indiscriminately on the streets of their city. The everyday emotional confrontation with the reminders of the war makes the *Sarajevo Roses* an exemplar of the constant interplay of the affective and the archival, something that is hard not to see and not to feel.

For those who can tell no tales

The following example of affect and intimacy in the archive might not be as easily visible as the 'Sarajevo Roses', but it nonetheless continues to affect thousands of families and individuals at a profoundly personal, affective and embodied level. It relates to the issue of the missing and the processes of exhumation and identification of genocide victims dumped into mass graves across eastern and western Bosnia.

As it has now been statistically and forensically established, the mass killings in the 1992–1995 Bosnian war had clear ethnic and gender patterns; out of some 100,000 casualties, mostly Bosniak (Muslim) men perished (RDC 2007). The same statistics show that the number of women who were killed is about 10 % of the overall number of victims. However, the ICTY judgments have confirmed that Bosnian women were not merely collateral damage of the war, but in most cases were also primary targets of organised violence—including sexual violence—by armed men (ICTY 1996). While coping with their own trauma, in the aftermath the war women have taken up the crucial role of identifying the remains of their male relatives who perished (Wagner 2008). They have literally been the embodiment of the search for and identification of the missing in more than one way. They have preserved a link between those who perished and those who survived both through their narrated and documented memories of the missing men and though their bodies—their own DNA being a crucial piece of information required to establish identities of the missing (Halilovich 2014a, p. 240).

As Nettelfield and Wagner (2014) argue, the use of DNA-based identification technology in the identification process of those whose bodily remains were exhumed from mass graves in Bosnia has changed the way in which the identities of the victims of mass atrocities are re-established, as well as the nature of the discussion about what really happened in Bosnia. Truth-telling has assumed a more scientifically backed, rigorous tone. While the DNA records have created a new form of digitised archives containing scientific evidence about the crime, Sarah Wagner reminds us that 'DNA evidence does not exist in a vacuum; rather, its success depends on other manifestations of individual lives, social ties, and everyday practice'. She goes on to invoke her own ethnography, witnessing how 'family members holding a piece of cloth, touching its fabric, whose pattern and stitching are indelibly etched into their memory, use their own recollections to help retrieve their missing relatives' remains' (Wagner 2008, p. 268). When there is a lack or a complete absence of any material belonging to victims with which to identify them, the survivors use their own imagination to fill the gaps and integrate the imaginary into their memories of the perished relatives.

Hida is one of the survivors, a mother who lost her son Senad at Srebrenica and who lacks almost any material evidence about her lost son. She uses her imagination to create what Gilliland and Caswell (this volume) call an 'imagined record' to help her cope with her loss. Every time I visit her at her post-war address in the town of Hadžići, near Sarajevo—far away from her destroyed village in eastern Bosnia to which she never returned after fleeing from it in 1992—she always has more to tell me about her son who went missing in July 1995. While I was conducting research

for my book *Places of Pain* (2013), she wanted her Senad to find his place in my book, being worried that the true memory of Senad would perish when she was gone. A more pressing worry for her was that she might not live long enough to bury the complete body of her lost son. Considering her fragile health and the fact she was already in her seventies, these worries were quite justified. Recently, she was notified by the Missing Persons' Institute that a femur and a piece of cranium were identified as Senad's remains. She was given a choice to bury these two bones 'as Senad' or to wait for more remains to be found and positively identified. No one could tell whether and when that might be. Hida made the decision to wait. In 2013, based on the only piece of information she knew about the two pieces of forensic evidence representing the earthly remains of her son, Hida told me her reconstructed story of Senad's last moments:

> They found him in a paddock, not far from Srebrenica […] He must have got lost as he didn't know the area. His body was not in a mass grave […] He didn't get into their [Serb] hands alive. No, he didn't. He was hit while trying to escape. Maybe it was shrapnel? Fifteen years of rain and snow moved away his bones.

Hida was not trying to tell a tale of a heroic death of her son. Although she is a deeply religious woman, she never calls him a *šehid* (Muslim martyr), an Islamic term that during the war was officially adopted for the Muslim war casualties, both those who were killed as defenders or died as innocent victims. While contested by a secular part of the population, the term *šehid* has come to symbolise both a fallen Bosniak hero and a saintly sacrifice. Hida however always refers to her lost son as '*moj* (my) Senad' and through narrating how she imagined his death, and creating an imagined record of his last moments, she is protecting him, giving herself hope that Senad's death came fast and painlessly; that he was not captured, tortured and then gunned down in a summary execution—as if believing that the more people who know this version of the story, the more true it would become. Hida had accepted long ago that her Senad was killed, but for years she has been wrestling with her fears that he was afraid, his hands tied with wire, his eyes blindfolded, that he was thirsty and suffered before his body was sprayed with hot bullets—as survivors of the massacres have described and as forensic records based on material evidence from mass graves have undoubtedly confirmed. By selectively blurring facts with fiction, and infusing them with sadness, affection and intimacy, Hida is effectively creating an alternative, a more humane and more bearable, narrative about what might have happened to her Senad. In that regard, she does not differ from other archivists involved in (re)creating historical narratives. As Dever et al. (2010, p. 106) argue, 'the very processes of preserving (or destroying), gathering, selecting and ordering archival records represent mediating acts: acts that shape the archive as we find it and inevitably transform the possible meanings of those artefacts and the historical narratives they might sponsor'.

Imaging, imagining and inscribing affect in records

There are many other forms of creating one's own record of the memories of perished relatives. Some Srebrenica genocide survivors literally chose to inscribe their memories on their bodies. I observed this trend among the young men in Bosnia and the diaspora who lost their fathers in the genocide. Their 'embodied memories' might be much easier to read—with tattoos of their fathers' names, their dates of birth and the dates they died decorating their arms in the fashion of contemporary popular culture. These young men, who were toddlers at the time of genocide, have become walking memorials for their fathers' deaths, their bodies displaying their affect and record of their loss and never-ending grief. Many of these young men now in their twenties do not have lived memories of their fathers and the rare image they might have got hold of from various sources, including exchange of digitised photographs via the internet, often represents the only visual evidence of their existence.

These photographs come from a variety of sources and people now often spread across the world and including distant relatives, former school friends and working colleagues or publically available documents. In addition to photographs and documents, representing the most common form of tangible records, some of the lucky ones searching for any evidence about their relatives' existence have also been able to retrieve bits of audio and video capturing voice and image of their loved ones. YouTube, Facebook and other online tools and platforms have proven invaluable in these personal searches and creation of family archives, involving foremost emotional labour and remaining deeply affective activities. Finding a new, unknown photograph or document, and looking at the context in which the photograph was taken provide valuable material to the survivors about their loved ones' and their own past lives. Such attempts to reach out into the past and restore shattered family memories and histories are accompanied by a mixture of feelings from affect, love and sense of pride to a sense of loss and grief.

Visual records from beyond the graves

These feelings can be triggered by more serendipitous events. In 2005, the Salkić family, Srebrenica survivors living in Melbourne's suburb of St. Albans, was taken aback by an event that could only be compared with the surrealism of a bad nightmare. It came in the form of a report on the evening news on the Australian public television broadcaster SBS. What was shown was evidence from the ICTY, close-up footage of an execution of six civilians from Srebrenica 10 years earlier. Their hands were tied behind their backs, they looked exhausted and one of them, a man wearing a blue shirt, asked the executioners, the Serb soldiers, if he could get some water before they killed him. The request was denied with laughter and abuse by the captors, who continued filming. In that thirsty man in a blue shirt captured on the hand-held video, Mido, at the time a 22-year-old university student, and his 17-year-old sister Mubera recognised their father. Their mother, Zifa, recognised

her missing husband, Sidik. The footage showed how their father and husband was forced to carry the bodies of four men killed seconds earlier and load them onto a truck; then, how he and the remaining captive men were lined up and the gun barrels of the execution squad pointed at their chests before they were gunned down in cold blood. A week after he saw his father's last moments Mido was in Bosnia trying to get any information he could about his father's grave. Nearly two more years passed before Sidik Salkić's remains were positively identified. He was laid to rest at the memorial cemetery of Potočari outside Srebrenica on 11 July 2007.

Zifa might be viewed as an exemplar for Bosnian women's continuing pain, for their memorialisation of what they have lost. Her old Bosnian memories are present in her new home in Australia: the photographs in her lounge room, the picture of the young smiling Sidik, and the film footage—the family retains a copy of the awful film clip, which now serves a memorialising function like a photograph. Similarly, the homes of many other Bosnian wives and mothers who lost their loved ones have become kinds of private museums and monuments to their loss. One such home, resembling Zifa's on the outskirts of Melbourne and Hida's near Sarajevo, is Fatima's home in the St. Louis' suburb of Bevo, in the USA.[3] Fatima's living room looks recognisably 'Bosnian', not only because of the distinct coffee cups (*fildžani*), copper coffee pots (*džezve*) and crystal glasses and ornaments displayed in the large credenza dominating the living room, but also because of the framed photographs of her family members.

One of the photographs is of a young man, a teenager, who only recently might have finished high school and is still learning how to look like a serious adult. In another photograph, one can see a moustached man, probably in his thirties, hugging a school-age boy: both are smiling happily.

The pictures in her living room are some of the few material records of Fatima's past life. She tells how in 1992, before escaping to the nearest safe village, she only managed to fetch a photograph album and a handful of documents from her burning home. Among the photographs were the two now standing on top of her credenza in her house in St. Louis. The documents she saved back then included her children's school certificates and the family's health care booklets. Today, these documents represent her own personal archive, evidence that she once had a different life from the one she has been living for the last two decades. She shows me the excellent marks in her sons' old booklets. The fading blue ink in which subjects *matematika* [mathematics], *sh-hs jezik* [Serbo-Croat language], *poznavanje prirode i društva* [introduction to nature and society] and next to them a series of marks *odličan pet* (5) [excellent five] handwritten in cursive at a local primary school in Bosnia many years ago sparks my imagination and takes me on a journey back in time to a classroom full of pupils in blue school uniforms, among them Fatima's enthusiastic sons peering into their textbooks, writing in their notebooks, earning their good grades. My mental imaging gets interrupted by Fatima's talking to the framed pictures, then again talking to me and explaining that the photographs were taken during the 1980s, when her life looked fairly ordinary and when it was impossible for her to imagine that some two decades later she would become a refugee, a

[3] Fatima's story features in another article I published in *Archival Science* (cf. Halilovich 2014a).

migrant living in the USA, while all three people in the pictures, her husband and two of her sons, would be dead, killed in the Srebrenica genocide in 1995.

Affective attachment to photographs, as a most common form of fonds and ephemera, and identifying them with the past life is not unique to Fatima's experience. In the absence of other contextual reminders, as Belaj (2008) argues, photography becomes evidence of something that really happened, something that exists as part of human experience. As such, photography serves as memory and archiving of reality. For survivors like Fatima, Zifa and Hida, the family photographs evoke the imaginary connection between them and their family members across time and space, allowing them to 'touch the past' (Mavor 1995, p. 33) and providing them with a platform from whence to create their oral history, their own 'archives in formation', and in the process to reclaim their own past as well as to situate themselves in the present. Thus, as researchers—as Dever et al. insist (2010, p. 127)—'we must consider photographs and ephemera as examples of archival artifacts that "tell" stories, convey narratives and shape how we think about our subjects'.

Photographs can sometimes assume other social life and purpose beyond the immediate family members, and became familiar images in the most unfamiliar settings, as, for instance, Caswell (2014) has described in the case of the use and (re)purposing of the mug shots of the victims of the Khmer Rouge atrocities. The photographs of genocide victims serve multiple roles: as archival evidence of the crime, as a record of someone's existence, as memorials to the victim(s) and as images that any person can adopt in their very personal narrative of a particular event. In fact, as illustrated by the examples described in this article, the social life of records, images and video clips can be as unpredictable and novel as the life of any living person.

Conclusion

This article started by offering a taxonomy of what we commonly refer to as subjective experience or our 'inner life', distinguishing between feelings, emotions and affects. It then moved on to discuss a number of examples involving various forms of records, memories and archives relating to real—and very tragic—events that had been lived experiences of those described in the article. All the described examples demonstrate a strong entanglement between what is considered archival (or factual, true and objective) and what is regarded as affective (or subjective, emotional and imaginative). In the final sentences, I would like to briefly reflect on the 'inner life' of the researcher conducting research in such an 'entangled' context. While it might be easier to ignore the presence of affect and other subjective experiences in the course of research, this would not necessarily provide a more accurate record of the topic being investigated. I am fully aware that my own affects, emotions and feelings have also become an integral part of the narratives of my participants. Initially feeling that this might be a weakness of a novice in the field, I have learned to recognise, appreciate and to integrate my personal subjective reactions into my research. For instance, listening to Hida's retelling of her son's

last moments has always been more than a mere research activity to me. I have been there to listen, to empathise, to understand. Not to encourage her or my other participants to move on, or to attempt 'closure' like a counsellor might have done. But to listen, and in listening, and in nodding in assent, allowing them to inscribe some meaning on an otherwise often meaningless landscape. Their telling of a story is creating an 'imagined record' (Gilliland and Caswell this volume); it is also in part directed to setting the record straight—a highly fictionalised account, but nonetheless a 'true' story in the ends it serves: in Hida's case to imaginatively spare Senad pain, suffering and humiliation, in Fatima's to relive the pride about her sons' excellent grades from primary school, in Zifa's to share her Sidik's last moments with him, in Stana's to reconcile her true feelings with her 'false' memories. All their stories are directed to maintaining the deep bonds, the intimacy, the love if you like, between the storyteller, their subjective past and the empathetic audience. Finding ways to capture, unveil and interpret the multitude of affective qualities of archives and records in all their varieties will remain a challenge and an open-ended question to anyone interested in decoding not only the full meaning, but also the feelings inscribed in memories of one's existence.

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