

Abstract

The thesis analyses historical narratives presented in exhibitions of the History Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo and the Museum of Republika Srpska in Banja Luka. It also clarifies who promotes that particular representation of history and which factors influence the decisions museums make. The thesis builds on theoretical literature related to a role of museums in a process of memory institutionalization and identity building as well as to their potential to bring reconciliation in post-conflict society. The subjects of the research are the main museums dealing with the recent history in the two Bosnian autonomous entities, with the History Museum being in predominantly Bosniak while the Museum of Republika Srpska in predominantly Serb environment. The thesis explores the development of the museums, their organization, financing, self-presentation and most importantly the narratives of their permanent and temporary exhibitions. These are analysed especially from the perspective of definition of own group versus the others. The analysis covers museums' activities in the period from 1995 to present days. The thesis argues in detail that historical narrative promoted by the History Museum in Sarajevo reproduces the Bosniak narrative despite its efforts to play a role of state-level institution with ethnically unbiased interpretation of history. The Museum of Republika Srpska, on the other hand, has a strongly Serbian nationalist tone as a result of being an instrument of centralized politics of memory in the Republika Srpska.