

## SUMMARY

### **"Republika Srpska as a quasi-state. The process of statehood creation by the Bosnian Serbs"**

The object of research in this thesis is the Republika Srpska, as an independent political territorial entity lacking the attributes of a sovereign state. On the other hand, the fundamental aim of the thesis is to analyse the policy of the Bosnian Serbs between 1991 and 2023, whose aim is or may be the separation from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the attainment of full independence of the Republika Srpska as part of this multinational state. The reservations about the objective pursued by the Bosnian Serbs, and consequently the diagnosis as guided by this dissertation, are valid, since their policy is not in total conflict with the legal order of BiH and with the position of the international community; on the other hand, in the verbal sphere, the slogan of independence is all too often declared explicitly. Thus, determining what exactly is the object of analysis of this dissertation is not easy and is largely based on understanding the intentions of the Bosnian Serbs and their leaders, which are unclear or often hidden.

The years 2019- 2023 in Bosnian politics saw two votes. In 2020, there were local elections, which rank close to general elections due to the high fragmentation of the country. In 2023, we witnessed a general election, which was called a landmark election, but which ultimately consolidated the Serbian SNSD party in the power structures not only at the entitlement level, but also at the national level. Both events are analysed in detail in this thesis as a confirmation of the support of Bosnian Serb society for Milorad Dodik's secessionist ideas. In addition, the work devotes a lot of space to the power-shaping period after the 2023 elections. This is particularly relevant as, for the first time, the SNSD party forms the core of the governing coalition, has a representative in the BiH Presidium and is the second largest party in the BiH Parliament. This gives Bosnian Serbs considerable opportunities in creating change. At the same time, the SNSD party, with the support of coalition partners, introduces quite a lot of changes at the level of the Republika Srpska, including banning the activities of the High Council of Judiciary and Prosecutor's Office of BiH within the Serbian entitlement and disrespecting the decision of the High Representative.

The work generally consists of two asymmetrical parts. The first part - the theoretical part - focuses on the issue of the state, its substrates and approaches to the state in international law. Many examples appear in this chapter, which prove that the concept of the state and the accompanying state-building processes elude rigid schemes and that each case should be treated individually. A significant part is the issue of the right to self-determination of peoples, which is often raised by nations wishing to secede from the mother state. Research on quasi-states and their relationship with the international environment is also presented. This is particularly interesting, as the lack of recognition distinguishes a quasi-state from a state, but, on the other hand, this does not exclude the fact that such a state cannot interact with other governments or organisations. A separate chapter is devoted to state-building theory. The main focus is on Francis Fukuyama's theory, which emphasises the mutual influence of three factors: the state, the economy and public administration. Starting from this theory of state-building, the state-building of BiH is contrasted with the emergence of the statehood of Republika Srpska. What is important here is the existence of a national consciousness among Serbs for centuries, which allows them to see their entitet as not just a quasi-state, but as a quasi-national state.

The second part of the work - the exemplification part - is strictly devoted to the policy of the Republika Srpska on its way to complete independence and fills a research gap, as for the first time an analysis of the Serbian entitlement only is undertaken. It must be clearly emphasised that the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina is treated as a background, as it has already been the subject of numerous

studies. At important moments in the work, certain events are explained, but they do not form the main part of the work. The issues dealt with mainly concern the activities of the SNSD party and its leaders, who have been gaining popularity among Bosnian Serbs for years, have completely dominated the political scene in the RS and are increasingly bold in their plan to make the Republika Srpska independent from Bosnia and Herzegovina. This part of the work presents the history of Republika Srpska, the references of Serbian historians to the medieval beginnings of the Serbian nation in the area, but above all the contemporary history. As history is an important element in creating a sense of community and identity of the nation, the policy of remembrance pursued by the ruling Serbian entitet is also presented. This is an important tool in the creation of statehood by the Bosnian Serbs. Three events were singled out that Serbs consider to be landmarks in their history. These include the establishment of the Republika Srpska on 9 January 1992, the events in Srebrenica and the attempt to deny the genocide against the Muslim people, and the actions of NATO in the RS during the civil war. The policy of remembrance is implemented by the Serbs through the media, celebrations, but also through the core curriculum in schools. An important chapter in this section is an analysis of the Dayton Agreement. It presents the earlier peace agreement proposals, the proceedings of the peace conference and the so-called Dayton Absurdities. This last aspect comes up very often in Serbian rhetoric, as it is the starting point in Serbian demands. The Bosnian Serbs want a return to the original form of BiH according to the 1995 assumptions. At the same time, however, they point to certain mutually exclusive assumptions of this agreement. Excerpts from this chapter are included in the post-conference publication 'Revision of the Dayton Agreement as a major challenge for Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region'. The most comprehensive part of the work is devoted to the SNSD party - the main representative of the interests of the Bosnian Serbs - its history, political programme and, above all, the events in which it participated or led during the 2019-2023 research period. Attention was focused on the 2020 local elections and the 2022 general elections, the results of which indicated unflagging support for the SNSD slogans. Victory in the 2022 elections allowed the SNSD to form a governing coalition at national level and enabled it to continue its policies at central level. This part of the thesis concludes with various scenarios for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska. These are proposals for a new format for the country. There is a realisation in the international community that the Dayton Agreement cannot deliver development in a country so strongly divided along ethnic lines, but there is a lack of courage to undertake such an innovative process. Therefore, the plans presented are only a theory that can be looked at, but should not be considered as an option.

It concludes with a summary: identifying and characterising the attributes of quasi-states in the context of Republika Srpska's aspirations; analysing the Dayton Peace Agreement in terms of conferring the attributes of a state on the entitites; analysing the current policies pursued by the political parties of the Bosnian Serbs, in particular the ruling party, the SNSD; identifying the tools used by the Bosnian Serbs to obtain the attributes of a state for Republika Srpska. The research were finally completed on 31.08.2023. The political situation in Bosnia is very dynamic and many of the issues raised in the work are open and waiting to be resolved.