Bosnian Immigrants: An Analysis of the Bosnian Community's Influence on the Cultural Landscape of Bowling Green, KY

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BOSNIAN IMMIGRANTS: AN ANALYSIS OF THE BOSNIAN COMMUNITY’S INFLUENCE ON THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF BOWLING GREEN, KY

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Geography and Geology
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Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science

By
Nathan Jess Cary

May 2013
BOSNIAN IMMIGRANTS: AN ANALYSIS OF THE BOSNIAN COMMUNITY'S INFLUENCE ON THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF BOWLING GREEN, KY

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CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction 1
Problem Statement 4
Purpose Statement 6

Chapter 2: Review of Literature 9
Introduction 9
Refugee Distribution 10
Resettlement 13
Return Migration 18
Ethnic Landscape 21
Migration Policy 23
Significance of the Research 24

Chapter 3: Methodology 25
Policy Analysis 25
Field Work 25
Mapping the Bosnian Community 28
Segmentation & Household Dispersion 30
Conclusion 33

Chapter 4: Policy Findings 35
Migration Policy Analysis 35

Chapter 5: Resettlement and Community Findings 43
Bowling Green’s Refugee Resettlement Center 44
Mapping the Bosnian Community 46
Local Experiences 69
Cultural Landscape 73

Chapter 6: Conclusions 82

Appendix A: Survey Questions 86
Appendix B: Percentage of Asians Map 88
Appendix C: Percentage of Hispanics Map 89
Appendix D: Percentage of Other Map 90

Bibliography 91
## LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Location of Bowling Green, KY (USA).</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The Balkans Prior to 1992.</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Balkans After 1992.</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The International Center, Bowling Green, KY.</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bowling Green, KY: Initial Bosnian Settlement, 1990s.</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Residences of the initial Bosnian settlement area in Bowling, KY.</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Bowling Green, KY: Ethno-Telephonic Survey of Bosnian Households, 2002.</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Bowling Green, KY: Mean Center and Standard Distance Spatial Statistics, 2002 &amp; 2012.</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Bowling Green, KY: Nearest Neighbor Analysis of Bosnian Households, 2002 &amp; 2012.</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Bowling Green, KY: Ethno-Telephonic Survey of Bosnian Households, 2012.</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Bowling Green, KY: Change in Bosnian Households Over the Past Ten Years by Census Block Group (2002-2012).</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Percentage of Bosnian Residents per Block Group with Mosques and Bosnian-Owned Restaurants Overlays.</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Bowling Green, KY: Percentage of White Residents per Block Group with Bosnian Households Overlay.</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Bowling Green, KY: Percentage of African American Residents per Block Group with Bosnian Household Overlay.</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Bowling Green, KY 2010: Median Household Income with Bosnian Households Overlay.</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>International Islamic Center, Bowling Green, KY.</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>The Mihrab of the main prayer hall, International Islamic Center, Bowling Green, KY.</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 18. New Bosnian Islamic Center, Bowling Green, KY.  
Figure 19. Taste of Europe, Bowling Green, KY.  
Figure 20. Alma’s Pita & Café, Bowling Green, KY.  
Figure 21. Mediterranean Food Store, Bowling Green, KY.
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Total Refugees Resettled.  43

Table 2. Bosnian Household Totals Compared to Ethnicity Household Percentages per Block Group in Bowling Green.  62

Table 3. Dissimilarity Index.  66

Table 4: Age Distribution of Participants.  70

Table 5: Year of Arrival in Bowling Green, KY.  70

Table 6: Responses to Questions.  71
Diasporas have been occurring for thousands of years, and today globalization has facilitated the quick rate at which diasporas occur on a global scale. Diasporas entail the mass movement of refugees across international borders, and diasporic peoples today now find themselves journeying across oceans and continents to the safety of host cities in a matter of weeks or days. My research analyzes the effects that Bosnian immigrants have had on the cultural landscape of Bowling Green, Kentucky. When people move, they bring their cultures with them, and this type of cultural diffusion impacts the landscape of the host cities. As geographic research on diasporas is limited, this study aims to fill the gap that exists.

Bowling Green, Kentucky, was selected for this analysis due to its large refugee population. Some of Bowling Green’s refugee population is comprised of immigrants from Iraq, Burma, Cambodia, and Sudan. Bosnians comprise the largest population of refugees in the city. In addition to examining immigrant policies and theories, the impacts of the Bosnian diaspora on Bowling Green’s cultural landscape will also be identified. Understanding how those cultures modify landscapes is an important part of diasporic research.

The data used for this study were acquired through surveys, census details, telephone directories, interviews, and the extant literature. The hypothesis of this study
is that Bosnian immigrants have a stronger visual impact on Bowling Green’s cultural landscape than other immigrant ethnic groups due to their large representation in the city.
Chapter 1: Introduction

The mass movement of people is nothing new; however, migrants now have the ability to traverse oceans and continents in a matter of days or even hours. Today’s efficient means of travel can be traced back to the Industrial Revolution, the beginning of modern globalization. Prior to the nineteenth century, people were definitely moving but on a much more localized scale. The modernization of ships, rails, and roads allowed migrants to cross oceans and continents quicker than ever before (Manning, 2005). With innovations in transportation and logistics came many new impacts. During the nineteenth century, modernization in travel not only opened more efficient lines of supply and demand, it also facilitated the more efficient mass movement of people, both voluntarily and involuntarily.

Because of recent globalization, events that happen in one part of the world no longer yield only local implications. Advancements in communication and transportation have allowed the world to become more connected. The increase in mobility, resulting from these new advancements, allows for the more rapid movement of goods, information, and people. Globalization has its benefits and downfalls. Most of us appreciate the variety of goods that is available to us, whether it is clothing, food, or communications, but the free movements of people frequently presents challenges. Some of those challenges are often political, economic, and/or cultural in nature. When people depart their homelands to settle in new areas, this process affects many facets of societal interaction at different geographic scales (Lewis, 1982). Implications are often felt at the regional, national, and community levels.
Early in the nineteenth century, significant numbers of people began migrating and settling different parts of the world. Throughout this time, industrialization changed major regions of the world, and areas like North America were soon relying on an immigrant workforce. Heeding North America’s call, many migrants journeyed to new commercial towns and rural farms throughout North America and elsewhere in search of better wages and way of life (Manning, 2005).

In this situation, migration generally is assumed to have a beneficial economic effect but, more often than not, the non-economic issues associated with migration are often overlooked by diasporic researchers. Migrants have to adjust to new political, social, and cultural environments and, sometimes, these adjustments can actually lead not only to a modification, but also the actual creation, of new political, social, and cultural environments (Lewis, 1982).

Mass migrations continued in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. From 1880 to 1920, over twenty million people migrated from Southern and Eastern Europe to North America. Economic decline in many European nations because of the two world wars continued the exodus of European peoples (Facts About Migration, 2002). This mass migration helped shape the cultural pluralism that now exists in those host nations and communities.

For the past 25 years many European countries have experienced a high level of immigration. In the past, multiculturalism was the celebrated goal of incorporating immigrants. However, in the past ten years political shifts in countries like Germany, Austria, and the Netherlands have persuaded policy makers to alter immigration law from a multicultural focus to one of assimilation. Their viewpoint on assimilation is literal and referred to as de-ethnicization (Joppke, 2004).
Because the mass movement of people affects more than just those on the move, it is important to look at particular aspects of human movement such as diasporas, which are just one element of migration. These events have occurred for millennia, with perhaps the most notable historical example the Jews of Alexandria over 2,000 years ago. This type of migration is different because diasporas are typically forced by economic circumstances, war, politics, tragedy, or even religious differences. Diasporas are also caused by resource crises like the Irish Potato Famine of the nineteenth century.

The continued involuntary movement of people across borders has played an integral part in the development of cultural identities. The mass movement of people across national boundaries is nothing new, as humans have always moved across territories in search of resources, which has sometimes led to conflict.

The United States has been a historic receptor of immigrants and diasporic peoples. This nation was founded on such a concept. Kentucky has also played host to many of those immigrants, mostly Hispanic, but diasporic peoples like the Bosnians, and others from South Asia, Southeast Asia, Southern Europe, the Middle East, and the former Soviet republics, have also taken up residence in cities throughout the state.

Bowling Green, KY, is one of those cities, and it has hosted numerous immigrants. Today it has an immigrant population that incorporates those nationalities previously mentioned. Bowling Green is located in Warren County, in South Central Kentucky, and it is the third largest city in Kentucky (About Bowling Green, 2012). Its immigrant community is diverse, and a majority of those immigrants are comprised of Bosnians. A primary reason for the diverse immigrant community is the presence of the International Center, a non-profit refugee resettlement organization. As a resident of Bowling Green for over fourteen years, it has been my experience that many local
residents are unaware of the reason why Bowling Green is home to such a large Bosnian population. For this reason, Bowling Green was selected as the study area.

Understanding what aspects of today’s diasporas promote challenges for refugee welfare and assimilation in host countries is important. Globally, invasions and colonialism have continually uprooted entire political, cultural, and religious groups. Obviously, this issue is not exclusive to the present day, but modern globalization has restructured refugee distribution in new and interesting ways. Because of innovations in transportation, refugees for the past 60 years are arriving at their host cities in a matter of hours or days. Because of this, host cities must prepare for their arrival at a much quicker rate, and it is also important to understand the impacts that these new ethnic communities have on the cultural landscape.

**Problem Statement**

Bowling Green, Kentucky (Figure 1), is home to a rather large immigrant and refugee population, especially when considering the city’s size. According to the 2010 Census, the four largest cities in Kentucky (in order from largest to smallest) were Louisville, Lexington, Bowling Green, and Owensboro. Among those cities, Bowling Green has the largest percentage of foreign-born residents, 10.9%. Lexington’s foreign-born population is 8.5%, Louisville’s is 6.1%, and Owensboro has 2.5%. It is also important to note that Louisville’s total population is nearly ten times larger than Bowling Green’s, and Lexington’s total population is about six times larger than Bowling Green’s total population.

My interest in the subject was stimulated by my own personal experiences. While living in Bowling Green, I have found that many of my co-workers, local students, and family members were lacking any knowledge of the reasons for Bowling Green’s
large Bosnian population. Initially, the Bosnian presence was not visible on the landscape, and it was not until I met a few Bosnians and researching the reasons for them being here that I became better informed. While teaching introductory geography courses at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, fourteen, years after the city began hosting Bosnian refugees, I discovered that many students and local residents were still shocked when they were informed of the diverse local refugee population.

Figure 1: Location of Bowling Green, KY (USA). Source: ESRI (2010), US Census 2010.

Among these immigrants and refugees in Bowling Green are Bosnians, who began settling in Bowling Green during 1994 and now comprise a majority of the city’s refugee population. Why are there Bosnians in Bowling Green? It is doubtful that they simply decided one day to move to Bowling Green. How did they get here, and did any
agencies aid in their arrival? Where do they live in Bowling Green? Do they have their own communities or are they evenly distributed within the city? What visual and non-visual impacts are they having or have had on the cultural landscape? Immigrants of all types help modify and reshape local cultures and have an impact on the cultural landscape. Understanding the answers to these questions is important because their presence has changed the very nature of Bowling Green’s community and its cultural landscape, and they have influenced how we see cultural relationships.

**Purpose Statement**

The significance of this study lies within the current geopolitical climate. Diasporas have been a major part of social change for centuries and immigrants have always encountered problems. Recent innovations in technology and logistics have helped to bridge the gap between globalization and localization. This link has thrust new responsibilities upon the host societies receiving refugees (Franz, 2005). Since there appears to be no foreseeable end to global conflicts that generate displaced persons, it is important to examine how refugees are impacting the landscapes of their new host countries and communities or vice versa.

The purpose of this research is to identify the impact of Bosnians on Bowling Green’s cultural landscape and to explore its meaning. The Bosnian presence in Bowling Green is visible through their businesses and religious structures. Though it seems that few people throughout the community actually understand the reasons for them being here, their diasporic influence has been felt by almost everyone. A previous study by Elcin Celik (2012), concentrated primarily on the findings from interviews with 25 Bosnian participants in Bowling Green based on the informant’s wartime experiences in relation to resettlement. This study differentiates from Celik’s (2012) study because
of its geographic analyses in conjunction with a review of geopolitical agents and structures that effect refugees.

Because of their construction of mosques and restaurant establishments, along with their numerical presence, my thesis argues that Bosnians have a stronger visual impact on Bowling Green’s cultural landscape than other immigrant ethnic groups. This study also explores the policies that relate to refugee admittance and also examines the fundamental effects that the Bosnian community has had on Bowling Green’s cultural landscape. For these reasons, I posit that they are shaping the overall cultural landscape of Bowling Green in unintended yet positive ways because of their large numbers, and that their presence is helping to improve the cultural diversity and international reach of the city.

To explore these hypotheses, an in-depth analysis of Bosnians’ influence on Bowling Green’s cultural landscape includes households, places of worship, and socializing venues. Through surveys, maps, population statistics, and photographs, I aim to convey the sense of place that is being created by Bosnians and to demonstrate their continued reshaping of Bowling Green’s cultural environment.

Further examination of the Bosnian community entails a spatial analysis of their household distribution over the past ten years throughout the city. These primary data were not available and had to be created using conventional techniques. The analysis of Bosnian households, locations, and concentrations, coupled with census data, helps to create an understanding of where they live and whether or not household dispersion throughout the city is continuing over time. Additional analysis involves the use of median household income and zoning data that helped to construct a profile of the current financial structure of the local Bosnian community.
A previous study by Elcin Celik (2012), concentrated primarily on findings from interviews with 25 Bosnian participants in Bowling Green based on the informant’s wartime experiences in relation to resettlement. This study is unique because of its geographic significance and in-depth policy analysis.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Migration studies is broad and has had a tendency to overlook one certain aspect of the discipline, refugees. Because of this, research in this sub discipline has been sparse (Mosselson, 2006). Diasporic migration relates specifically to refugees, and recent diasporic studies have had a predisposition to deny or ignore the significance of geography (Carter, 2005). However, some researchers have begun to recognize the importance of this field. Diasporic studies are relevant to modern migration discourse because of current global events that yield forced migrants (Carter, 2005; Duval, 2001; Mosselson, 2006; Pandit and Holloway, 2005; Rios and Adiv, 2010; Wood, 1994). Diasporic studies, however, has recognized that understanding diasporas can help to better replicate the concepts of place directly related to diasporas (Carter, 2005).

Rios and Adiv (2010) suggest that research on diasporas should emphasize more than just the basis of forced migration. The communities generated from this process are more than just an assembly of refugees. These communities are much more complex and influence the host society in many ways through their re-creation of home. In doing so, Rios and Adiv (2010) assert that analysis of these ethnic landscapes would help to craft new attributes of diasporas that were previously unknown.

As forced migration numbers continue to increase, the research on forced migration has grown, and more emphasis has also been placed on critiquing the programs and policies of governments. Because of this, Wood (1994) concedes that current and future geographic research on this matter should not be limited to locations abroad but should also focus on local implications.
The United States was founded by immigrants, and studies on those initial settlements have contributed to a detailed historical geography of the country, but the ongoing admittance of immigrants continues to shape America’s modern cultural landscapes. Understanding how recent immigrants continue to shape the landscapes of American cities is fundamental. By recognizing this important aspect of contemporary immigrant geographies, Pandit and Holloway (2005) insist that geographers should continue with this analytical path in order to maintain a continued understanding of immigrants effects on landscapes.

Because diasporas have become appealing to scholars, it is important to break the past predetermined associations between place and identity and place more of an emphasis on the characteristics of each individual diaspora and recognize their uniqueness (Carter, 2005). In order to contextualize modern diasporas within migration geography, I have identified five main areas for analysis: refugee distribution, resettlements, return migration, ethnic landscapes, and immigration policy.

**Refugee Distribution**

There are two primary factors that initiate migration: push and pull. Involuntary migrants would be responding to a forceful push, while some migrants respond to an enticing pull from elsewhere. Some migrants simply choose to leave their home country because they have a desire to move. Those that are influenced by this kind of pull factor desire to live elsewhere. By no means is the push and pull theory appropriate for all migration reasons. Meilaender (2001) insists that this model only acts as a starting point, and that push and pull factors are not always exclusive to one another. Some motivations do not fit in either of the push-pull categories but, as mentioned before, the model exists as a broad method of organizing the varying motives for migration.
Pedraza-Bailey’s (1985) earlier research supports Meilaender’s (2001) claim by insisting that the push of lessened opportunities and the pull of increased new opportunities explain why migrants flow from one place to another. However, Lewis (1982) argues that a person may be satisfied with his or her current situation, but knowledge of greater opportunities may draw or pull that person away from the homeland.

Lewis (1982) also emphasizes that another type of analysis is critical to understanding why migrants move. This process can be summarized into three basic levels of analysis: objective, normative, and psycho-social. The objective level has mostly focused on inter-regional migration and is used to understand migrations between cities. The normative level uses a limited number of interview questions to interpret why people move. The psycho-social aspect is concerned primarily with the decision-making process behind the move. Specifically, how did the migrants come about their decision to relocate?

Factors that pull people away from their homelands can be just as powerful as the push but are often times more positive. During the nineteenth century, many Europeans were pulled to America. The reasons for these pulls entailed a better way of life and more economic opportunity. During this time, many European nations were experiencing economic hardships and growing overcrowding in urban areas. The better way of life that America offered facilitated the pull on migrants throughout Europe and, as Meilaender (2010) acknowledges, most went to urban areas in search of factory or service employment, while many migrants sought out economic opportunity in rural areas. This process continues today.

International response to flows of refugees is primarily directed by the United Nations. When a state forces people to flee for racial, religious, ethnic, or political
reasons, the state is misbehaving, and the international community is often called upon to provide aid and comfort to the unwanted. As suggested by Kreely (1996), the level of support that is provided by host nations is critical to the achievement of those on the diaspora.

Modern diasporas are unique. The success of a migrant’s journey is initially contingent upon the policies set forth by the host country’s governmental and non-governmental organizations. The legal systems of national and supranational governing bodies, such as the European Union, dictate the criteria for eligible diasporic migrants throughout much of Europe. Similar to Kreely’s (1996) claim, Castles and Miller (1998) also argue that since the principal organizations are responsible for the approval, admittance, and social welfare of modern-day asylum seekers, the successful assimilation of these migrants is reliant upon the perceptions and mobility of the space they inhabit.

In addition, Massey (1994) reports that successful diasporas rely on the formation of traditional homeland ties and a successful host nation social structure, and that societal configurations help shape the identity of place. In agreement, Carter (2005) recognizes that it is the nature of diasporic communities to maintain communications with their homeland, and that this type of relational network does create a gap between places of belonging and places of residence, further promoting the importance of spatial and temporal studies.

To understand the importance of diasporic nationalism within diasporic communities, Boyle (2001) insists that it is crucial to explain their historical geographies. Boyle’s (2001) study of the Irish Diaspora noted the wide range of destinations for Irish migrants on the move and, because of situations like this, space should be given a
greater role in shaping diaspora studies. Boyle (2001) continues to reinforce this argument by noting that the interaction between migrants and their host nations helps to forge a stronger sense of diasporic nationalism.

The reasons leading up to the distribution of refugees are important to geographers. By understanding the reasons that influenced the Bosnian diaspora, I believe this research is geographically important, because those factors have been felt on several geographic scales, especially at the local level.

**Resettlements**

Refugee resettlements no longer only involve neighboring countries. Modern advances in transportation have allowed for a global and rapid distribution of refugees. One of the results of this new spatial-temporal union is the elevation of uncertainty for defining place. Host communities are continually presented with resettlement problems, so for the wellbeing of all it is important to ensure the smooth transition of their new guests (Massey, 1994).

Often times, immigrants can travel great distances to reach their host communities. This journey is the beginning of a new reshaping. Migrants are often transformed when moving from their homeland to their new host community. Hume and Hardwick (2005) assert that not only is the individual’s life changed, the new host community also experiences changes, and some of these changes entail creating accommodations, pooling of resources to provide financial assistance, and the initiation of social support systems that can strain local economies.

Since the conclusion of WWII, many Western countries have been preparing for the resettlement of future refugees. Many of these countries have followed a model of resettlement that includes the participation of both the government and private sectors.
National and international policies establish the basis of many refugee programs, but voluntary organizations (volags), often times, take on the remaining roles.

Over recent decades, the private nonprofit sectors have become institutionalized as the primary link between refugee admissions and resettlement. Prior to WWII, volags relied solely on self-generated funds, and these were sometimes not very reliable. Following the Corporate Affidavit Program of 1946, volunteer agencies were guaranteed financial support from the U.S. government. This agreement further insured that current and future refugee-immigrant populations would not become a public charge. The volag affidavit program was such a success that the majority of resettlement responsibilities are now provided by the private sector (Zucker, 1983).

In the United States, volags provide the services and goods necessary for initial resettlement (Lanphier, 1983). Volags, like Catholic Charities and Lutheran Family Services, have helped many African refugees secure housing in Portland, Oregon. Along with housing needs, Catholic Charities and Lutheran Family Services have also helped with language and job training (Hume and Hardwick, 2005).

After the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2011, states began to limit their refugee responsibilities. New emphasis was placed on securing borders, instead of opening them. After the September 11\(^{th}\) attacks, the world community has made it even more difficult for asylum seekers to acquire refuge. Many believe that countries are “abrogating their responsibilities,” but an opposing view may suggest that states are under assault from asylum seekers (Koser, 2007, p 233).

Cultural mobility and migration greatly affect the homes and family lives of immigrants. The cultural geographies of migration contribute heavily to transitional citizenship. Studies have placed an emphasis on the host nations and how migrants’
homelands chose to regulate migration, and Blunt (2007) insists that these two main factors are important in shaping the immigrants’ way of life through cultural politics and societal assimilations.

Carter (2005) has recognized that when a place’s social structure is broadened, a diasporic community is able to influence the policies, economy, and culture of the host nation. Broadening political and economic cultures can be positive. Once a diasporic community is settled within its host society, its strength and culture can be very noticeable. Diasporic nationalism has the ability to affect local policies and election results as well. This was clearly the case with the 1992 U.S. presidential campaign. During this time period, the Croatian-American community was upset by the wavering path taken by President George H. W. Bush in dealing with the crisis in the Balkans. The Croatian-American community thought his lack of involvement with the Balkans War was tacit support of a unified Yugoslavia. Croatian-Americans were obviously distraught by this interpretation. As a result, leaders within the Croatian-American community rallied behind the Democrat Presidential candidate, Bill Clinton. Their continued connectedness with their homeland contributed to local political activism that may have resulted in helping secure the presidency for Bill Clinton (Carter, 2005).

Sometimes immigrant activism is practiced on a more local scale. New identities are difficult to establish, especially when the general public bases a person’s individuality on his or her country of origin. This prejudice has a tendency to tarnish an immigrant’s experience as an American. For example, Nagel and Staeheli’s (2005) analysis has shown that many settlers engage in local politics, and these political battles sometimes incorporate the politics of antidiscrimination and inclusion. Nagel and
Staeheli (2005) also found that the ultimate goal of the majority of those settlers was to change the attitudes of the host community.

To aid in the assimilation of immigrants, some volunteers and non-governmental organizations have created local support groups to aid the immigrants’ transition. Many of these groups have sprung up throughout host communities. Even though the goal of these groups is to help refugees, sometimes these goals are not met. For example, Kelly’s (2003) analysis of recent Bosnian migrant assimilations into British society found that the model of assimilation that the British use is based on multiculturalism and relies heavily on refugee support agencies. The Bosnians, at this time, have seemingly chosen to gain prosperity without any type of representative community. This lack of community involvement has allowed for the sustainment of divisions. The conformity of Bosnians within British society is vital to their success. There is, technically, no community of Bosnians in England. What communities exist are considered to be contingent. This type of contingent community is basically a façade. The interests that are conveyed to the host nation from this contingency are not their own, but they are alleged from their host country’s policymakers. The lack of “self-created” associations may have led to limited contributions from the host community (Kelly, 2003).

Refugee support groups seem to play an important role among forced immigrants within the United States. Weine Et Al.’s (2005) analysis of support groups within the Bosnian resettlement community of Chicago compared the successes of refugees that chose to participate in such groups and those who chose not to participate. From this study, Weine Et Al. (2005) suggest that not only are support groups important, but their engagement strategies are also key to success. This study found that it is better to engage families of the same size concurrently, because support groups that comprise families of
equal size have higher success. This structuring allows more passionate gatherings. Relating this issue to diasporic studies, it is important to analyze how existing support groups, within a host nation, engage their refugees and to note the success rates among those groups that practice in this manner (Weine et al., 2005).

Assimilating into a new and very different culture can prove to be very difficult, especially when cultural differences, such as religion, exist. Winder’s (2006) study analyzed the host city of Nashville, TN, which has tried to facilitate the assimilation of multiple ethnic immigrants, ranging from Latinos to Bosnians. Winders (2006) argues that not only should each individual group strive to be a part of American society, but the immigrants should also form bonds within the new multinational community. Winders (2006) also suggests that Nashville may not be the most welcoming city to foreigners. As with the case of Burmese and Iraqi settlement in Bowling Green, KY (about 50 miles north of Nashville), it has been discovered that an increase in “English language skills and cultural awareness” would help to facilitate the successful resettlement of the Burmese (Renaud, 2011, p. 126). The reason for the lack of assimilation by the Burmese and Iraqis is not because of an inhospitable environment but more of an issue of unfamiliarity. Renaud (2011) found that many of the basic tools required to thrive are available, but a lack of knowledge and confidence were limiting their social mobility.

Researchers have also discovered that sometimes a person’s cultural identity may be extended to that person’s skin color (Nagel and Staeheli, 2005; Koser, 2007; Tesfahuney, 1998). Even today, something like this may influence the rate at which one assimilates. For example, Arab-Americans have assimilated into various political and economic sectors of the United States but, due to their religious and other cultural
differences, they are sometimes still considered to be “not-quite-Americans” (Nagel and Staeheli, 2005). Because of Arab stereotypes, this type of transnationalism is perceived by some people as threatening to the cultural strength of the United States as a society (Koser, 2007). This paranoia has been termed “white terror.” These practices are not only fueled by ignorance, but they can also negatively influence the mobility of non-whites when they travel through or remain in traditionally white spaces (Tesfahuney, 1998).

Examining the effects and history of displaced Africans is relevant to the matter of bias based on skin color, especially in the United States. Although many may argue that African Americans with slave roots are not currently involved in any type of diaspora, Lamour (2007) has found a correlation between early slave trading and the current exploitation of Africa’s people and natural resources which establish the importance of self-sufficiency for all refugees. Cultural renewal and socioeconomic regeneration are portrayed as keys to a successful rebuilding of those people on the diaspora and continue to redefine white spaces.

Refugee resettlements are often unique, and many aspects of the refugee culture help to define that uniqueness. Immigrants often shape more than just their new locations. Their cultural traits also help to redefine their host city. It is the intent of this research to determine how the Bosnian resettlement in Bowling Green has helped to shape the city’s cultural landscape.

**Return Migration**

Today, innovations in travel and communications have made it more affordable and efficient for immigrants to maintain linkages with their homelands. These new means are so reasonable that the new connections facilitate social, financial, and
political influence upon their homelands. The breaks between places of belonging and places of residence are no longer voids. Modern human mobility allows for different types of linkages between the two. This type of human mobility used to be very limited. Earlier migrant groups’ abilities were restricted by societal and national bounds. Traditional immigration norms frowned upon dual citizenship, and the lack of logistics, affordable transport, and modern communications promoted the severing of ties with migrant homelands. This encouraged a politically sedentary root system in the immigrants’ newly adopted host country (Nagel, 2002).

Even though transportation has also become more affordable, Nagel (2002) acknowledges that immigrants often find out that the cost of relocation involves more than money. International policy-making greatly influences the models of return migration within the Bosnian refugee community throughout Europe. The European Union’s attempt to meet the day-to-day requirements of the Bosnian refugees seemed to hinder the wellbeing of Bosnia’s most helpless people. The creation of these refugee-hindering policies and their implementation by the host nations are nothing more than obstacles. The underlying initiative of this international legislation is to promote permanent return migration. These policies basically eject Bosnians from their new settlements and leave them to fend for themselves in Bosnia. The result of host governments’ hand wiping, if you will, of the Bosnians is damage to their success after returning to their home country (Heimerl, 2005).

It has also been suggested by Franz (2005) that the type of host country, welfare or liberal welfare, influences the rates of acculturation and assimilation among refugees. The type of state may play a more important role than the refugees’ places of origin, education, or war trauma experience. The process of refugee return migration can be
extremely difficult. Political obstructions have been closely examined to gain a better understanding of return migration failures. It has been suggested that current policies in some host countries, predominantly in Europe, present tremendous barriers to return migration. Once the refugee minorities return to their country of origin, they are often underrepresented and, in some ways, they fall back into the hierarchy of pre-wartime ethnicities. For most, the war or issue may be over, but the racist judgments continue. Examining the post-war homeland has solidified the importance of fair government policies on return migration and suggests a need for policy restructuring (Harvey, 2006).

Many European communities have failed to promote return migration. Eastmond (2006) insists that more times than not, return programs are based solely on the act of returning refugees rather than on the wellbeing of the returning refugees. It is important to consider the livelihood of the returning population because, in some instances, returnees may no longer have local social relations or a sense of home. Sweden, a liberal welfare state, has implemented a practicable solution. Sweden allows many of its Bosnian refugees to maintain active ties to their country of origin. Once Bosnian refugees relocate back to their home, they are granted the resources of their host country and the option to re-migrate back to Sweden (Eastmond, 2006).

Surprising to some, the United States is labeled as a liberal welfare state when dealing with refugee acceptance, care, and relocation. In the U.S., refugees are eligible for cash and medical assistance for eight months from the date they are admitted. Refugees are also eligible for certain social services here in the U.S. and upon their return to their homeland. When contrasted with Austria, simply a welfare state, most refugees hold only a temporary residence status in Austria, and are unable to secure dual
citizenship. Because of this, many Bosnians have a difficult time returning to their homeland (Franz, 2005).

**Ethnic Landscapes**

Cultural landscapes have been traditionally identified by geographers through mostly physical structures. Throughout many cities, immigrants are actively creating new cultural spaces through the construction of place (Baker, 2004). In the past, defining the culture of a landscape may have included only the mapping of visible features that defined a culture. Some of these features could have been barns, store fronts, churches, and homes. Identifying these features inspired by cultures is important, but modern geographers no longer rely solely on these concrete attributes (Robertson and Richards, 2003).

Recently, geographers have begun to analyze both the social and physical aspects of landscape. In doing so, landscapes are now being seen as a result of human social life. For example, many cities have neighborhoods that are home to clusters of non-local ethnicities. Desbarats (1985) suggests that a major reason for this is that refugees tend to concentrate and live together when possible. As one might expect, the homes in those areas would project their ethnicity through architecture and other physical appearances, but this is not always the case. Wood (1997) has found that neighborhoods are not always ethnically visible and, for that reason, modern cultural landscapes must be investigated more-so than in the past. Cultural landscapes link culture to the physical environment, and people do this in more ways than just physical construction.

Immigrants often live among themselves in new communities. The reasons are obvious. By living in close proximity to one another, immigrants from the same homelands are able to overcome language barriers, share cultural and religious beliefs,
and socialize with ease (Oakes, 1997). Often times, new immigrant communities will acquire gathering spaces within or near their community. As with the case of the Vietnamese refugees of Northern Virginia back in the 1970s, a rented space close to their resettlement was used as a Buddhist temple. Religious structures are important gathering places for refugees. These areas not only help to develop a sense of place but also act as a neighborhood foundation or anchor (Wood, 1997).

Immigrants have helped to shape the entire cultural landscape of North America. In the late 1800s, many American and Canadian cities were affected by the influx of European immigrants. Depending on the country of origin and cultural diversity of the North American community, their presence established new community identities, and today the pattern of urban ethnic association continues (Arreola, 1995).

Landscapes can also help us to understand the histories of a place. The interaction between residents and their surroundings defines an understanding of culture (Pascual-de-Sans, 2004). Migratory processes greatly affect cultural landscapes and, because of this, analyzing place can lead to a better understanding of the community’s migration histories. This is possible because most immigrants have a natural tendency to construct a sense of their homeland through place, whether it is through the establishment of ethnic businesses, like restaurants and grocery stores, or via churches, temples, or mosques. When restaurants and grocery stores offer food and cuisine that are not typical of the region, local residents begin to question why the businesses exist and the need for these businesses and religious structures can often be a good indicator that the community is host to unique ethnicities (Cuba and Hummon, 1993).

Ethnicity and tradition are not stagnant, and landscapes have the ability continually to evolve when the local culture is reinvented (Schnell, 2003). This cultural
landscape evolution is the result of the importance of place, which dramatically affects
the human spirit. The act and the result of modifying landscapes can be healing. These
methods help immigrants establish not only a sense of place but a sense of history (Cox
and Holmes, 2000). Because of this, I feel it is important to observe how the Bosnian
refugees in Bowling Green have chosen to inhabit their spaces, and to examine the ways
that they shape the cultural landscape of Bowling Green.

Migration Policy

The ever-evolving guiding principles of world governments affect people
globally, especially those on the diaspora. Events such as World War I (WWI) and
World War II (WWII) produced involuntary movements of people, regionally. Fearful
of their lives, many people throughout Europe, during these two wars, traveled from
their homes to seek refuge from the fighting. This displacement of people continued
after the culmination of WWII.

The 1917 Balfour Declaration supported the creation of an Israeli state, and after
the WWII genocide of the Jews the Declaration was enforced. The relocation of the
Jews became a large problem. In 1947 the United Nations (UN) attempted to resolve
this issue by partitioning Palestine between the Jews and the Arabs. These new
superimposed boundaries created a lot of tension between the Arabs and Jews and
sparked the involuntary movements of people throughout the Eastern Mediterranean
(Carter, 2005).

A more recent example of how territories break up and lead to diasporas is the
collapse of the former Yugoslav Republic. The war of the Balkans in the 1990s was the
final chapter in the devolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. As with
most modern-day conflicts, the effects of these hostilities were felt by many. The war in
the Balkans aided in the continued production of global wartime refugees. Many Slavic ethnic groups in this area were displaced, but one particular group of people was affected the most: the Bosnians. The initiation and continuance of the Balkan conflict displaced millions of Bosniaks from their homeland.

For every cause there is an effect. Policies are usually the result of certain causes. With the case of immigration, specifically refugees, conflict is usually the cause. As conflicts generate refugees throughout the world, governments create and/or modify policies relating to refugee admittance. Immigration policy within the United States and Europe has continually evolved, and an analysis of their legislation on immigration should not only demonstrate the differences but the reasons why these differences exist.

**Significance of the Research**

Policies have a strong tendency to define a refugee’s return experience. The transnational perspective implies that success relies upon the journey being an open-ended process. The refugee should be able to utilize the mobility and capitalize upon the resources of both places, but if conditions within the host nation inhibit success, the immigrant’s achievements could be very limited (Eastmond, 2006).

Structures, policies, and interaction dictate the immigrant’s initial ability to assimilate (Franz, 2005). But the actual host community assumes most of the burden of immigrant success. This research should help to fill the gaps in migration studies, because no one has specifically examined the geographic effects of policy, resettlement programs, immigrant contributions, cultural landscapes, and distribution of the Bosnian diaspora within the United States, specifically Bowling Green. While others may have touched on certain aspects of my study, none have incorporated all of these parameters in one focused analysis. By including the mapping aspect along with other relevant
cultural geographic attributes, my analysis of Bosnians in Bowling Green could lead to a better understanding of how Bosnian immigrants are helping to shape Bowling Green.
Chapter 3: Methodology

Several methods were used to analyze the Bosnian community in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Those methods included the analysis of secondary and primary data, qualitative research, and analysis of quantitative data. The data collection process included policy analysis and field work, which included the researching of immigration policy, distribution of surveys, interviews, observations, and photographs. Map creation and analyses were also conducted through a GIS analysis of telephone directories, census data and related statistics, and also the generation of a segregation analysis.

Policy Analysis

The policy analysis consisted of researching historical and current immigration laws from the United States and Europe. Since the U.S. and much of Europe received the majority of Bosnian refugees during the war in the Balkans from the 1990s onwards, I decided to compare and contrast the two locations’ policies. In turn, a simple understanding and explanation of those policies are included in this analysis. The reasons that led to existing immigration laws are also explained. By comparing and explaining the differences in policies between the U.S. and Europe, a better understanding of how policy affects immigrant resettlement and which policies promote immigrant prosperity can be developed.

Field Work

Surveys

A survey consisting of eighteen questions was designed (Appendix A), and approved by Western Kentucky University’s Human Subjects Review Board. The surveys were administered during the summer of 2008 in Bowling Green and were
conducted in areas identified as Bosnian social spaces. The survey consisted of four main components: demographics, questions about the family, migration experiences, and local experiences. Because of the possibility of reviving negative experiences, such as memories of deaths or torture, the survey questions did not inquire about the participants’ war-time experiences. The demographic questions included the following information; first name, age, and educational background. The reason for collecting these data was to have an understanding of the age and education distribution. By administering surveys to participants with a variety of ages and education, it was my hope to collect a more diverse range of responses.

The next questions were family oriented and involved information on marital status, number of children, and the location of immediate family members. The primary purpose of these questions was to gauge migration trends, specifically chain migration. The third set of questions asked about migration experiences. These questions asked the participants when they first arrived in Bowling Green about their migration route, and about return migration. The final questions sought information about the participants’ local experiences. These questions specifically asked about the participants’ opinions of Bowling Green and were designed to measure their overall perception of their new host city.

The questionnaire survey sample size only entailed 20 respondents and is representative of a smaller population than the estimated 7,000 Bosnian residents in Bowling Green. A sample size of 20 does not provide meaningful results. However, due to the lack of opportunity to collect a larger sample size, I utilized a phonebook survey to increase the number of data points. The original questionnaire data can thus be integrated into the findings for analysis.
Observations

Bosnian-owned businesses, mosques, and the neighborhood with the highest concentration of Bosnian families were identified through interviews and telephone book data. After identifying these locations, photographs were taken to document these Bosnian areas. The photographs also helped to demonstrate the cultural landscape modified by Bowling Green’s Bosnian community.

Mapping the Bosnian Community

A series of maps were created to identify the location of Bowling Green’s Bosnian residents. The maps also help to locate Bosnian-specific neighborhoods and to analyze specific demographics. In order to map the Bosnian community, a database of Bosnian addresses had to be created. From that database, not only was I able to produce maps showing household distributions, but the database also enabled the creation of a dissimilarity index.

Data Collection

Collecting attribute data based on the location of Bosnian households was challenging. The US Census only reports certain ethnic demographics: White, African-American, Asian, Native American, Hispanic, and other. The Bosnian nationality is not included in this grouping.

Because the US Census ethnic categories do not included the Bosnian ethnicity, I had to make the unknown known. This process was based on the research design of Meigs (1941), whose “Ethno-Telephonic Survey of French Louisiana” faced the same problems as this study. In his quest to map the Cajun ancestry population of Louisiana, he identified French surnames in a series of phone books, recorded the addresses, and plotted them on a map. Doing so revealed a regional distribution of Louisiana’s Cajun
population (Meigs, 1941). This method was also replicated in Reed’s (1976) “Heart of Dixie” study.

For this specific phonebook survey, two sets of Bowling Green telephone directories from 2002 and 2012, both around 100 pages in length, were used. To identify the current locations of Bosnian residents, I physically searched every page of both local directories and recorded the family names ending in “ic.” The Center for Applied Linguistics has indicated that a majority of Bosnian surnames end with “ic” (Bosnians, Their History, 2012); this was confirmed during an interview with a local Imam. This process took about four hours for each phone directory. It is also important to note that even though the phonebook survey is a great way of creating population data, this method is not foolproof.

Discretion in identity for both the first and last names is needed, because not all last names ending with “ic” are Bosnian. Some common North American names end in “ic” as well and were not included in the survey. Other reasons that could have added to error also exist. It is possible, for economic reasons, that Bosnians could be underrepresented in the phonebook, or might only use mobile phones. Mobile phone users are not included in the standard telephone directories and, therefore, would not be included in the population sample. Even with the existence of these weaknesses, this sample size should be ideal. Considering the circumstances, this dataset is the best available unless more costly and time consuming methods were enacted such as physically knocking on every door in the city and performing a new census. For these reasons, the phonebook survey acts as a viable population sample.

To demonstrate a temporal change of Bosnian residences, I also scanned every page and recorded the Bosnian family names found in the 2002 directory. The data from
both phone directories were entered into an Excel spreadsheet, imported into ArcMap, and geocoded. Before the production of the analytical maps, a base map of Bosnian residences overlain on top of Bowling Green’s city limits and roads was provided to Imam Agic for verification. Imam Agic is a local religious leader at the International Mosque and is very familiar with Bowling Green’s Bosnian community. He concluded that the map was an accurate depiction of the spatial distribution of Bosnian residences in Bowling Green.

**Map Creation**

To visualize the data and gain a better understanding of the spatial situation, eleven maps were created. They range from simple locations of Bosnian households and Bosnian-owned businesses to ethnic analysis derived from aggregate SF1/ACS(formerly SF3) data attributes and census block group data. The phonebook survey results paired with median income data from ESRI also enabled the creation of a median income distribution map.

The aggregate data were also helpful in the production of segregation statistics. The creation of a Bosnian household database proved to be more useful than for just the production of maps.

**Segregation & Household Dispersion**

To gain a better understanding of how Bosnian households are distributed throughout the city of Bowling Green and whether or not segregation exists, several spatial and descriptive statistics were used. Among those were spatial mean, standard distance, nearest neighbor, and Moran’s I spatial autocorrelation.

The mean center or spatial mean was calculated in ArcGIS to determine the center of Bosnian household locations in 2002 and 2012. From this, the direction, if any,
of Bosnian households may then be identified by comparing the Euclidian distance between 2002 and 2012 mean centers (Mean Center (Spatial Statistics), 2012). The mean centers for both time periods were calculated which resulted in change of location.

The equation for the spatial mean is

\[
\bar{X} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} X_i}{n}
\]

\[
\bar{Y} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} Y_i}{n}
\]

Where:

the coordinates of Bosnian household locations in Bowling Green are \((X_i, Y_i)\).

\(n\) is the number of Bosnian households (Burt, J., Barber, G., and Rigby, D., 2009).

The standard distance is used to determine dispersion of Bosnian household locations over Bowling Green. The standard distance is like a spatial deviation with its center being the mean center and standard distance \((SD)\) (Standard Distance (Spatial Statistics), 2012) being the radius from the center expressed in Euclidean distance (Burt, J., Barber, G., and Rigby, D., 2009).

The equation for standard distance is

\[
SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} (X_i - \bar{X})^2}{n} + \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} (Y_i - \bar{Y})^2}{n}} \approx \sqrt{S_x^2 + S_y^2}
\]

The nearest neighbor analysis produces a ratio \((R)\) of the observed average distance of locations \((\bar{d}_o)\) under investigation to the expected average distance \((\bar{d}_e)\) of a random spatial point pattern (Average Nearest neighbor (Spatial Statistics), 2012).

The equations used for nearest neighbor are

\[
R = \frac{\bar{d}_o}{\bar{d}_e}
\]

\[
\bar{d}_e = \frac{1}{2} \frac{n}{\sqrt{A}}
\]

\[
\bar{d}_o = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} d_{ij}}{n}
\]

Where:

\(d_{ij}\) is the Euclidean distance between a Bosnian household in Bowling Green and its nearest neighbor Bosnian household, \(n\) is the number of Bosnian households in Bowling Green, and \(A\) is the area of the study region (Burt, J., Barber, G., and Rigby, D., 2009).
Moran’s spatial autocorrelation was used to determine if the Bosnian households are becoming dispersed with the study’s spatial units, percentage of Bosnian households per block group, and to further validate the results of the nearest neighbor which used address points. The spatial autocorrelation (i.e., Tobler’s first law of geography) is used to determine the degree of correlation of nearby values of percentage of Bosnian households in block groups. A positive spatial autocorrelation indicates similar values (clustered), negative indicating opposite values (dispersed) and zero indicating random values (Spatial Autocorrelation (Global Moran’s I) (Spatial Statistics), 2012).

The equation for Moran’s I ($I$) spatial autocorrelation is

$$I = \frac{n\left(\sum_{i=1}^{n} \sum_{j=1}^{n} w_{ij}(X_i - \bar{X})(X_j - \bar{X})\right)}{\left(\sum_{i=1}^{n} \sum_{j=1}^{n} w_{ij}\right)^2} \left(\sum_{i=1}^{n} (X_i - \bar{X})^2\right)$$

Where:

- $X_i$ is the percent of Bosnian households for the block group of interest.
- $X_j$ is the percent of Bosnian households of a block group compared to the block Group of interest ($X_i$).
- $\bar{X}$ is the average number of percent of Bosnian households per block group in Bowling Green.
- $w_{ij}$ is the inverted Euclidean distance ($1/d_{ij}$) weight for a pair of block groups, $i$ and $j$.
- $I$ is the observed value of Moran’s I (Burt, J., Barber, G., and Rigby, D., 2009).

To calculate the rate of segregation among Bosnians in Bowling Green, I computed this measure via the index of dissimilarity. An index of dissimilarity is used to measure segregation between two groups of people that are distributed across a geographic unit, in this case the city Bowling Green. The result of this analysis is an indication of segregation and not a ratio of populations.
For the purposes of this study, Bosnian households were compared to the white households of Bowling Green. The primary reason for calculating segregation against white households is because they are the racial majority in the city. An adjusted analysis was also created that took into consideration the possibility of Bosnians being counted as white in the last census.

The index of dissimilarity is

\[
\frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left| \frac{b_i}{B} - \frac{w_i}{W} \right|
\]

where:
- \( i \) is the \( i \)th block group in Bowling Green
- \( b_i \) is the estimated number of Bosnian households for the \( i \)th block group
- \( B \) is the total estimated number of Bosnian households in Bowling Green
- \( w_i \) is the census number of white households for the \( i \)th block group
- \( W \) is the total census number of white households in Bowling Green.

Paired with the mapping of Bosnian households in Bowling Green, this analysis is unique to geography, because this process is an actual spatial analysis of Bosnian population that was previously unknown.

**Conclusion**

The methods designed for this study went beyond asking and answering the question of why Bowling Green has such a large Bosnian population. Policy analysis and interviews were key to understanding this question, and the survey data helped to demonstrate the assimilation process of the Bosnian community. The geographic element that was employed also added to answering the unknown. Through the creation of maps, the Bosnian community in Bowling Green was identified, and the Bosnian household data allowed for the calculation of previously unknown segregation statistics. Because the basis of this research entailed an analysis of immigration policy,
immigration theory, and spatial landscape analysis, I plan to investigate whether or not the Bosnian community in Bowling Green has followed or deviated from the patterns established by findings of previous research.

The merging of both qualitative and quantitative methods in this examination helped to address the basic thesis of this study. As demonstrated, spatial analysis is important and played a major role in this project. These spatial analyses along with additional landscape and policy analyses allow this study to stand apart from previous studies on the local Bosnian population like that of Celik’s (2012) study.
Chapter 4: Policy Findings

Understanding why Bowling Green has such a large population of Bosnian immigrants, and the implications of their settlement, is important because of their significant presence and the lack of information on these matters. Not only are the reasons for the presence of Bosnians in Bowling Green investigated, but the cultural and economic landscapes that they have helped to create and modify are analyzed as well. This chapter includes a policy analysis of migration and an investigation of Bowling Green’s refugee resettlement center.

Migration Policy Analysis

The devolution of Yugoslavia began in 1992, when conflict fragmented the country into newly independent states (Figure 2). Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia had all declared their independence, but the new territorial boundaries did not differ much from the pre-existing internal Yugoslav republic boundaries (Figure 3). This declaration threatened the nationalist Serbian cause. In an effort to reunite former Yugoslavia and to aid in the creation of a superior Serbia, the Serbian nationalists illegally forced Bosniaks from their homes and villages in what later became known to the rest of the world as genocide (Cigar, 1995).

The effects of the 1990s Balkans War were felt by more than just those in Central Europe. Serbia’s quest to reunite the former Yugoslav territories by conquering and, in some cases, exterminating the Croats and Bosnians alarmed much of the international community (Franz, 2005). Immediately, hundreds of thousands of Bosnians became refugees dependent upon a global system of resettlement. Because their homeland was under siege, many had to reach out to other countries, like the
United States, for assistance. This geopolitical issue led to the eventual formation and implementation of an international peacekeeping force sponsored by the United Nations (UN). Policy initially set forth by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) established a basic migration strategy that allowed countries like the United States to offer assistance (Coughlan and Owens-Manley, 2006).

Figure 2: The Balkans Prior to 1992. Source: ESRI (2010).
Policy plays an important role in shaping the lives of diasporic peoples, and these displaced people are at the mercy of those countries willing to accept them. In order to present real-world solutions to the challenges of today and the past, governments often times incorporate strong public ideas into their own immigration policies. The success of their pragmatism can be directly related to the consensus of the people or electorate (Will ideology, 2010). Sometimes policies work well and, obviously, sometimes they do not.

Beginning in 1992, the United States and much of Europe saw their first arrivals of Bosnian refugees as a direct result of the Balkans War. Generally, the people of the United States are not locked into specific cultural identities like many European people.
In the United States, people have a tendency to see themselves as Americans first. Americans take pride in the idea that their society can absorb immigrants and accept them as Americans. Phrases such as ‘E Pluribus Unum’ (out of many comes one) serve as a national motto, and the immigration policies set forth by the United States are a reflection of this ideology (Franz, 2005).

Host nations play an important role in refugee resettlement, and their individual policies and resettlement programs dictate the success of these new guests. Within these host nations are reception cities. For the purposes of this study, the resettlement community of Bowling Green is specifically analyzed. The journey of Bosnia’s displaced people was a difficult and lengthy one. As for the formation of policy, that process was even longer.

**Formation of Refugee Policy**

Many factors have shaped the immigration and refugee policies of the United States and Europe. Most of the countries were initially involved in the central piece of legislation, the 1951 Refugee Convention. The convention was held at the European Office of the United Nations in Geneva, with twenty-six states in attendance. During this gathering, the convention laid out specific guidelines as to the definition of a refugee, the refugees’ rights, and the obligations of participating states (Goodwin-Gill, 2008).

Article 1(A)(2) of the 1951 Refugee Convention defines a refugee as a person who has a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion. The person must also be located outside of the country of his nationality and be unable and/or unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country. As soon as a person satisfies the above criteria,
that person may be considered a refugee. Unfortunately, there was another caveat for refugee declaration: all of the events identifying a person as a refugee must have occurred before January 1, 1951. Therein lies the necessity for further amending the 1951 Convention’s refugee definition. As time and conflicts progressed, more refugees would be produced, but if the culminating events of displaced persons happened after 1951, those people would not be considered refugees. Enter the 1967 Protocol.

The 1967 Protocol took place in Bellagio, Italy. Its purpose was not to amend the entire 1951 Convention but to redefine the term “refugee.” Because the 1957 delegates chose not to recognize the possibility of future refugees, displaced persons after the established 1951 date were left without much international help. During the 1967 meeting in Bellagio, immigration experts decided to remove the temporal restrictions pertaining to the refugee definition. The protocol was ratified by UN participating states and accepted as a legal amendment later that year (Goodwin-Gill, 2008).

It’s important to note the history of legal disputes and recognition of the evolving geopolitical climate. Because our world is ever-changing, policies on immigration have a tendency to change over time as well. Both the United States and much of Europe have seen changes to their immigration legislation as a direct result of current and past events. Even though the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol laid the foundation for immigration policy, UN member states have chosen to amend and interpret the legislation in their own way.

Grounds for customizing the immigration law that was set forth by the 1951 Convention, 1967 Protocol, and the European Union (EU) are laid out within the Dublin Convention, signed in 1990. The Dublin Convention’s purpose was to give more power
to EU member states. The strongest of these powers is the right for each EU member state to have the ability to customize EU immigration law. More specifically, individual governments are now able to play a triple role. EU members can exercise their executive power while also playing the role of lawmaker and judge. The result of these triple role government entities has led to EU governments limiting the responsibility of the state towards refugees (Franz, 2005).

**Bosnian Refugees Influence Modern Legislation**

By the summer of 1992 the Bosnian diaspora was in full motion, and many EU member states were called upon by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to fulfill their humanitarian obligations as EU members and to host as many of the Bosnian refugees as possible. Unfortunately, many EU members had already adopted visa requirements for refugees. This adoption greatly limited the number of refugees each country would host. By late 1992, hundreds of displaced Bosnians arrived in Western Europe with new passports. The passports were issued by Serbia, and the issuance of those passports was perceived as an act of deportation. Because the Bosnians were deported by the Serbian government, the Bosnians were not considered to be legal refugees. The argument, on behalf of the EU member states, was that they were not going to support the Serbian deportations by offering asylum. Fear of an impending wave of Bosnian refugees, which was projected to strain national finances, helped to justify the denial of refugees (Franz, 2005).

A lot of these countries that were primed to receive Bosnian refugees were feeling overwhelmed before their actual arrival. Ireland, specifically, had never received considerable numbers of refugees and was initially reluctant to participate. Even though Ireland was one of the signers of the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol, it was
unenthusiastic to incorporate the legislation into local law until the creation of the Refugee Act 1996. This reaffirmed the rights that were outlined by the previous Convention. The Act also prompted the adoption of new Irish Statute Law, which obligated Ireland to consider every application from people escaping persecution in their homeland (Collins, 1997).

The United States’ history of refugee acceptance differs greatly when compared to much of Europe. It is well known that the US has welcomed numerous immigrants from many different countries, but what is often overlooked are the limitations that the US has placed throughout its history on the conditions and numbers of refugees admitted.

The open-door immigration policies of the US were initially a welcoming invitation to anybody looking for a better life. It was not until the 1880s that the US began to regulate immigration and, by the 1920s, the US began to enforce numerical restrictions. Refugee status was never considered a special class. The Displaced Persons Act of 1948 was the first piece of legislation actually to recognize refugees. This law was a direct result of the millions of displaced people following World War II (Coughlan and Owens-Manley, 2006).

The Displaced Persons Act of 1948 was swiftly followed by the Refugee Relief Act of 1953. This Act defined refugees as individuals from nations under the control of the Soviet Union. By allowing Soviet defectors into the US, it was hoped by the US that key scientific personnel would also migrate to the US. This legislation was skillfully designed to inflict a blow against the Soviet Union (Coughlan and Owens-Manley, 2006).

More recent legislation, the Federal Refugee Act of 1980, redefined refugee status and held true to the standards set by the previous 1951 Convention and 1969
Protocol. In order for a person to be considered a refugee, he or she no longer had to originate from a communist nation. The number of refugees allowed within US borders was distinctly determined by each standing US President (Coughlan and Owens-Manley, 2006).

After the outbreak of war in the Balkans, the US initially began welcoming fewer Bosnian refugees than Europe but, within three years, those numbers soon surpassed those of Europe. US immigration law differed from the European standards, because the US did not establish a limit to who may be granted asylum so long as the person could prove a well-founded fear of persecution. After some European states closed their points of entry to refugees, the US continued to admit Bosnian refugees. A majority of those refugees were granted permission to enter based upon the Family Reunification Program (FRM). The FRM actually worked quite well, because a majority of the refugees that continued to enter the US after Europe closed its borders were family members of refugees already in the US. Because of family ties, a lot of the financial burden could be shared by the families already in the United States (Franz, 2005).
Chapter 5: Resettlement and Community Findings

Global resettlements have increased over the past two decades. Advancements in transportation and the logistics of relocating displaced persons have greatly aided in this population redistribution. Some countries take in more refugee than others. The reasons vary from policy limitations to limited resources and infrastructure.

As of 2009, the UNHCR reported that over 42,000,000 people are currently displaced from their homes. Of those forty-two million, about sixteen million are actual refugees living abroad (Refugee 101, 2012). At the height of the Bosnian diaspora, the United States had resettled more than three times the number of Bosnian refugees than the European Union has settled as a whole by 1999 (See Table 1).

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<th>Year</th>
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<td>105,943</td>
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</table>


Many host nations only offer temporary asylum, which places the burden on other host nations. During the war in Bosnia, Germany temporarily hosted about 350,000 Bosnian refugees. By the year 2000, it was estimated that only about 37,000 of those refugees continued their stay in Germany because of the limited resources, while
the remaining majority sought refuge in other host nations like Ireland and the United States (*Germany: UNHCR urges*, 2000).

Following the outbreak of the Balkans War and leading up to the year 2000, the United States accepted around 140,000 Bosnian refugees as permanent residents (*Germany: UNHCR urges*, 2000). Several states within the United States were selected as hosts because of their available resources, but not all host locations were initially selected. One of the locations was Bowling Green. To date, Bowling Green has hosted 2,600 primary Bosnian refugees. The approximate current total of all Bosnian residents in Bowling Green is around 7,000. Reasons for the increase in residents vary from chain migration to the simple expansion of families (Robins, 2012). The city of Bowling Green has a total population of about 58,000 (State & County Quick Facts, 2012), with Bosnian residents comprising about 12% of the total population. A primary reason for the city’s large Bosnian population is the creation and expansion in services of the Bowling Green International Center (Robinson, 2012).

**Bowling Green’s Refugee Resettlement Center**

Local refugee centers aid in the resettlement of Bosnian and other refugees. Several US cities including Chicago, St. Louis, Salt Lake City, and New York City have played host to Bosnian refugees. Some of these cities have resettlement centers dedicated solely to one particular ethnic group, while other host locations including Bowling Green cater to multinational resettlement groups. Even though the nationality of focus may differ, their goals are all centered on refugee transition, education, and employment.

The International Center in Bowling Green (Figure 4) currently has programs that aid over 30 nationalities. The International Center is partnered with the U.S.
Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) and also accepts funding from religious groups. The International Center was founded prior to the Balkans War, in 1980, and the Center hosted its first Bosnian refugees in 1994.

Figure 4: The International Center, Bowling Green, KY.

The International Center’s goals are designed to promote refugee resettlement and wellbeing, along with educating the community. The broad focus of the International Center is on assisting with language instruction, employment, school registration and funding, and housing.

The International Center is proactive in its approach to informing the community about its program and cultural awareness. The International Center actively promotes cultural awareness through its Cultural Competency Training program. This program is implemented in many of the surrounding area’s facilities, like hospitals, businesses, and schools. The aim of the program is to inform the community of the differences among cultures generally, not just those participating in the International Center’s programs. The Cultural Competency Training program also informs locals about the Center’s
mission. International Center staff members have found that simple question and answer sessions have helped to eliminate any previous negative assumptions about the organization.

As mentioned earlier, the International Center in Bowling Green did not initially accept Bosnian refugees. A response was developed after a local female resident decided to host a displaced family. From her initiation, other Bosnians began to migrate to Bowling Green. Recognizing the need for assistance, the International Center obtained private and federal funds to incorporate the Bosnians into its refugee services.

**Mapping the Bosnian Community**

Communities can be classified into two main analysis types: interest communities and geographic communities (Poplin, 1979). Interest communities are not defined spatially. An example of an interest community would include the aviation community. To be part of the aviation community you would not have to live in a specific area, but you would have to share an interest in aviation. Whether you are a pilot, member of a flight crew, or simply enjoy learning about or viewing aircraft, you could be classified as part of the aviation community. A geographic community, on the other hand, does include the spatial element. Geographic communities are defined over space, and a particular type of social interaction often times ties these communities together (Poplin, 1979).

To obtain Bosnian household data for Bowling Green required the production of household data estimates that were unavailable. The US Census does not include the individual ethnicities of everyone who is surveyed. Census data only maintain broad ethnic groups like white, African American, Asian, Native American, Hispanic, and
other. Unfortunately, the Bosnian classification is not incorporated in the census demographics.

Defining neighborhoods, and household/population numbers, is a central concern of many human geographers, and doing so can require additional analysis, especially when certain ethnicities are not represented in the census (Martin, 2004). To create the geographic community of Bosnians in Bowling Green, I used a phonebook survey. It is argued that using ethnic surnames to identify addresses can produce an accurate estimate of ethnic family distributions.

Based on the assumption that the occurrence of Bosnian family names would be a valid basis for mapping the distribution of Bosnians in Bowling Green, a series of maps was created using 2002 and 2012 data. This ten-year span should help to identify not only the distributions of Bosnian families but also their movements within Bowling Green. The maps should also identify the extant Bosnian geographic community. Identifying the Bosnian community spatially allowed for additional analyses. This analysis also enabled the investigation of zoning data, or household types, and median household incomes.

Bosnian refugees began arriving in Bowling Green in 1994 and primarily settled in one neighborhood in the vicinity of Morgantown Road, Veterans Memorial Lane, and Russellville Road (Figure 5). This neighborhood is comprised of many apartment complexes, a mobile home park, older houses, and new construction homes (Figure 6). Because this area has many multi-family housing units (apartments and townhouses), this allows immigrants, like the Bosnians, more easily to depend on each other for success (Kuo and Lin, 1977).
Figure 5: Bowling Green, KY: Initial Bosnian Settlement, 1990s.

Map created by Jess Cary
Source: ESRI (2010)
Figure 6: Residences of the initial Bosnian settlement area in Bowling Green, KY, specifically within the vicinity of Morgantown Road, Veterans Memorial Lane, and Russellville Road.

Source: Photos by author.

The next map (Figure 7) is indicative of the Bosnian settlement trend continuing eight years later. This map was created from household data obtained from a local 2002 phonebook survey. Even though this snapshot of Bosnian residences from eight years after the initial settlement indicates a wider distribution of Bosnian households throughout the city, the initial settlement area still comprised approximately 42% of the Bosnian households.

The initial settlement area still encompasses the majority of Bosnian families eight years later, but the dispersion of Bosnian households throughout the city could be an example of continued acculturation. In order to verify this trend, data from a local 2012 phonebook were used to create an updated Bosnian household map.
Figure 7: Bowling Green, KY: Ethno-Telephonic Survey of Bosnian Households, 2002.

Map created by Jess Cary
Before creating the 2012 map, it was easy to assume that greater dispersion of Bosnian households away from the original settlement would occur. A rational for this is in accordance with Spatial Assimilation Theory that suggests over time, and by generation, ethnic families have a tendency to disperse away from their original settlements. This is the case with the Bosnians in Bowling Green.

**Household Dispersion**

To ensure that the overall Bosnian population is continuing to disperse, I calculated the spatial mean center (\( \bar{X}, \bar{Y} \)) and standard distance of both time period address points, 2002 & 2012, in a GIS.

\[
\bar{X} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} X_i}{n} \quad \bar{Y} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} Y_i}{n}
\]

(spatial mean)

In doing so, the mean centers of 2002 and 2012 household locations show that the address points for each year migrate to the southwest by approximately 1,300 ft. or a quarter mile. (Figure 8). The standard distance (SD) of household locations from the mean centers increased in radius from 9,887 ft. in 2002 to 11,282 ft. in 2012, thus reflecting the spatial assimilation theory.

\[
SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} (X_i - \bar{X})^2}{n} + \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} (Y_i - \bar{Y})^2}{n}}
\]

(standard distance)

As a result the household dispersion increased over the area of Bowling Green, drifting away from the original settlement toward the southwest (Figure 8).

To further examine the dispersion of households from 2002 to 2012, a nearest neighbor analysis was performed on the 2002 and 2012 household locations in a GIS.
Figure 8: Bowling Green, KY: Mean Center and Standard Distance Spatial Statistics, 2002 & 2012.

Map created by Jess Cary
A nearest neighbor analysis produces a ratio of the observed average distance of locations ($\bar{d}_0$) under investigation to the expected average distance ($\bar{d}_e$) of a random spatial point pattern.

$$R = \frac{\bar{d}_0}{\bar{d}_e}$$

(nearest neighbor ratio)

As the ratio value deviates from one to zero, the observed average distance becomes smaller indicating a more clustered pattern. Larger ratio values compared to smaller ratio values between zero and one indicate that the observed average distance is larger and thus more dispersed. In calculating the nearest neighbor ratio ($R$), the expected average distance is not meaningful since it includes area out of the Bowling Green City limits (Figure 9), but when comparing the spatial patterns between the two time periods, the nearest neighbor ratio is important because it can then be used to determine whether the households are becoming more or less clustered or dispersed. The value determined for the 2002 ratio is 0.17 which is less than that of the ratio in 2012, 0.34. The nearest neighbor distance ratio in 2012 is closer to one than the ratio calculated for 2002 which suggests that the 2012 households are becoming dispersed (Figure 9).

To determine if the Bosnian households are becoming dispersed with the study’s spatial units, I conducted a spatial autocorrelation analysis among block groups to determine and compare if the same results from the nearest neighbor analysis persists at the block group level. The Moran’s index (Moran’s $I$) was used for comparing the spatial autocorrelation of percent of Bosnian households at the block group level in Bowling Green.

$$I = \frac{n \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left( \sum_{j=1}^{n} w_{ij} (X_i - \bar{X})(X_j - \bar{X}) \right)}{\left( \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left( \sum_{j=1}^{n} w_{ij} \right) \right) \left( \sum_{i=1}^{n} (X_i - \bar{X})^2 \right)}$$

(Moran’s $I$ Spatial Autocorrelation)
Figure 9: Bowling Green, KY: Nearest Neighbor Analysis of Bosnian Households, 2002 & 2012.
This value is then compared to the expected index value \( E(I) \), which indicates no spatial autocorrelation, i.e. random spatial pattern among percent Bosnian households per block group.

\[
E(I) = \frac{-1}{n-1}
\]

(expected index value)

As the Moran’s I value increases away from the expected index, the spatial autocorrelation of neighboring block group’s percent of Bosnian households become similar. The Moran’s I value for 2002 was 0.1579 and for 2012 was 0.0859. When compared to the expected index calculated for this study, -0.0192, the neighboring values of 2002 percent Bosnian households per block group are more similar (or aren’t as dispersed) when compared to 2012, which is consistent with the findings from the nearest neighbor analysis.

By 2012, the number of Bosnian families in the original settlement neighborhood had decreased to about 36% (Figure 10). Even though clustering still exists throughout the city, Bosnian households are more evenly distributed compared to 2002. It is also interesting to note that even though the original cluster in the vicinity of Morgantown Road, Veterans Memorial Lane, and Russellville Road has experienced a 6% decrease in Bosnian households, Bosnians appear to be diffusing into the southwest portion of the city.

Figure 11 not only shows increases of Bosnian households per census block group, it also shows where the decreases are happening. Overall, it appears that the Bosnians are beginning to favor the peripheral block groups of Bowling Green so, in doing so,
Bowling Green, KY: Ethno-Telephonic Survey of Bosnian Households, 2012

Map created by Jess Cary
Bowling Green, KY: Change in Bosnian Households Over the Past Ten Years by Census Block Group (2002-2012)

Figure 11: Change in Bosnian Households Over the Past Ten Years by Census Block Group (2002-2012).

Map created by Jess Cary
the trend of moving away from the original settlement continues. Even though as time progresses and the trend of dispersion endures, many local residents still refer to the original settlement as the Bosnian neighborhood. To validate this trend and the locations of the Bosnian households that I extracted from local phonebooks further, I sought the advice of a local Bosnian Imam.

When asked to verify the locations of Bosnian neighborhoods, Imam Sedin Agic verified my findings and shared some interesting insight. He noted several reasons for the continued clusters of Bosnian residents. He stated that it was important for Bosnian families to live close to each other. Remaining within walking distances of relatives and friends was especially important to the older generations, many of whom do not drive vehicles. Socializing over coffee among neighborhood adults inside their homes occurs on an almost daily basis. He also mentioned the safety factor and how it was common for Bosnian children to play games in the streets of their neighborhoods, which he mentioned is more common than simply staying indoors and playing video games. Thus, with the families living in close proximity, the adults would be better able to watch over them. Even though dispersion of households continues so does clustering and, because of the geographic distribution towards southwest Bowling Green, a new Bosnian Mosque was constructed.

The new Bosnian mosque is located on Blue Level Road within close proximity of high concentrations of Bosnian families (Figure 12). The primary purpose of this mosque is to serve Bosnian residents. Unlike the International Mosque on Old Morgantown Road, services are only offered in Bosnian. The International Mosque originally offered both Bosnian and English services and continues this structure.
Figure 12: Percentage of Bosnian Residents per Block Group with Mosques and Bosnian-Owned Restaurants Overlays.

Bowling Green, KY: Percentage of Bosnian Residents per Block Group with Mosques and Bosnian-Owned Restaurants Overlays.

Map created by Jess Cary
Bosnian families are living in clusters. But as time progresses and in keeping with Spatial Assimilation Theory, the third and fourth generations of Bosnian immigrants may begin to disperse even farther away from their ethnic concentrations (Ellis and Wright, 2005). Because of this phenomenon, it is interesting to explore the overall diversity of the neighborhoods currently comprising Bosnian households.

**Block Group Diversity**

To understand the general ethnic diversity of the block group neighborhoods where Bosnian families live, the block group ethnicities, as defined by the 2010 Census, were aggregated from the block level to the block group level and their residential percentages were calculated. Ethnic neighborhoods naturally attract refugees because of the low-cost housing (Montgomery, 1996). Because of this, it is interesting to note the diversity of block groups where Bosnians live. The census block group data in Table 2 also help to demonstrate this diversity because, in general, where there are Bosnian households in a block group, there is also a high number of either white, African American, Asian, Hispanic, or other racial groups.

To better visualize the diversity of major racial groups compared to the location of Bosnian households throughout Bowling Green, a series of overlay maps was created to relate the Bosnian household distribution to other races. Figure 13 displays the percentage of white residents per block group with the Bosnian households as an overlay. This analysis of block group diversity indicates that a majority of the Bosnian families live in areas where there is less than 75% white residents. This is interesting because it is very possible that Bosnians may have been included as white during the last census count as, from my experiences, some Bosnians do consider themselves to be classified as white.
Figure 13: Bowling Green, KY: Percentage of White Residents per Block Group with Bosnian Households Overlay.

Map created by Jess Cary
Table 2
Bosnian Household Totals Compared To Ethnicity Household Percentages per Block Group in Bowling Green (continued next pg).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block Group</th>
<th>Bosnian HH#</th>
<th>White HH%</th>
<th>African-American HH%</th>
<th>Asian HH%</th>
<th>Hispanic HH%</th>
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62
It could also be argued that perhaps the Bosnians were counted as “other” during the last census.

Analysis of Table 2 gives more credence to the assumption that the Bosnians may have been counted as “other” in the last census. With the exception of seven occurrences, all 27 block groups that contained Bosnian households had more Bosnian households than the other households. When compared in the same manner to the white households, all 27 Bosnian block group households were significantly outnumbered. Because of this, it may be possible that the census worker on the going from door to door may have assumed the Bosnians ethnicity to be “other.”
A comparison of Figure 13 with Figure 11 indicates that the block group to the southwest, a predominately white area, is seeing an increase in Bosnian households and, at the same time, those block groups with less than 75% whites have experienced a decrease in Bosnian households over the past ten years.

The ethnicities with the most prominent numbers within the block groups with the highest concentration of Bosnian families are Asian and African American. While not the highest, Hispanic concentrations appear to be high as well. It’s also important to note that the block groups with the highest percentage of other ethnicities also contain a significant number of Bosnian families.

When comparing the percentage of African American residents per block group with the Bosnian households overlain, one can see that almost every block group with at least five percent African-American residents includes Bosnian households. If this figure is compared with that of Table 2, the rate of increase and decrease of Bosnian households over the past ten years within African American neighborhoods (Figure 14) is about the same, meaning that there is no clear sign of Bosnians only leaving African American neighborhoods.

This trend actually continues when compared to the other major racial groups, Hispanic, Asian, and other (Appendices B, C, and D). Since mapping the Bosnian households only shows clustering and is not a good indicator of actual segregation, I employed the index of dissimilarity.
Figure 14: Bowling Green, KY: Percentage of African American Residents per Block Group with Bosnian Households Overlay.

Map created by Jess Cary
Segregation

For this analysis, the index of dissimilarity is used to measure the segregation of Bosnians to all other races counted in the census with special attention given to the white group.

\[
\frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left| \frac{b_i}{B} - \frac{w_i}{W} \right|
\]

(index of dissimilarity)

The primary reason for this is because whites comprise the majority of Bowling Green’s population. The result of this index ranges from 0 to 1 with 1 indicating the highest degree of segregation and 0 indicating no segregation (Table 3).

Table 3: Dissimilarity Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bowling Green, KY</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bosnian to White</td>
<td>0.608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnian to African-Americans</td>
<td>0.470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnian to Hispanic</td>
<td>0.576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnian to Other</td>
<td>0.499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bosnian to Adjusted White</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.609</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The highest result in segregation was among the whites. As discussed earlier, there is a possibility that Bosnians could have been counted as white during the last census, 2010. Since this possibly exists, it was necessary to calculate the dissimilarity index of Bosnians to an adjusted white count. So, assuming that the actual Bosnian households were counted as white, I subtracted the total number of Bosnian households from the total number of white households for each relevant block group, and I also subtracted the total number of Bosnian households from the total number of whites in Bowling Green, and calculated the dissimilarity index again.
The index number for the adjusted white calculation resulted in a slightly larger measure of segregation, from 0.608 up to 0.609. In both cases, segregation exists and suggests that there is a higher degree of segregation compared to the unadjusted white population, but only by a thousandth. It is also important to understand that a telephone survey was used to obtain Bosnian household numbers and thus may only provide minimal numbers. If the actual number of Bosnian households were available for this analysis, and assuming by deduction that the number of Bosnian households would increase, it is probable that the dissimilarity index number of Bosnians to whites would increase, and that would most likely indicate a much higher degree of segregation. With that said and with the information that is available, it is probable that most Bosnians are living in segregation in Bowling Green.

**Income Distribution**

Data obtained from the City-County Planning Commission of Warren County enabled me to estimate the types of residences in which Bosnians live. A “spatial join,” or the joining of one mapping layer to another based on spatial location in a GIS, of the 2012 Bosnian residents with the 2012 Bowling Green residential zoning data suggested that 70% of Bosnian families are living in multi-family homes, while the other 30% are living in single-family residences.

According to the US Census Bureau, the 2006-2010 median household income for Bowling Green was $41,576 (State & Census Quick Facts, 2012). The overall income range for Bowling Green is $0 to about $375,000. A spatial selection of Bosnian residents within the block groups defined by median income resulted in 51% of Bosnian residents potentially averaging above the 2010 median household income, and
Figure 15: Bowling Green, KY: 2010 Median Household Income with Bosnian Households Overlay.

Map created by Jess Cary
about 49% possibly falling below the city’s median income (Figure 15). The aforementioned results are estimates, and one should be aware of ecological fallacy in drawing assumptions from this generalization. Even though more than 50% of Bosnians live in block groups with median incomes over $41,000, this does not prove that all Bosnians within these block groups are averaging this annual income. It is possible that the Bosnians’ annual income could fall well below or even above the median income for those block groups.

**Local Experiences**

To gauge a better understanding of how Bosnian residents view their host city and local residents, I conducted a series of 20 interviews. All of the interviews took place in public areas including restaurants and other places of business. Given that I am not a Bosnian speaker, when a language barrier existed, I used an interpreter to translate the questions and answers.

The ages of the 20 participants ranged from 20 to 51 years of age, and all participants were born in Bosnia (Table 4). Their arrival in Bowling Green occurred between 1995 and 1999 (Table 5). Only five of the participants traveled directly to Bowling Green from Bosnia. Twelve participants arrived in Bowling Green via transit communities in Germany, and three lived in refugee camps in Croatia. Of the twenty participants, nine attended school only in Bosnia, and the remaining eleven attended school in Bosnia and/or Bowling Green. Four of the participants held degrees from a university, and the other sixteen only completed high school. The participants were approached at random, and everyone that I asked to participate seemed to do so willingly. During a couple of interviews, the participants insisted that they were allowed
to buy my drinks. The interviews were pleasant and took approximately 10 to 20 minutes each (Table 6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th># of Participants</th>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>1</td>
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</table>

Source: Data collected from surveys by author.

<table>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data collected from surveys by author.
The participants were asked if they enjoyed living in Bowling Green. Nineteen of the 20 responded affirmatively. A follow up question asked, “Do you feel that Bowling Green’s residents are welcoming?” Eighteen out of the 20 respondents replied, “Yes” and gave some similar reasons. One of the participants explained:

“Bowling Green is a very friendly place. My girlfriend is from Bowling Green, and I’ve had no problems with Bowling Green people.”

Another participant proudly stated:

“My girlfriend is from Bowling Green. Her family thinks I’m funny. We all get along.”

Of the eighteen positive responses, almost everyone offered some sort of comment about how helpful and/or friendly the people of Bowling Green are. Staying on a positive note, I asked the respondents what they liked best about Bowling Green. The responses included safety and security of the city, being united with their families, friendly people, the weather, the university and colleges, the Bosnian community, and “pretty American girls,” but not all responses were so positive.

To obtain an understanding of the negative aspects of their host community, the participants were asked what they disliked about Bowling Green. Because the other responses were so positive, I was a little surprised by some of the negative responses. A few of the participants mentioned the heavy traffic, and how motorists were not
respectful of pedestrians. Two of the younger interviewees mentioned the lack of pubs or bars. Perhaps the most interesting was that five participants actually used the word “redneck” to explain their dislikes. One of the five participants responded:

“Most of the people are very nice, but the rednecks, the guys with big trucks, can yell bad words. Maybe they see stickers on our cars and think something, so they yell and honk horns.”

Another interviewee explained:

“I had a redneck tell me to go back to Russia! I am not from Russia you know! He did not understand and [I’m] still mad.”

It is difficult to judge how telling the last two responses are, because as a United States citizen my entire life and a resident of Bowling Green for over 14 years I have actually experienced some of the same, suggesting that I, too, was an outsider.

To understand the difficulties involved in transitioning from one country to another, my surveys also inquired about the types of community support, if any, that are shared by the participants. Specifically, I asked if they attended any local support groups, such as those hosted by the International Center or places of worship. Sixteen of the twenty participants responded that they attend regular services at the local mosque. It is well known that a majority of the local Bosnian community is Muslim, and these responses came as no surprise. What was surprising was that there was no mention of participating in any type of specific support services like those offered by the International Center.

Knowing that all of the participants had at one time lived in Bosnia, I was interested to learn about their individual opinions on return migration. When the participants were asked if they wished to return permanently to Bosnia, only three of the twenty participants replied, “Yes,” and the other seventeen participants replied “No.”
The overall responses to the surveys were positive but not unanimous, and there were not any noticeable differences in responses by age. Overall, the responses seem to represent the positive assimilation of Bosnians in Bowling Green.

Even though the responses obtained through my surveys were for the most part optimistic, this does not hold true for other immigrant groups throughout the US. One interesting case study by Fadiman (2003), observed the Hmong community in Merced, California. She found that the Hmong community has experienced a lot of negative feedback from the non-Hmong Merced residents. Many of the locals’ complaints were unfounded but, nonetheless, were still expressed and seemingly believed by those spouting them. Many residents viewed the Hmong as lazy and uneducated when, in fact, many of the Hmong students were at the top of their classes (Fadiman, 2003).

There is one similarity shared between the Bosnian community in Bowling Green and the Hmong community in Merced, and that is the clustering and segregation of the two groups as expressed in the maps created earlier. Unlike to Bowling Green, the town of Merced did experience a lot of financial strain due to the mass influx of Hmong immigrants and that is unfortunate, but this and the public outrage among local residents does not appear to be the case with the Bosnians in Bowling Green.

**Cultural Landscape**

At the core of all diasporic people is identity. In order for a group of people to be identified as diasporic, some criteria must first be met. Among those conditions is maintaining a discrete culture or a culture unique to one’s homeland and beliefs. Cultural landscapes are symbolic and representative of cultural identity (Schein, 1997). Cultures shape landscapes because culture acts as the agent, the physical area is the medium, and the result is the cultural landscape (Sauer, 1925). For these reasons, the
Bosnian influences on Bowling Green’s landscape continue to be visible through their mosques and businesses.

Perhaps one of most notable ways that Bosnians have maintained their identity while influencing the cultural landscape in Bowling Green is their adherence to Islam resulting in the construction of two mosques. Perhaps the welcoming environment of Bowling Green has encouraged this. This suggests that the lack of public outcry and protest against Muslims has been nonexistent, unlike other areas like Murfreesboro, TN. From 20 local Bosnian participant interviews, 18 of those did not feel any sense of religious discrimination from the local residents.

Prior to the arrival of Bosnian refugees in Bowling Green during the 1990s, Islam did not exert a visible footprint on the cultural landscape of Bowling Green. With the initial influx of more than 2,000 Bosnian residents, mostly Muslim, Islam would play an important role in redefining Bowling Green’s religious ecology and, today, Bowling Green is home to two mosques.

**Mosques in Bowling Green**

Bowling Green’s first Islamic Center was founded by Bosnians in 1998. The Center was located on Old Morgantown Rd. That facility was not ideal due to its small size, but it would remain somewhat sufficient until the necessary funds could be acquired to construct a larger mosque. In 2005, the new International Mosque was opened (Figures 16 and 17). It is important to note that the mosque is not uniquely Bosnian. It is an international mosque and hosts worshipers from many different countries. Today, the Islamic Center in Bowling Green accommodates more than 20 different nationalities. Its diverse congregation originates from countries such as Yemen, Iraq, Egypt, Morocco, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Russia, Turkey, Sudan, and the
United States. Even though the Islamic Center’s participants comprise multiple ethnicities, the majority of its members are Bosnians.

Figure 16: International Islamic Center, Bowling Green, KY.

Figure 17: The Mihrab of the main prayer hall, International Islamic Center, Bowling Green, KY.

The Islamic Center is more than just a place for local Muslims to gather and worship. The Center provides several community outreach programs. On Fridays and Saturdays, the Center plays host, in the form of classes, to anybody wishing to learn more about Islam. The Center has established relationships with other religious groups in Bowling Green for interfaith purposes to provide a better understanding and stronger
relationships among those of different beliefs. The mosque plays an important role in facilitating religious guidance for many international students at Western Kentucky University (WKU). The mosque organizes bus transport for many of WKU’s students who would normally be unable to attend services. The Islamic Center offers cultural awareness classes for US soldiers and officer candidates. These classes are intended to help educate servicemen and women prior to their deployment into predominantly Islamic states like Iraq and Afghanistan.

The International Islamic Center has acted as an attractor for chain migrants. According to Imam Agic, the Center has played an important role in attracting many Bosnians from surrounding areas. Because of the large numbers of families relocating to Bowling Green, the Center has found that it has reached its maximum capacity. To remedy this “good problem,” as Imam Agic stated, a new Bosnian Islamic Center has been constructed on Blue Level Rd (Figure 18). The aim of this mosque is to cater specifically to Bosnians, as services are only offered in Bosnian. The Bosnian Islamic Center is located in the southwest portion of Bowling Green approximately four miles from the mosque on Morgantown Road. It is important to note the location of the new mosque not only because it is located in what seems to be a sprawling area for new Bosnian households, but also because it is built next door to a Christian church. The location of the church may be a sign of continued religious tolerance in Bowling Green.

The completion of the Bosnian Islamic Center during the summer of 2012 resulted in the hosting of the seventeenth Convention of Bosniaks in North America. The convention attracted as many as 10,000 Bosnians from around the United States. The cultural event was even scheduled to host one of Bosnia’s current Presidents. Bosnia has three Presidents: one Bosnian, one Croat, and one Serb. The convention
entailed public Bosnian film viewings and photo exhibits at Western Kentucky University’s campus. An open forum and discussion of the life of today’s Bosnians in the United States was also held. A Bosnian team-dancing competition, comprising teams from Canada, drew over 1,000 competitors. Other competitions also included chess and soccer matches. The event was mostly free and the public was encouraged to attend (As many as, 2012).

Figure 18: New Bosnian Islamic Center, Bowling Green, KY.

Professor Daday of Western Kentucky University’s Sociology Department was interviewed by a local newspaper and stated, “a lot of people in the community recognize that we have a large Bosnian population but they don’t know why they are here” (As many as, 2012, p. 1). Through cultural events like the Convention of Bosniaks in North America and along with research such as this and other projects (Celik, 2012; Renaud, 2011), the local community should become more informed about the Bosnian culture.
Bosnians have brought more than cultural awareness with them to Bowling Green. Along with helping to diversify the religious community of Bowling Green, the diasporic influence of the Bosnians has continued in other ways. Bosnian-owned restaurants and grocery stores not only have helped Bosnians establish landscapes of home, they have also helped to shape a growing international dining scene and have revitalized the downtown area.

**Restaurants**

Bowling Green’s immigrant culture has succeeded in diversifying the city’s restaurant choices. Prior to the arrival of Bosnian refugees, the restaurant and grocery options of Bowling Green were culturally average for a city of its size and consisted primarily of chain restaurants and grocery stores with the exception of a few locally owned restaurants serving American and East Asian cuisines. In 1998, one of the first Bosnian-owned restaurants, A Taste of Europe Café, opened first inside the Greenwood Mall, but later relocated to downtown (Figure 19). Its Greek-inspired menu spiced up the local restaurant choices of Bowling Green and the café offered a taste of home for many of the local Bosnian residents by offering authentic Bosnian dishes like cevapi, which is comprised of several little sausages over pita bread. When immigrants open ethnic places of business, this process has a tendency also to boost immigrant morale (Murphy, 1952). Other Bosnian-owned restaurants soon followed A Taste of Europe’s example, and there are now a total of seven Bosnian-owned restaurants in Bowling Green. A majority of these restaurants, like Alma’s Pita & Café, have not only diversified Bowling Green’s dining scene, but they have incorporated outdoor café-style seating, which is common throughout Europe (Figure 20).
Grocery Stores

Bosnian-owned grocery stores, like the Mediterranean Food Store, have also been opened in recent years (Figure 21). Their original purpose may have been to cater to the local Bosnian immigrants but these new grocery stores have opened up a wide range of grocery options for all of Bowling Green’s residents. Bowling Green’s immigrant culture is varied, and the Bosnian-owned grocery stores have recognized this by offering foods unique to Bosnia. In doing so, local Bosnian residents are able to shop for items from their homeland, and other local residents are able to experience new diverse grocery choices. Not only has the influx of Bosnian refugees helped to remold the cultural landscape of Bowling Green, their contributions have led to a more international sense of being for a lot of residents. Also, when immigrant businesses open in existing vacant structures, they are helping to reinvigorate the local economy (Kaplan, 1997).
The liberal immigration policies of the United States and the welcoming environment of Bowling Green have allowed many of the local Bosnian residents to
prosper. Through their acculturation and assimilation, they have been able to live meaningful lives absent the fear of war, they have also added a complexity to the social and economic culture of Bowling Green. Bowling Green has become more international, its residents are also becoming more informed about the reasons for the presence of Bosnians. Bowling Green is a prosperous city, and Bosnian residents are contributing to this prosperity. Understanding why and how global refugees end up in Bowling Green is important, and understanding those reasons may help to eliminate local geographic and cultural ignorance.

In April 2012, a copy of the University of Sarajevo’s president Faruk Cakolovica’s book “1,479 Days, The Siege of the University of Sarajevo” was presented to Western Kentucky University. A quote in the WKU student newspaper, College Heights Herald, by the Department of Communications’ Head Helen Sterk, summed it up best; “whenever this university can connect [to] the community and when those two can connect the world, it expands WKU’s reach” (Bosnian university, 2012, p. 1). Not only is the university’s reach increased, so is the entire community’s reach.
Chapter 6: Conclusion

Migrants move for many reasons. Whether those reasons are voluntary or involuntary, host nations’ policies play an important role in defining how and to where those people relocate. Diasporic peoples are especially affected by this. Policy not only dictates the where and how, but it also establishes for how long and directly relates to migrant well-being, in terms of economic and social mobility.

In Bowling Green, Bosnian immigrants have benefited from the liberal immigration policies of the United States. Unlike many Bosnian refugees throughout Europe, most of the refugees admitted into the US were granted permanent residence status and the choice to obtain dual citizenship. Along with other advancement options available through federal and local organizations, like those provided by the Bowling Green International Center, Bosnians in Bowling Green were given the tools to succeed and many have chosen to do so.

Immigrant communities can shape both the physical and cultural landscapes in significant ways that have long-term impacts. By simply analyzing local community businesses and even cultural awareness events, the effects of immigrant communities can be revealed. This is possible because those initially on the diaspora have a strong tendency to maintain their distinct cultural heritage. In the form of local businesses like restaurants and grocery stores, immigrant communities develop a new sense of place while at the same time diversifying the entire host community.

By having a Bosnian presence in the city, Bowling Green is becoming a much more multicultural place. Bosnians have had a noticeable impact on the culture of the city over the past fifteen years. The significant numbers of Bosnians in Bowling Green
has led to the construction of Bosnian businesses and mosques and the establishment of Bosnian neighborhoods. In doing so, the general community is benefiting from a more diverse economy and an increase in religious tolerance and multiculturalism.

For this thesis, I hypothesized that Bosnian immigrants have a stronger visual impact on Bowling Green’s cultural landscape than other immigrant ethnic groups. Proving this hypothesis presented a few unexpected challenges, like the nonexistent household data on Bosnians. Since these data did not exist, they had to be created. In doing so, I was able to create several maps showing the distribution, or clustering, of Bosnian settlements, draw inferences about economic data, and calculate the segregation measure. These findings were interesting, but failed to prove my initial hypothesis.

Assuming that the large population of Bosnians in Bowling Green would have a significant visual impact on the cultural landscape was an error when, in fact, they actually seem to be more invisible on the landscape, unlike that of the Hispanics. According to the local Bosnian Mosque Imam, it is his belief and many throughout the Bosnian community that it is best to blend in culturally as much as possible. As Imam Agic stated, “We have our flags and our pride, but we do not wish to rejoice in a rude manner. We want to be a part of the city and not stand out.” However, he did state that he felt this mood would change in the future as the second generation of local Bosnians matured. He believes that they will feel a need to celebrate their heritage as the first generation passes. He also insinuated that a lot of local Bosnians, especially the older generation, still see themselves as guests, which seemingly would play a large part in wanting to blend in.

The question of whether or not the Bosnian elders should see themselves as guests is especially interesting because, technically, most of them have been granted
permanent resident status and are no longer on the diaspora or classified as refugees. A telephone interview with Damir Babic, a consular officer with the Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Washington DC stated that, “as of 1998, the international community…including the US and EU…declared the diaspora over and we [Bosnians] were no longer considered refugees.” He also went on to say that this validation was furthered by Bosnia and Herzegovina’s issuance of a document of readmission for all displaced Bosnians, an official call for Bosnians to return home. Since the issue of the document of readmission, the EU has offered Bosnian and Herzegovina potential candidacy country status, which also allows for the free movement and employment of Bosnians throughout EU member states.

Even though this study failed to validate the original hypothesis, some interesting results were still obtained. The findings resulted in the creation of a nonexistent database, the mapping of the Bosnian community, and evidence that suggests a high probability of segregation.

Understanding the impacts of immigrant communities on the landscape is very useful and case studies such as this contribute to the field of immigrant studies. Significant work in this field should be continued, because not all diasporic and immigrant communities are the same. Future research pertaining specifically to the Bosnian immigrant communities in the United States could entail a comparison and contrast of other US Bosnian resettlement locations to see if the Bosnian experience is similar to or different from that of Bowling Green. Further research in Bowling Green could include an expanded survey with a larger sample population. This would help to provide a more accurate understanding of local Bosnian experiences. A follow-up analysis, ten years from now, of Bosnian household distributions via phonebook survey
would also demonstrate whether or not the household clusters continued or dispersed in accordance with the Spatial Assimilation theory. It would also be interesting to note whether or not Bosnian-owned businesses continue to thrive or diminish over this time period. As global conflicts continue to generate new flows of refugees, it is important to continue diasporic studies research to gain a better understanding of how host communities can better prepare for the next flow of refugees. For example, the ongoing crisis in Syria may well lead to similar diasporic processes going forward as those experienced by Bosnia in the 1990s. The diasporic process experienced by Bosnians in Bowling Green Kentucky is not going to be the same compared to what happened or is happening elsewhere, because geography matters. Yet there are identifiable adaptations and influences that likely would be found in other communities because diasporic processes do have many generalized impacts on local environments.
APPENDIX A

Survey Questions Example

Demographics

1. What is your first name?
2. How old are you?
3. Where did you go to school?
4. What is your education level?
5. Where do you work, and what kind of work is it?
6. Is your current job the same as it was in Bosnian?

Family Questions

7. Are you married? If so, is your spouse Bosnian?
8. Do you have any children? How many? Where do they live?
9. Does all of your family live in Bowling Green, KY? Do you have family in Bosnia?

Migration Experiences

10. When did you first arrive in Bowling Green, KY?
11. Did you come directly to Bowling Green, or did you live somewhere else? If so, how long did you live there before coming to Bowling Green?
12. Have you returned to Bosnia? If so, how often? If no, would you like to visit Bosnia, and what keeps you from going?
13. Do you wish to permanently return to Bosnia?
Local Experiences

14. Do you like living in Bowling Green?

15. What do you like best about Bowling Green?

16. What do you dislike about Bowling Green?

17. Do you attend any community support groups? If yes, what kind of support groups?

18. Do you feel that residents of Bowling Green are welcoming? Would you give examples?

*Note: Approved by WKU’s Human Subjects Review Board
APPENDIX B

Appendix B: Bowling Green, KY: Percentage of Asian Residents per Block Group with Bosnian Households Overlay.

Map created by Jess Cary
Appendix C: Bowling Green, KY: Percentage of Hispanic Residents per Block Group with Bosnian Households Overlay.

Map created by Jess Cary
APPENDIX D

Appendix D: Bowling Green, KY: Percentage of Other Residents per Block Group with Bosnian Households Overlay.

Bowling Green, KY:
Percentage of Other Residents per Block Group with Bosnian Households Overlay

Map created by Jess Cary
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93


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