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Five Bosnian Jokes

Various Authors

Question: How many countries are in Europe?
Answer: Three
Question: Which three?
Answer: The European Union, EU candidate countries, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Miloševi? is convicted by the court, but the judge does not know what would be his worst punishment. He decides to sentence Miloševi? to live on a Bosnian pension.

Journalists ask Mujo what he thinks about the big cross that the Croats constructed on the Hum hill above Mostar. Mujo says, “I think it is a big plus for Bosnia and Herzegovina.”

A man from Bosnia and a man from Japan were talking about priorities in life. The man from Japan said: For me, Japan is first, then my job, and then comes the family. The person from Bosnia said: For me, it is the opposite, first comes my family, then my job, and then comes Japan.

Studying a foreign language starts with swearwords, enough to know half of Bosnian.

Note: Clearly, humor reflects something deep about a society’s character. Moreover, every society has a particular and telltale sense of humor. Humor is the window into a society’s soul for outsiders and a mirror for insiders to see and celebrate their collective identity. These truisms are no less true for Bosnian society than any other. Throughout the Balkans, Bosnians have been known for their clever, self-depreciating sense of humor. During the darkest moments of the war, Bosnians created jokes that flashed with pentrating rays of truth and pleasure during the most dishonest and painful of times. The jokes bore witness. They were powerful protests against the cruel course of the world. The examples provided here could be compelling material for studies in linguistic

anthropology, sociolinguistics, or meta-linguistics, following the example of Mikhail Bakhtin; we, though, allow these verbal utterances to speak here for themselves and bear witness in their way to the Bosnian spirit.

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